



ST. MARK'S  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## A Walk Through Holy Week

A Personal Reflection or Family Experience

# Introduction

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Two months ago none of us thought that we would be worshipping online during Lent. But as we approach Palm/Passion Sunday I am aware that I will miss the “normal” experiences of Holy Week. The new realities of Covid-19 mean that we will be in our homes during this Holy Week. We have rituals for Holy Week: Palm Sunday worship, Maundy Thursday communion, Good Friday remembrance of Jesus’ suffering and death, and a joyous Easter celebration at St. Mark’s. Since we can’t do those things together we are offering you a new opportunity for meditation and worship.

The A Walk Through Holy Week is designed to be done in a public setting, but we offer it to you for personal meditation or family worship. You could make this part of your daily prayers or do it in its entirety on Good Friday or Holy Saturday. If you are doing it with children be sensitive to the issues of violence in the story.

In addition to A Walk Through Holy Week there will be online worship services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday at 7:00 p.m. Please join us.

- - Pastor Mary Ann - -

Welcome to this experience of walking in Jesus’ footsteps during the climactic final hours of his life on earth, also known as the Passion. It is our hope and prayer that during the moments ahead you will connect deeply with the biblical story; take personal inventory of your own spiritual health; and, express your gratitude more profoundly to the One who gave his all for you.

Before you begin, if you would like to make it more experiential for your family, may we suggest you gather the following items. If you don’t have something, improvise. For example, if you need palm branches, you can make them at home. Come check out our St. Mark’s Kidz Church craft for step-by-step instructions. What a great Palm Sunday activity! If you have room in your home, perhaps you can set up the stations in various locations. By all means, adapt items to make this a wonderful learning experience for your children! Suggested items needed:

- Palm Branch(es)
- Wine Goblet and pita bread (or soda crackers)
- Glass beads or for families Bubbles (representing Jesus’ tears)
- Piece of fire wood (or a stick, given the recent wind we’ve had you can likely find one in your yard!) and a rooster (have the kids color a rooster!)
- Purple cloth/crown of thorns (or branch from bush outside with thornes)
- Bowl of water and towel
- Three large nails/beam or piece of wood/bowl with sponge soaked in vinegar
- White linen cloth/jar or bowl of spices

As you begin, here are a few suggestions:

- Please turn off your cell phones.
- At each “station”, read the Scripture text to yourself or your family members.
- Take your time. There is no rush. Explore the suggested activities and ponder the questions that are raised.
- If you are with others, interact with them quietly. Maintain an attitude of quietness and reverence.
- The Passion Walk is intended for all ages. Certain activities, however, will require adult supervision for younger participants. Please be prepared to extend special attention to your children.
- Prayerfully ask that God himself would take this walk alongside you.

St. Mark’s Worship Committee



John 12:12-16

<sup>12</sup> The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!”

<sup>14</sup> Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: <sup>15</sup> “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

<sup>16</sup> His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

### **For you to consider:**

- Imagine walking over the palm fronds. Can you feel them under your feet?
- Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem was not what people might normally think as fitting for a king.
- Close your eyes. Can you hear the crowd adoring Jesus with their shouts? Can you imagine a thrilled audience gathered to welcome their king?
- Think about your heart. Are you welcoming Jesus? Are you eager for him to enter in?
- Reflect for a few minutes. Then pray, “Jesus, you entered Jerusalem willingly to much anticipation and celebration. Thank you for coming so that we might live.”



Mark 14:17-26

<sup>17</sup> When it was evening, he came with the twelve. <sup>18</sup> And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.” <sup>19</sup> They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, “Surely, not I?” <sup>20</sup> He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. <sup>21</sup> For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.”

<sup>22</sup> While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” <sup>23</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. <sup>24</sup> He said to them, “This is my blood of the[c] covenant, which is poured out for many. <sup>25</sup> Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

### **For you to consider:**

- Eat a piece of the unleavened bread (a bread made without yeast eaten at Passover to commemorate the Israelites exodus from Egypt.) Dip some parsley into the salt water and eat it (It is a Passover reminder that God’s people cried during their time in Egypt.) Sample a bit of ground horseradish (a reminder of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt.)
- Jesus spent his last meal with his friends. He knew one of them would betray him. He gave them the gift of himself so that they would always remember him.
- Consider: Jesus is spending his last meal with you. He loves you so much that he is giving you the gift of time and of himself. What have you given Jesus lately?
- Reflect for a few minutes. Then pray, “Jesus, you have done so much for me. How would you like me to honor you today?”

