



Messy Church at Home

Holy Week

April 5-12, 2020

Adapted from Bringing Home the Mess: Holy Week Edition
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Scripture Readings from Common English Bible

Holy Week is the most important week in the Church year! We remember Jesus and celebrate in special ways the events of Jesus' last week beginning with Palm Sunday and leading to Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection on Easter. We reflect on Jesus' teachings and recommit to living as Jesus' disciples in the world today.

Since we cannot be together for Messy Church at this time, we wanted to provide some worshipful Messy Church activities that you can do as a family at home. Each of the activities will follow the events of Holy Week. You can choose to do one each day of Holy Week or choose a day and do all of the activities together. The hope is that these interactive worship activities will lead to a greater understanding of what happened each day during Holy Week and inspire all to grow closer to God and live and love the way Jesus teaches.

Palm Sunday, April 5th, 2020



Jesus and His disciples make their entrance into Jerusalem. Two of His disciples went ahead of the rest and brought a donkey for Jesus to ride. Jesus is greeted by crowds waving palm branches and exclaiming, "Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Scripture: Luke 19: 37-38

"As Jesus approached the road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the whole throng of his disciples began rejoicing. They praised God with a loud voice because of all the mighty things they had seen. They said, 'Blessings on the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens.'"

Activity: Palms and Races

Need: paper (green if you have it), pencil, scissors, crayons or markers, glue, Popsicle sticks.

Have each person in your family trace their hand four or five times on the paper. Color the hands green if you don't have green paper. Using the scissors, cut out the hands. Apply glue to the sticks and arrange the hands (thumbs together) on either side of the stick so they resemble a palm leaf.

Once the leaves are finished, set up a start and finish line and divide into teams. Since the palms were laid so Jesus's feet would not touch the ground, lay the palms, from your team, end to end and try to be the first one across without actually touching the ground. Once you step on a palm, lay another in front. Then, once you step on that one, reach back for the other and, again, place it in front. Keep this going all the way across the finish line!

Prayer: Faithful God, we give you praise this day! The people gathered to surround Jesus with shouts of praise, yet here we are at home to keep our neighbors safe by social distancing. We join our "Hosanna!" with people all over the world you are praising you this day. Be with us as we walk with Jesus during this coming week. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Holy Monday, April 6, 2020



Jesus and His disciples go to Temple in Jerusalem. Jesus is frustrated with how people are treating this worship space. He turns over tables and declares, “My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves.”

Scripture: Luke 19: 45-46

“When Jesus entered the temple, he threw out those who were selling things there. Jesus said to them, “It’s written, my house will be a house of prayer, but you have made it a hideout for thieves”

Activity: Your House of Prayer

Need: Paper, pencils, tape.

Create your own “house of prayer” by writing down reminders to pray. It can be specific prayers or just to pray in general, but write your thoughts on the paper and tape them up around the house. Mirrors, the refrigerator, the television, and doors are all good reminder places we will see frequently.

Prayer: God of all times, as we walk with Jesus as he walks toward the cross of Good Friday, be present with us in all of the twists and turns of this Holy Week story. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Food Idea: Donuts! There is a cute saying that goes, “Donut forget to pray!” Yes, it’s a cute saying but it also has a great message (plus it is a fun treat!)

Holy Tuesday, April 7, 2020



On this day, we look at the story when Jesus and His disciples come across a fig tree as they walked through the streets of Jerusalem. Jesus used the fig tree to give a lesson about staying persistent when it seems that everything is falling apart. The leaves on the fig tree are beginning to sprout and Jesus tells his followers that it is a sign that the seasons are changing. Jesus then instructs them that when things are changing, they are to stay alert and pray for strength. Our world has changed through the Covid-19 pandemic but we can hear the voice of Jesus telling us to stay alert and to pray for strength.

