

Journey Through Lent



Evening Devotions for Families

*When true simplicity is gained
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed
To turn, turn will be our delight
Till by turning, turning we come round right*

A Note on Reading and Retelling the Stories

Before you read the new story each evening, ask for a volunteer to retell the bible story from the previous evening. You can also retell the story together, encouraging young children to tell the parts they know, or in the case of very young children, simply letting them fill in missing words as you tell the story.

Children should never feel as though this is a test of some kind, or that they are *required* to participate in retelling. Let them observe you struggling to remember details or the right chronology! Help them to see that these are the stories of our faith that we treasure, and in telling and retelling them over and over we make them our own, participating not just in the telling, but in living in light of them.

When you read the new story, you could read it more than once, and ask children to imagine themselves close to a different character each time, noticing their reactions or imagining what their feelings might be.

You could encourage each person in the family to ask one question once you have finished reading. Those questions can be “I wonder questions” that may not have a clear answer. They might be very simple questions about content, or deeper questions about meaning. Being included in asking questions also helps young children to know that they are not being tested, but instead have a part to play too in the discovery of the meaning of a biblical text.

Invite the Spirit to be present and trust that he is as you come together around God’s Word!



Lent begins soon. Perhaps you have already begun to think about how you or your family might enter in and journey through the season. At our church, “Give it up, Pray and Give it Away” is what we say to remember the ways that Christians have, for centuries, made room in their lives during Lent for God to bring growth, amendment of life and greater love for the world he died for.

The children in our midst are on that journey as well, and they help us. The process of thinking with them about what God’s Story means, answering their questions with integrity, and most important- trying to *be* the kind of people who show the way, is a great but wonderful challenge; formation for them and an incentive to desire ongoing transformation for us!

I thank God that while this has to be solitary work in some respects, we walk the journey together in the richness and companionship of the Body of Christ, not only with the people we share our lives with at home, but in the larger church family. I look forward to the ways the Lord will join with us and lead us, through our life together in the church, to be ready for the great celebration of Easter!

Journey Through Lent Table Center

Gather these simple supplies:

- ❖ *three rectangles of felt: dark purple, light purple and white*
- ❖ *small squares of felt: 1 black, 1 green, 5 red*
- ❖ *assorted bits of colored felt for decorating the Easter side*
- ❖ *brown felt for the crown of thorns*
- ❖ *light brown felt for the cross*
- ❖ *7 tea light candles*

Additional supplies needed:

- ❖ *extra tea lights to replace used ones.*
- ❖ *a tall white pillar candle*
- ❖ *fresh flowers for Easter Sunday morning.*

To assemble:

1. Trim the **dark** purple and white pieces of felt so that they are slightly smaller than the light purple felt. Glue the three pieces together with the light purple one in the middle, which will make a border for both the dark purple and white sides.
2. Glue the cross to the dark purple felt in the center, oriented to the long side.
2. Arrange the squares (or cut them into circles if you like) in a circle around the cross, beginning with the black one ½ " or so from the bottom left corner of the cross, and ending with the green on the bottom, right corner. The black and the green will be beside each other. Glue them in place.
3. From the dark brown felt cut 40 small thorns or branches. These don't have to be uniform (a great job for preschoolers with child-scissors!) Keep these in a bag or a special box on the table where you will use the Lenten Journey Table Center.
4. Decorate the white felt for Easter Sunday morning in a way that shows it is a great day of celebration! Use bright and joyful colors, flowers, butterflies, a gold crown, exuberant faces, trumpets use your imagination!



To use:

1. Each evening, gather your family together to worship God. The black square or circle is for Ash Wednesday, and you will start with lighting just that one candle.
2. Each evening, choose one person in your family to lay a thorn or branch down. You will be making a crown of thorns around the outside of the candles as you go through Lent.
3. Each Sunday of Lent, light an additional candle on one of the red circles until you get to the green one, which is for Palm Sunday. On that Sunday, all 7 candles will be burning.
4. During the days of Holy Week you will light one fewer candle each evening so that on Good Friday you will blow out the last red candle. On Saturday, when Jesus was in the tomb, you will not light any candles.
5. On Easter Sunday morning, turn over your mat and light a new, tall, white candle to celebrate Christ's triumph over death into life! You could also place a vase of fresh flowers on your table center.

