



Celebrating Holy Week at Home

April 2020

During Holy Week, take time to worship at home as a family.

Sunday – Palm Sunday
Thursday – Maundy Thursday, Last Supper
Friday – Good Friday
Sunday -- Easter

- Pick a time every day to connect to God individually and as a family
- Create Sacred Space:

Find a spot to make a worship table. Leave it simple without signs of Easter or Spring. Make or place a cross on it, placing a stone each day leading towards the cross like a road. Each day add a token symbol to the table.

- Pray together
- Experience the story together: Scriptures in this resource reflect assigned lectionary readings and come from the book of Matthew. For young children- Parents are encouraged to read the scripture prior to sharing or retelling the story in child friendly language or to read the story from an age appropriate children's bible (options are listed below). Older children and adolescents might choose to look up the scripture in their bible of choice as your family listens to God's word together. You might choose to retell the story in your own words, or take turns reading together. You might choose to shorten the verses as you read aloud too. The hope is that this will be an engaging and interactive space to connect to God and each other as you remember the story of Easter.
 - [Deep Blue Bible Story Book \(Toddler\)](#)
 - [Deep Blue Bible Story Book \(Ages 3-6\)](#)
 - [Deep Blue Kids Bible \(Ages 7-12\)](#)
 - [The CEB Student Bible](#)
- Wonder together: Take time to read scripture or tell the Easter story and reflect on the questions provided together.
- Check in with your church or at growingtogetherumc.org for ideas/resources to use as you celebrate together. (Ex: Watch the [Laurel Heights Facebook](#) page for Ms. Laura to talk about making a backyard labyrinth, foot washing, and a Godly Play story to make at home.)



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Daily Themes and Activities for Holy Week:

Sunday – place a palm frond or homemade palm. Word: Hosanna.

- Experience: Matthew 21:1-12, entry into Jerusalem.
- Wonder: How can we welcome Jesus into our home and our lives this week?
- Respond: Parade around and shout Hosanna.

Monday – place some coins. Word: Justice

- Experience: Matthew 21:12-17, Jesus in the Temple

Note: Jesus went to the temple and saw people cheating others out of money. Jesus was very angry.

- Wonder:
 - Why do you think Jesus got mad?
 - Have you ever gotten mad because someone was not doing the right thing?
 - How can we use money wisely?
- Respond: build with blocks and then pretend to get mad and knock them down.

Tuesday – place a heart. Word: Love

- Experience: Matthew 22:34-40. The 2 great commandments.
- Wonder:
 - How do we love God with all our heart, all our strength, and all our mind?
 - What is a way we can show one of our neighbors love today?
- Respond: Do some service of love for a neighbor.

Wednesday – place some perfume. Word: Holy

- Experience: Matthew 26: 6-12. A women anoints Jesus with perfume.
- Wonder: What special things do we do to draw near to God?
- Respond: Make prayer beads. Find a string and beads. As each person prays add a bead. Say prayers for all that's on your heart during this unusual time and remember to include those in the world circle. Take turns wearing the beads today.



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Maundy Thursday – place a small bowl of water and a piece of bread.

Word: Last Supper

- Experience
 - Jesus washes the disciples' feet (John 13:1-16).
 - The Last Supper (Matthew 26: 17-30).
 - Jesus prays in the garden (Matthew 26:36-46).
- Wonder:
 - What do you think it felt like for Jesus to wash the disciple's feet?
 - What do you think Jesus' friends talked about at this special last meal?
- Activity -- Re-enact these stories as a family.
 - Gather a basin and towel and wash each other's feet or hands as a family.
 - Participate in your church's foot washing or Maundy Thursday Service
 - Eat dinner and tell the Last Supper story. Bakers may want to bake bread for this meal.
 - At bedtime, tell the praying in the garden story and go outside in your jammies for nighttime prayer. Remember Jesus praying in the night.

Good Friday – place a cross or other symbols of the crucifixion. Word: Sadness

- Experience: The Bible's telling of this story is very graphic for a young child, and the concept of "Jesus died on the cross to forgive your sins or because He loves you" can also be difficult to explain or understand (as it also is for grownups). A way to talk about the day is simply to say, "It was a very sad day. Jesus died and that makes us sad." You might choose to read an age appropriate telling of this story, or you could tell the story in your own words too. A wonderful telling of this narrative is offered via the [Godly Play Story: The Faces of Easter](#). You might choose to watch this story with your family.
- Wonder: This is a good day to talk about death and sad things that are relevant to your family. Grief revisited is grief tended, and in time turned toward gratitude.
 - I wonder what you learn about God in this story?
 - I wonder how you feel when you hear this story?
 - I wonder what we can do when we feel this way?
 - I wonder what you wonder about?
- Activity :
 - Participate in your church's stripping of the Sanctuary or Good Friday service
 - You can participate in this afterwards at home by putting away any Easter decorations in your own home. (They will appear again Sunday morning!)
 - Make a cross. If your children are awake in the evening, watch the Good Friday service with some art response materials and color crosses at this time.
 - Make the cross puzzle and tell The Godly Play, [The Mystery of Easter](#) story.
- Older children can read [The Tale of Three Trees](#) by Angela Hunt, or you can watch it on [youtube](#).



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Holy Saturday – place a white cloth (shroud) or a butterfly. Word: Hope

- Experience: Burial. (Matthew 27:57-61). “On Saturday, everything was so still you could almost hear the earth breathe.” Tell the story of a butterfly. This is the chrysalis time. The caterpillar is no longer here, and yet the butterfly has yet to come forth.
- Wonder:
 - I wonder what your favorite part of this story is?
 - I wonder what the two Mary’s thought about?
 - I wonder what it feels like to be this still?
 - I wonder what you wonder about?
- Activity:
 - This is a day of waiting and can be the day of preparation also. Just as the women got their spices ready for Sunday morning so you can prepare for Easter today.
 - Since Easter egg hunts will be private family affairs consider using real eggs along with candy filled plastic ones. Dye them yourselves and after finding them you can enjoy eating them next week.

Easter Sunday

After the children go to bed on Saturday night, remove all the things from Holy Week and re-decorate the worship table as an Easter table with Easter eggs, decorations, and flowers.

Word: Resurrection.

- Experience: Resurrection. Matthew 28:1-10. This telling of the Easter story is full of drama and emotional expression. You can read the story from the Bible and have your kids act it out as you read it.
- Wonder:
 - What is your favorite part of the story?
 - Where are you in the story?
 - What do we learn about God in the story?
 - What do you wonder about?
- Activity: Consider what you might do that is special this year. Your own Easter egg hunt. Special foods. If you have early risers in the family, have a Easter sunrise breakfast and welcome the day. Give thanks for Jesus, and for life, and new beginnings that come to us each day, and every Easter.