Scripture: Luke 21: 29-31, 36

“Jesus told them a parable, “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, you know that God’s kingdom is near...Stay alert at all times, praying that you are strong enough to endure everything that is about to happen and to stand before the Son of Man”

Activity: Pay Attention and Pray

Need: Pencils, paper.

Take a moment to reflect on what may be causing you anxiety today. Draw a picture or write it down on your paper. As a family, take turns sharing what it is you are feeling. Then as a family pray for strength during this time of uncertainty. Reach out to your church friends via social media or a phone call and let them know that you are also praying for them.

Prayer: Merciful God, during this time of uncertainty, we remember how Jesus told his disciples to stay alert and to pray for strength. Give us strength and courage this day. Thank you that you are with us in our anxiety and will never leave us alone. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Food Idea: Spaghetti! Heat up some spaghetti sauce on the stove and boil the water for noodles. As you wait for the noodles to boil, talk about how we never know the precise moment that the noodles will begin to boil but we know that through the heat, they eventually will boil. Just as we are patient for the noodles to boil, when we pray, we must also practice patience. We can rely on the faithfulness of Jesus to be with us always as we wait for things to fall into place in our lives. Then, mix your spaghetti sauce and noodles together and enjoy your spaghetti!

Holy Wednesday, April 8, 2020



Today we look at the story of one of Jesus's disciples, Judas, who goes to the religious leaders of the time who are disturbed by the teachings of Jesus and want to silence him by arresting him. Judas asks the religious leaders what they would give him if he helps them follow through with their plan to arrest Jesus. The men count out thirty silver coins and hand them to Judas. From that point on, Judas is looking for a time when he can help the leaders arrest Jesus.

Scripture: Luke 22: 3-6

"Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, who was one of the Twelve. He went out and discussed with the chief priests (religious leaders) and officers of the temple guard how he could hand Jesus over to them. They were delighted and arranged payment for him. Judas agreed and began looking for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them—a time when the crowds would be absent."

Activity: Collecting Silver

Need: Find 30 pieces of silver coins.

Take turns looking at the 30 coins. Silently think about a time when you did something you shouldn't have done or a time when you may have turned away from God.

Look at the thirty pieces of silver again and talk about a ministry you'd like to donate to. The silver can include nickels, dimes, quarters, half dollars, or any other coins of the same color. How might these coins become a blessing?

Prayer: Forgiving God, there are times in our lives when we turn away from you and do not love others as Jesus teaches us to love. We ask for your forgiveness. Give us the courage to follow the teaching of Jesus to love one another. We thank you for your mercy. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 2020



On this Holy Thursday, Jesus and his disciples sat down together to celebrate the Passover. This was a special meal meant to remind everyone of how God saved the Israelites and brought them out of Egypt. Before they ate the meal, Jesus knelt down and washed his disciples' feet. This was something that a servant would normally do and the disciples were shocked! But Jesus told them that they were to love one another like this, by serving one another. We call this day "Maundy" Thursday because "Maundy" means "mandate" – Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another the way Jesus loved them.

At the end of the meal, frequently called "The Last Supper", Jesus took bread and wine, which was tradition at the end of a Jewish meal, and he blessed them and told his followers to remember him whenever they gathered together. Later that Thursday night, Jesus is betrayed by Judas and taken to the house of one of the high priests where they begin to make a case against Him to use in a trial.

Scripture: Luke 22: 14, 19-20

"When the time came, Jesus took his place at the table, and the disciples joined him...After taking bread and giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, he took the cup after the meal and said, 'This cup is the new covenant which is poured out for you.'

Activity: Cup Decorating

Need: Paper cup, stickers, markers, glitter, etc. Any supplies you have will work!

Decorate your paper cup any way you'd like so you can use it with your "last supper" meal.