ASH WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

Candle Lighting

This week, there will be one candle on the black square. After lighting the candle, sit quietly for a few moments and invite God to be with you.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Sit in silence together and ask the Lord to bring to mind any ways that you have sinned. Confession may be silent or out loud, as the Spirit leads.

Choose one person to add a small branch to begin making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us. Help us to follow him in love so that our lives may help others and our weaknesses never hinder them. We pray in his name, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Worship in Song (songs may be found at the back of this guide)

'Tis a Gift to Be Simple

God's Story

Wednesday: Read together Genesis 3

Thursday: Retell the story of the Fall

Friday: Read together: Matthew 4: 1-11

Saturday: Retell Matthew 4: 1-11

Learning about Lent

choose a question or topic from those listed on the next page

Family Prayers

Closing Prayer of Blessing

Thank-you for the time we have spent with each other and with you. Lord we ask you to bless us and keep us, each one. With the gift of your grace, sanctify us. Help us to be faithful to your commandments, to care for each other, ennoble this world by our lives and serve the world you came to save. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Family Activity – Lenten Prayer Chain

This week, make your Lenten Prayer Chain. You will need 40 purple links and a white link at the end of each week for the Sundays in Lent. Hang your chain somewhere close to where you eat breakfast. Each morning at breakfast, take off one link and read the verse before you begin the day's activities. You could ask God to help you think about the words during the day and ask him to give you a chance to act on them!

Reaching Out Activity

Make arrangements to serve together as a family at a soup kitchen sometime during the season of Lent. Put that date on your calendar and pray for that ministry as the day of your service approaches.

Each week during Lent, you may choose to participate in purchasing various items to put together a welcome kit for a refugee family, or choose projects especially relevant to where you live.

Learning About Lent

1. What do you already know about Lent?
2. Is Lent in the bible? (No. It was initially a time the church set aside to prepare adult converts to Christianity for baptism at the Easter Vigil.)
3. How long is the season of Lent? (Forty days, not counting Sundays which are feast days.) Why do you think the church chose forty days? Can you think of other 40's in the bible? (Jesus' temptation in the wilderness/ the length of time it rained during the flood/the number of years the Israelites wandered in the desert)

1ST WEEK OF LENT

Candle Lighting

After lighting two candles (the one for Ash Wednesday on the black square and the red one beside it), sit quietly for a few moments and invite God to be with you.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Sit in silence together and ask the Lord to bring to mind any ways that you have sinned. Confession may be silent or out loud, as the Spirit leads.

Choose one person to add a small branch to begin making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us. Help us to follow him in love so that our lives may help others and our weakness never hinder them. We pray in his name, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Worship in Song *(songs may be found at the back of this guide)*

'Tis a Gift to Be Simple

God's Story – People Jesus Made Well

Monday: The Paralytic- Matthew 9:1-8

Tuesday: A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman- Matthew 9:18-26

Wednesday: A Blind Man- Mark 8: 22-26

Thursday: The Man at the Pool John 5:1-15

Friday: Two Blind Men – Matthew 20:20-34

Saturday: Lazarus – John 11: 1-43

Family Prayers

Closing Prayer of Blessing

Thank-you for the time we have spent with each other and with you. Lord we ask you to bless us and keep us, each one. With the gift of your grace, sanctify us. Help us to be faithful to your commandments, to care for each other, ennoble this world by our lives and serve the world you came to save. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Family Activity- Planting Seeds

This week's activity is to plant some seeds in a pot that will sprout and grow during the next few weeks.

Talk about it: Did Jesus tell any stories about seeds? How many can you think of? Look up John 12:24. I wonder what Jesus meant by saying this. Who was he talking about? Is this true for us too? How does the season of Lent help us to grow as God's children? As you watch your seed grow, think about the ways God is helping you to grow and how you can cooperate with God's work.

Reaching Out Project

Begin collecting new items for a Welcome Kit for a refugee family. This week, it's **kitchen items** such as mixing bowls, kitchen utensils, dishtowels, baking dishes... Why not go shopping and choose something together?