## Station 3

# The Garden of Gethsemane

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Mark 14:32-38

<sup>32</sup> They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” <sup>33</sup> He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. <sup>34</sup> And he said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.” <sup>35</sup> And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. <sup>36</sup> He said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.” <sup>37</sup> He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? <sup>38</sup> Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

### For you to consider:

- Jesus is in the Garden with his friends. But how alone he must have felt as they slept. His burden was so heavy and he was filled with sorrow.
- He took it to his Father in prayer and surrendered it all to his Father’s will.
- Pick up a glass bead or blow some bubbles into the air and watch them fall. Remember the tears that Jesus shed in the Garden. Think about your life and your current circumstances: What is weighing you down? What troubles you or fills you with sorrow? Prayerfully surrender your burden to God: “Not my will, Lord, but your will be done.”



Mark 14:66-72

<sup>66</sup> While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. <sup>67</sup> When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” <sup>68</sup> But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. <sup>69</sup> And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” <sup>70</sup> But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.” <sup>71</sup> But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.” <sup>72</sup> At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

### For you to consider:

- Imagine standing by a campfire. Can you smell the charred wood? Imagine being Peter, torn between loyalty to Jesus and fear for his own safety.
- Look for the rooster. Ask yourself: “When have I given in to fear and denied Jesus?”
- Ask yourself: “What situations or people in my life might need grace and understanding from me right now?”
- Reflect for a few minutes. Then pray, “Thank you Jesus that you forgive me even when I am weak. Show me the places in my life where you are asking me to be stronger. Then please give me the strength and the courage to change, knowing that you will help me.”



# Station 5 Flogging at Pilate's Palace

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Mark 15:16-19

<sup>16</sup> Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters]); and they called together the whole cohort. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. <sup>18</sup> And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>19</sup> They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him.

## **For you to consider:**

- Ponder the rods and cat-o-nine-tails. Touch the sharp thorns on the crown.
- Consider how all of this must have hurt. It was so unfair. Jesus did nothing to deserve this treatment.
- Ask yourself: "Do I expect that following Jesus should make my life harder or easier?"
- Then pray, "Jesus, I don't think I could have made all of the choices that you made willingly enduring all that you did, solely because you love me. If I were the only one who needed saving, you still would have gone to the cross for me. Thank you."



John 19:4-7, Matthew 27:24,26b

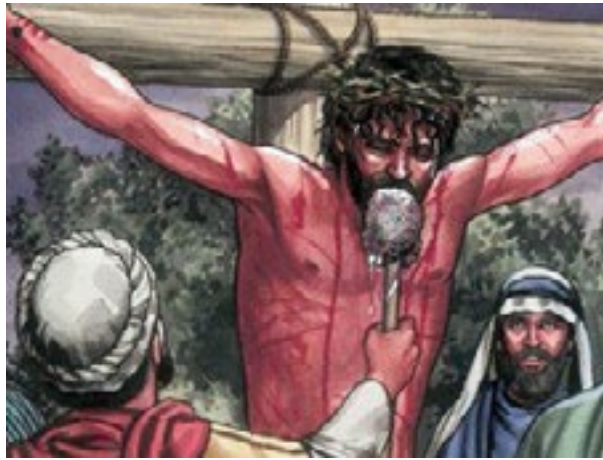
<sup>4</sup> Pilate went out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.” <sup>5</sup> So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!” <sup>6</sup> When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.” <sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.”

<sup>24</sup> So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.”