Prayer: God of mercy, as we prepare this meal, we remember how Jesus told us to remember him whenever we break bread and share a cup with one another. We thank you for Jesus and for his love for us and we remember his teaching us to love one another. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN

Food Idea: Mimic a last supper meal with your own family. So, choose a family favorite meal and use this time to talk about what feelings Jesus might have been experiencing at His own supper. Then, use some bread or crackers and some juice to recreate communion.

Good Friday, April 10, 2020



Good Friday is, by far, the most somber and arduous day of the Holy Week. On this day, our savior Jesus Christ was wrongfully accused in illegal trials and sentenced to death via crucifixion. He was nailed to a wooden cross and suffered for many hours before His death. Friday evening, Jesus is taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb.

Scripture: Luke 23: 44-46

"It was now about noon, and darkness covered the whole earth until about three o'clock, while the sun stopped shining. Then the curtain in the sanctuary tore down the middle. Crying out in a loud voice, Jesus said, 'Father, into your hands I entrust my life.' After he said this, he breathed for the last time."

Activity: Cross Art

Need: Paper, painter's tape, paint, paint brushes. You could also use markers or crayons.

Place the painter's tape, in the shape of the cross, at the center of the piece of paper. Then, pick out your favorite colors to paint with. Paint the entire piece of paper (including over the top of the tape) and wait for it to dry. When it has dried, carefully pull the painter's tape off to reveal a beautiful white cross among your artwork.

Prayer: Be with us this day, O God, as we remember that Jesus died upon a cross many years ago. We are sad yet we know that you are with us no matter how we feel. Thank you that your love for us is stronger than death. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Food Idea: Make a rectangle pan of Rice Krispy Treats and empty it onto a cutting board. Cut the rectangle into a large cross and have fun decorating it with sprinkles and frosting before enjoying the delicious treat!

Holy Saturday, April 11, 2020



This day in the Holy Week is the day Jesus lay in the tomb. While many of his disciples had fled the scene, some of the women who followed Jesus stayed behind. They buried Jesus in a borrowed tomb on Friday before the Sabbath began. The tomb was then sealed tightly and guarded by Roman soldiers. On Saturday we remember how Jesus' disciples must have felt, thinking that everything was over, knowing that Jesus was dead.

Scripture: Luke 23: 55-56

"The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph of Arimathea. They saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was laid in it. Then they went away and prepared fragrant spices and perfumed oils. They rested on the Sabbath in keeping with the commandment."

Activity: Moment of Silence

Need: Just yourself.

Take a moment out of your day as an individual or as a family and just be silent. Use this time to reflect on what happened to Jesus and the miracle that is to come. You can also use this time to pray if you'd like.

Prayer: We rest in your love, O God as we keep silence this day. We wait for the coming of the dawn of Easter light. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN

Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020



The Bible says that early on the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb to finish preparing Jesus' body for burial. When the women got to the tomb, they discovered that the tomb was empty! The large boulder that covered the entrance to the tomb had been rolled away and Jesus was gone. An angel appeared to the women and told them they need not be afraid. Jesus had risen! The women went back to the other disciples to tell them all they had seen.

Scripture: Luke 24: 1-6

“Very early in the morning on the first day of week, the women went to the tomb, bringing the fragrant spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they didn’t find the body of the Lord Jesus. They didn’t know what to make of this.

Suddenly, two men were standing beside them in gleaming bright clothing. The women were frightened and bowed their faces toward the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He isn’t hear, but has been raised. He is ALIVE!’ “



Activity: Secret Message

Need: Paper, white crayons, watercolor.

Use the white crayon to draw and write secret pictures and messages that have to do with Easter Sunday. Hand the paper to another member of your family and have them paint the paper with watercolor to reveal the secrets underneath! Ideas include the words "He is risen," a hill with three crosses, an empty tomb, etc.

Prayer: God of life, we have experienced many different emotions this past week and today we are jumping up and down in joyful exuberance. Jesus is alive! What a surprise to remember that in the midst of dark times, you surprise us with new life. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! In the name of the risen Jesus we pray. AMEN.