Notes on Reading the Stories

Before you read the new story each evening, ask for a volunteer to retell the bible story from the previous evening, or another one you read together during the week. You can also retell the story together, encouraging young children to tell the parts they know, or in the case of very young children, simply letting them fill in words as you tell the story.

When you read the new story, you could read it more than once, and ask children to imagine themselves close to a different character each time, noticing their reactions or imagining what their feelings might be.

Encourage each person in the family to ask one question once you have finished reading. Those questions can be "I wonder questions" that may not have a clear answer. They might be very simple questions about content, or deeper questions about meaning.

Invite the Spirit to be present and trust that he is as you come together around God's Word!

2ND WEEK OF LENT

Candle Lighting

This week, we light three candles. After the candles are lit, watch the flames for a few moments until you feel quiet inside. Whisper a prayer to God, inviting him to join you.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Sit in silence together and ask the Lord to bring to mind any ways that you have sinned. Confession may be silent or out loud.

Choose one person to add a small branch to continue making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us. Help us during this season of Lent to pay attention to the ways you want us to grow and change.

Say to each person in your family, “The Peace of the Lord be with you!”

Worship in Song

There is a Redeemer

God’s Story – “Follow Me”

Sunday: Two Brothers *Luke 5:1-11*
Monday: Philip and Nathaniel *John 1:43-50*
Tuesday: A Man Named Levi *Mark 2:13-17*
Wednesday: Twelve Disciples *Mark 3:13-18*
Thursday: Little Children *Mark 10:13-16*
Friday: A Rich Young Man *Mark 10: 17-29*
Saturday: Zacchaeus *Luke 19: 1-9*

Family Prayers

Closing Prayer of Blessing

Thank-you for the time we have spent with each other and with you. Lord we ask you to bless us and keep us, each one. With the gift of your grace, sanctify us. Help us to be faithful to your commandments, to care for each other, ennoble this world by our lives and serve the world you came to save. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Questions for the Stories this Week

Will this person's life, or these people's lives change, if they come to Jesus and follow him? How? Will they leave something behind or give something up? What would they gain? Is following Jesus easy or difficult (or both)? Why?

Family Activity- "Me Free Day"

** from celebrating Saints and Seasons by Jeanne Hunt*

Try this simple game for a day (or a week if you are really brave!): Try to spend a whole day without using the pronouns *I* or *me*. Give each person 5 safety pins. Make a chain with them and pin them to your shirt. If you hear another person say *I* or *me*, you can ask them for a pin. The person with the most pins at the end of the day wins! This little game can call attention to how much we think about ourselves.

(It's not too late to make your paper chain if you haven't already. Just start with the page for this week. Take of one link each morning at breakfast and ask Jesus to help you remember those words that day.)

Reaching Out Project

This week, shop for bed sheet sets (full and twin), blankets, quilts, comforters, pillows and pillowcases. Find a special corner in your home where you can gather the items you are collecting. You could pray for the family who will receive them.

3RD WEEK OF LENT

Candle Lighting

This week, we light four candles. After the candles are lit, watch the flames for a few moments until you feel quiet inside. Whisper a prayer to God to be with you.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Sit in silence together and ask the Lord to bring to mind any ways that you have sinned. Confession may be silent or out loud.

Choose one person to add a small branch to continue making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us. Help us to obey him willingly.

Say to each person in your family, “The Peace of the Lord be with you!”

Worship in Song

Tell Me a Story – Katy Wehr

God’s Story – Stories Jesus Told: Lost and Found

Sunday: The Lost Sheep – Luke 15: 1-7

Monday: retelling of the Parable of the Lost Sheep

Tuesday: The Lost Coin – Luke 15: 8-10

Wednesday: retelling of the Parable of the Lost Coin

Thursday: The Parable of A Lost Son- Luke 15: 11-24

Friday: The Rest of the Parable: The Other Lost Son – Luke 15: 23-32

Saturday: retelling of the Parable of the Two Sons and their Father – Luke 15:11-32

Family Prayers

Closing Prayer of Blessing

Bless us and keep us this night. Help us to look for ways to love and serve each other and so fulfill the law of Christ. Bless the families who live around us and let our lives show the love and the light of Christ to them.