### **For you to consider:**

- Study the symbols of Roman power and authority. Face “the crowd” as if you were Pilate. Imagine bearing the responsibility for the life or death of Jesus. Dip your hands in the bowl of water and dry them on the cloth.
- When have I, like Pilate, washed my hands of Jesus? When have I been publicly challenged about my support of Jesus? When have I turned my back on him or not said or done something I knew God wanted me to do? What might I do differently if presented with the same opportunity?
- For children, consider Pilate’s actions like intense peer pressure. How can we/you stand up for Jesus in all circumstances?
- Reflect and then pray, “Forgive me, Jesus, for the times I have not supported or defended you. Give me the wisdom and the courage to recognize how you want me to act and react in the future.”





Matthew 27:33-50

<sup>33</sup> And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), <sup>34</sup> they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; <sup>36</sup> then they sat down there and kept watch over him. <sup>37</sup> Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

<sup>38</sup> Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup> Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” <sup>41</sup> In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, <sup>42</sup> “He saved others; he cannot save himself. [ He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup> He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, ‘I am God’s Son.’” <sup>44</sup> The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

## The Death of Jesus

<sup>45</sup> From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>46</sup> And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” <sup>47</sup> When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, “This man is calling for Elijah.” <sup>48</sup> At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup> But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.” <sup>50</sup> Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

## For you to consider:

- How things have changed. The same people who adored Jesus only days earlier now mocked him and insulted him.
- Smell the vinegar.
- Hammer the nail into a beam or touch the sharp end of the nail. (continued on next page)

- Ponder the “Seven Last Words of Jesus”

THE FIRST WORD: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” Luke 23:34

THE SECOND WORD: “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” Luke 23:43

THE THIRD WORD: “Jesus said to his mother: “Woman, this is your son.”  
Then he said to the disciple: “This is your mother.” John 19:26-27

THE FOURTH WORD: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34

THE FIFTH WORD: “I thirst.” John 19:28

THE SIXTH WORD: When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished;” and he bowed his head and handed over the spirit. John 19:30

THE SEVENTH WORD: Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Luke 23:46

- What a bitter reality, what an agonizing death.
- Consider how we, with our sins, hammered the nails. Reflect on Jesus’ last moments and the sacrifice he chose to make for us, for each one of us. Ask yourself, “How can I more fully show how grateful I am for what Jesus did for me? How can I live, so that others better see him who lives in me?”
- Reflect for a few moments. Then pray, “Jesus, I am eternally grateful for all that you did for me. Thank you.”



John 19:38-42

<sup>38</sup> After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. <sup>41</sup> Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

### **For you to consider:**

- Experience the darkness and loneliness of the tomb. How dark it must have been with the stone rolled in front of the door. Smell the incense. Touch the burial cloths.
- Ask yourself, “Is Jesus still here? The one I worship, did he stay dead in this tomb? Or do I believe he is fully alive?”
- Consider: Is there hope in my heart? Do I believe Jesus has risen? Do I live in a way that shows others the hope of the cross? Who do I know that needs this hope?
- Reflect for a few moments. Then pray, “Thank you, Lord, for your hope. Help me to live as you live, shining your life inside of me. Show me who needs your hope today and guide me in sharing it.”

John 17:15-19

<sup>15</sup> I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

The night before he died, Jesus prayed for his disciples – and for all of his future followers as well. We know that in the midst of his Passion his friends failed him. “All of them deserted him and fled.” (Mark 14:50)

### **For you to consider:**

- How will you leave this passion walk experience? Was there a question that was difficult for you to answer? Was there something that caused you to pause? Has something stirred in your soul? Are there distractions now or in your life that you want to leave behind? Do you wonder how to walk more closely with God?
- And as your thoughts turn from inward to outward, how might Jesus be wanting you to share him more? What choices might you make differently? How can you best give away your gifts and talents to glorify God’s kingdom?
- As you consider these questions, ask God for wisdom; for the ears to hear, the eyes to see, and the knowledge to know how God would like to use you to bless others. Ask God to help you feel God’s presence, joy, and peace more fully in your life.

We want to thank Zionsville Presbyterian Church for the Stations of the Cross service they created for the community last year. We used their outline as a resource in creating this document.

## Resources

### Palm Branch Pattern

Come check out our St. Mark's Kidz Church craft for step-by-step instructions. [Click here](#) or go to [stmark-scarmel.org](http://stmark-scarmel.org) and click Kidz Church under the Grow tab.

### Rooster