Family Activities

1. Soap Cross – from *Before and After Easter* by Debbie Trafton O'Neal

You can carve a cross from a bar of soft soap. Draw a cross with a pencil on the soap and carefully shave away the corners. (Don't try to cut the section out all at once). Use the soap during Lent to remind you that Jesus washes away all our sins. When you use your soap, remember to thank him for forgiving us.

2. Honoring Godparents or Mentors

Did you know that long ago the season of Lent was a time for people who wanted to become Christians to prepare for their baptism at the Easter Vigil? If you have godparents, they made a promise to pray for you at your baptism. You could pray for them this week! Do they live close to you? Ask your parents if you could host them for a meal during Lent. If your godparents don't live in our city, you could make them an Easter card and have it ready to send in time for Easter Sunday. If you haven't been baptized yet, or don't have godparents, think of someone who loves you and prays for you.

Reaching Out Project

Hygiene (all items must be new)

Toilet paper (8-pack)

Shampoo and conditioner

Hand soap

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Toothbrush holder, soap tray

Deodorant

Hand/body lotion

Chapstick

Razors and shaving cream (for men)

Bath towels, hand towels, and wash cloths

Shower curtain and bath mat

4TH WEEK OF LENT

Candle Lighting

This week, light five candles. Once the candles are lit, you could join hands and simply sit in silence for a few moments, listening. Ask God to be with you.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Sit in silence together and ask the Lord to bring to mind any ways that you have sinned. Confession may be silent or out loud.

Choose one person to add a small branch to continue making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us.

Say to each person in your family, “The Peace of the Lord be with you!”

Worship in Song

What Wondrous Love is This?

God’s Story – Conversations Jesus Had

Sunday: Which story did you hear at church this morning? Read that together and tell what you learned.

Monday: with Zacchaeus – Luke 19: 1-10

Tuesday: (tell about conversation Jesus had with Zacchaeus)

Wednesday: with his mother, Mary – John 2: 1-12

Thursday: (tell about the conversation Jesus had with his mother)

Friday: with a blind man near Jericho Luke 18: 35-43

Saturday: (tell about the conversation Jesus had with the blind man)

Family Prayers

Closing Prayer of Blessing

+Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all the snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; let your blessings be upon us always; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

The Almighty Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.
Amen.

Family Activity -Spring Cleaning!

Take time this week to clean a room together. While you work together, you could think about how your clean room is like a little picture of how during Lent, when we listen to God for ways we can clean-up our hearts and lives, he makes all things clean and new. What a wonderful feeling of peace that brings- just as looking at a clean and tidy room, free of stuff we don't want brings that feeling, only much better!

Reaching Out Project

Cleaning Supplies

Here are some ideas:

Dish soap, bathroom and kitchen cleaner, white vinegar, baking soda, spray bottle, sponges, laundry detergent, waste baskets, broom and dustpan, trash bags, toilet brush, vacuum cleaner

Talking about the Stories *some possible questions....*

Who started the conversation? What were the questions asked and the answers given? Were there any questions or comments that surprised you? Why? Was the person changed because of their conversation with Jesus? How? What do you think they learned about themselves? What do you think they learned about Jesus? How about us- what do we notice about Jesus from "listening to this conversation?" If you lived during Jesus earthly lifetime, and had a conversation with Jesus, what do you think you would ask him? What do you think he would choose to talk about with you?

5TH WEEK OF LENT

Candle Lighting

We are getting close to the end of our Lenten journey. This week, you will light 6 candles. Sit together quietly for a few moments and in your heart, invite God to be with you as you worship him this evening.

Confession

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Family Responds: And renew a right spirit within me.

Ask God to show you any ways you are in need of his forgiveness. Is there anyone you need to forgive?

Choose one person to add a small branch to continue making the Crown of Thorns.

Pray Together: Dear Father, we remember that Jesus bore the pain of our sins on the cross. Thank-you for the forgiveness that is ours because of what he was willing to do for us.

Say to each person in your family, “The Peace of the Lord be with you!”

Worship in Song

Lamb of God – Twila Paris

God’s Story – Amazing Things That Jesus Did

Sunday: Lazarus- John 11
Monday: Jesus fed 5,000 people – Matthew 14: 13-21
Tuesday: Retell the story of Jesus feeding the people.
Wednesday: Jesus Walked on the Water – Matthew 14:22-33
Thursday: Retell the story of Jesus walking on the water
Friday: Jesus Stopped a Storm – Matthew 8: 23-27
Saturday: Retell the story of Jesus stopping the storm.

Family Prayers *finish with The Lord’s Prayer*

Closing Prayer of Blessing – Book of Common Prayer

+Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all the snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; let your blessings be upon us always; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

The Almighty Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.
Amen.

Family Activity - Lenten Prayer Corner

This week, create a special place in your home where family members can go to pray, think, read or just sit in God's presence during the last two weeks of Lent, and especially during Holy Week.

Create your space with cushions or perhaps a chair by a sunny window. Cover a small table with purple cloth and place a bible or bible story books on it. Children could draw pictures from some of the stories you have been reading together to put on the walls. Have a journal for children to draw or write in, or a basket with paper and a pencil for them to write prayer requests...perhaps you have other ideas.

Encourage each other to spend a little time in your prayer corner each day.

Reaching Out Project

Household and Baby Items

These are things that children will enjoy shopping for this week! Here are a few suggestions:

Alarm clock, notebook and pens, table lamp and light bulbs, storage tub, clothing hangers, diapers, baby wipes, blankets, bottles, pacifiers, baby lotion.

Talking About the Stories This Week...some possible questions:

Who are the people in this story? Is there a problem for the people? If so, what is it? Why did Jesus do what he did? Is there more than one reason? What is the most important thing that happens in the story? Is there more than one reaction to what Jesus did? How do you think you would have responded if you had been there?

WITH JESUS THROUGH HOLY WEEK



While the entire span of Jesus' thirty-three years on earth, from birth to death, is covered in the gospels, a third of the gospels are devoted to the events of *one week* of his life. In the case of John's gospel, it is one half! That week is of course the week that led to his death. May we know the life and presence of Jesus with us as we walk through these events this week in our homes and together as a church.

Take some time this weekend to plan some simple meals ahead of time and clear the family calendar as much as possible so that your family is free to participate in Holy Week services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, The Great Vigil of Easter and of course, Easter Sunday morning!

There is a separate page of devotions for each day this week. We will be lighting one less candle each evening, ending in darkness on Good Friday.

With regards to talking about the readings with children, I would like to suggest something we used to do with our children that often worked very well. After the reading, everyone was encouraged to think of a question. There are a quite a few advantages to this approach: It provides something of an incentive to listen well. It means that the discussion, whether it is long and involved or short, is based on what seems important to those present (or maybe even what the Spirit is highlighting for you!). It demonstrates to children that asking questions of the scriptures is important for the discovery of their meaning. Children feel that they are contributors and co-learners, not simply passive recipients. Finally, everyone can participate at their own level!

PALM SUNDAY

Candle Lighting

Today you will light all the candles except the one on the black circle. Each day as we go through Holy Week, light one fewer, working backwards around the circle from the green Palm Sunday candle. On Good Friday, you will light the last candle on a red circle. Saturday will be dark to represent Jesus in the tomb.

Child: Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord

Family Responds: Hosanna in the highest!

Worship in Song

Hosanna

God's Story – The Triumphal Entry – Matthew 21:1-11

For older children: All four of the gospel writers include Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. If you have time, you could read them all! Do you notice any differences in the way the authors tell the story?

Family Prayers

Blessing

God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord, Amen.

May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

MONDAY

Candle Lighting

Light all the red candles.

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God

Family Responds: and renew a right spirit within me.

Confession

In the peace of evening, we come to you Lord God. May your love and mercy free our hearts from the cares of this day. Forgive us for those things we should not have done and for those things we failed to do. As we receive your forgiveness, may we too forgive our brothers and sisters who have injured us. We ask this in your name, Jesus, Amen.

Offer each other the Peace of Christ

Worship in Song

Were You There?

Vs. 1 - Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

God's Story

Jesus at the Temple – Matthew 21:12-17

Family Prayers**Blessing**

God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord. May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

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Family Activity – Palm Crosses

If you brought home a palm branch from church yesterday, fold it into a palm cross.

Go as a family to each bedroom and tuck a palm cross into the top of the light switch plate. Pray for God's protection and blessing for the person who sleeps there. (If you don't have a palm cross, you could draw one, or make one from two twigs tied together with thread.)

TUESDAY

Candle Lighting

This week we are lighting one fewer candle each day to show increasing darkness as Jesus got nearer to his death. Today, light only 4 candles on the red circles.

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God

Family Responds: and renew a right spirit within me.

Confession

In the peace of evening, we come to you Lord God. May your love and mercy free our hearts from the cares of this day. Forgive us for those things we should not have done and for those things we failed to do. As we receive your forgiveness, may we too forgive our brothers and sisters who have injured us. We ask this in your name, Jesus, Amen.

Offer each other the Peace of Christ

Worship in Song

Were You There?

vs.2 – Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

God's Story – Jesus Anointed at Bethany - Matthew 26:6-13

Family Prayers

Blessing

God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord.

May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

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Family Activity - Anointing Oil

Put some fragrant oil in a small container.

Prayer of blessing: Dear Lord, your words are true: the story of the woman who anointed you out of love is still told today. Bless this ordinary oil for us and may it be a sign of your healing presence.

Ask everyone to take a small amount of oil and make the sign of the cross on the palm of the person next to them.

WEDNESDAY

Candle Lighting

Light three red candles this evening.

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God

Family Responds: and renew a right spirit within me.

Confession

In the peace of evening, we come to you Lord God. May your love and mercy free our hearts from the cares of this day. Forgive us for those things we should not have done and for those things we failed to do. As we receive your forgiveness, may we too forgive our brothers and sisters who have injured us. We ask this in your name, Jesus, Amen.

Offer each other the Peace of Christ

Worship in Song

Were You There?

Vs. 3 – Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

God's Story:

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus – Matthew 26: 14-16

Family Prayers

Blessing – God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord, Amen.

May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

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Family Activity - Planning an Easter Egg Hunt

How about planning an Easter Egg hunt for some children in your neighborhood? You could decorate invitations and deliver them together, inviting people to your house or yard on Sunday afternoon. Alternately, is there someone in your neighborhood who you know would be encouraged by an Easter card or a basket with some bread or cookies? Plan to make something that you could deliver on Sunday and pray for that person this week.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Candle Lighting

Light two red candles this evening.

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God

Family Responds: and renew a right spirit within me.

Confession

In the peace of evening, we come to you Lord God. May your love and mercy free our hearts from the cares of this day. Forgive us for those things we should not have done and for those things we failed to do. As we receive your forgiveness, may we too forgive our brothers and sisters who have injured us. We ask this in your name, Jesus, Amen.

Offer each other the Peace of Christ

Worship in Song

Were You There?

Vs 4 – Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

God's Story - Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet – John 13: 1-17

Family Prayers

Blessing

God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord. May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

Family Activity - Maundy Thursday Service

If you are unable to attend the Maundy Thursday service, you could have your own foot washing, remembering the example Jesus set for his disciples.



GOOD FRIDAY

Candle Lighting

Tonight, we will only light one candle: the one on the last red circle beside the black one.

Child: Create in me a clean heart, O God

Family Responds: and renew a right spirit within me.

Confession

In the peace of evening, we come to you Lord God. May your love and mercy free our hearts from the cares of this day. Forgive us for those things we should not have done and for those things we failed to do. As we receive your forgiveness, may we too forgive our brothers and sisters who have injured us. We ask this in your name, Jesus, Amen.

Offer each other the Peace of Christ

Worship

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

God's Story

The Death of Jesus – John 19: 17-37

After the reading tonight, blow out the single candle that you lit tonight.

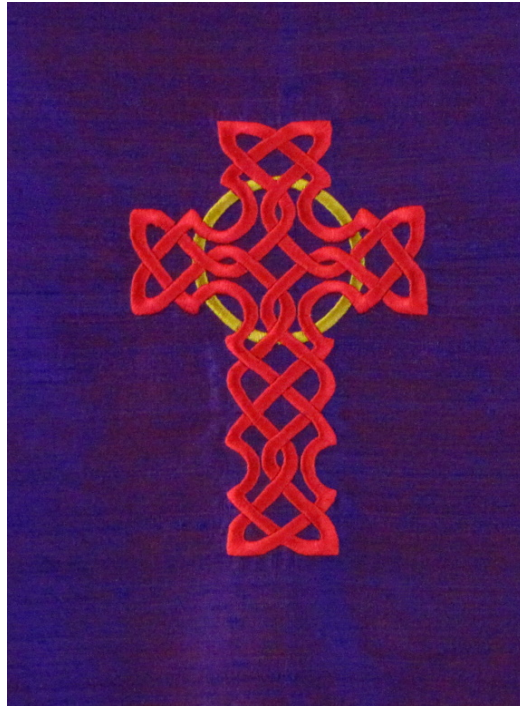
Jesus said, "It is finished." One by one, take away the thorns you have placed on your mat to make the crown of thorns, and put them away. As you do this, thank Jesus in your heart that his death took away all our sin.

Family Prayers

Blessing –

God our Father, you have been our guide and our help throughout this day. Stay with us now throughout the night. May you enlighten and purify our hearts and keep them vigilant in faith, through Jesus, the Christ, our Lord. May Christ, the only Son of God, bless us and help us. Amen.

Family Activity - Stations of the Cross and Good Friday Service.



HOLY SATURDAY

We don't light any candles today to help us remember that Jesus lay in the dark tomb.

Talking Together

Think of some of the people we have met in our stories this week. Name as many as you can: both friends and enemies of Jesus. I wonder what their feelings and thoughts would be on this day when Jesus lay dead in the tomb. If you had been there what your thoughts and feelings have been? Do you think there was anyone who knew what was going to happen next?

Prayers

Pray as a family for the people who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil.

Family Activity - Paschal Candle and Easter Vigil

You can make your own paschal candle and use it on Easter Sunday and throughout the Easter season. You need a tall white pillar candle, a marker, 5 cloves and a knife. Draw a cross on your candle with the marker. Have an adult carve out the design. Place a clove at each of the points of your cross and one in the middle. These represent the wounds in Jesus head, hands, feet and side.

EASTER SUNDAY

Candle Lighting

Turn your mat over today to show the side you decorated before Lent began. The days of darkness are over. Jesus has brought new life and hope to us! Place a your Paschal Candle in the center of your mat, along with some fresh flowers.

Child: Alleluia! The Lord is risen!

Family Responds: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Worship in Song

Were You There?

Vs 5 -Were you there when he rose up from the grave?

God's Story - The Empty Tomb - John 20: 1-18

Easter Prayers

Christ met the women at the tomb, and turned their tears to joy. Alleluia!

Christ is risen

Christ went through closed doors, and turned the disciples' fear to courage. Alleluia!

Christ is risen

Christ comes to us in our daily lives and assures us that his life has changed the world forever. Alleluia!

Christ is risen

Christ brings us new life, new hope, new strength. He says both, "Come and see" and, "Go and tell."

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



Songs

Tis a Gift To Be Simple

Tis a gift to be simple, tis a gift to be free
Tis a gift to come down where we ought to be
And when we find ourselves in the place just right
It will be in the valley of love and delight

When true simplicity is gained
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed
To turn, turn will be our delight
Till by turning, turning we come round right

Tell Me A Story

Tell me a story, O tell me a story
A parable of the Kingdom of God
Jesus has gathered the people together
To show them the way of the Kingdom of God

A shepherd had 100 sheep with him
When one wandered off all alone.
A woman had 10 special silver coins
And lost one somewhere in her home.
So they both started searching and did not stop
Looking high, looking low all around.
They called to their neighbors
"Rejoice with me!
"The one that was lost has been found!"

What Wondrous Love Is This *American Folk Hymn*

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down
Beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul for my soul,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.
To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb,
Who is the great I AM,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
While millions join the theme, I will sing.

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free
I'll sing His love for me,
And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity I'll sing on.

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When I Survey the Wondrous Cross *Isaac Watts*

When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
and pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ my God
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were an offering far too small
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all

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Were You There

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Where you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when he rose up from the grave?
Were you there when he rose up from the grave?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when he rose up from the grave?

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