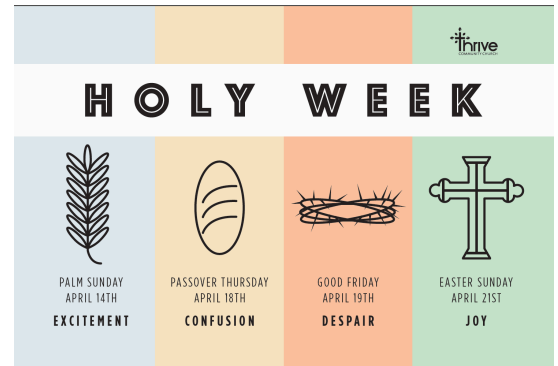


Sunday School at Home-All Ages

March 29, 2020

Location: At home

I'm so glad you are here, and are considering sharing a time of Sunday School at home. These times at home together are a special opportunity for us to deepen and share our faith in our families, and invite God's peace, love and hope into our lives. Together, we can all explore questions like, how we can find and make meaning in this time of challenge and uncertainty; where we see God moving and working in the midst of this pandemic; how to live with gratitude, grace and hope; and how our faith can guide us to love God and love our neighbors in this time.



Today's Story: Background

CONTEXT: Next week is Palm Sunday (April 5th), and our lesson today hopes to prepare our kids and families to participate in Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Palm Sunday remembers Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, beginning the long week that will end in his death and resurrection. I am finding new resonance with this story this year, and wonder if you are too. During Holy Week, Jesus walks the darkest of paths, directly into the darkest tomb - a place of death, darkness and hopelessness. Yet, God does not allow the tomb to be the end of the story. This Holy Week and Easter, we remember in a profound way that God is always working in times of fear, uncertainty and death, to bring light, love, hope, healing and new life.

SCRIPTURE: (This background, as well as some of the activities for today's lesson are provided by Rev. Sandra Summers) "The Stories about the events of the last days of Jesus' life take up large portions of each Gospel. This unit seeks to look at the events of Holy Week as a connected journey - the story of Jesus' journey through Jerusalem to the cross and the Resurrection. All four Gospels tell the stories of the last week of Jesus' life. Each account reflects differing opinions and interpretations.

The Gospel of Mark (the first penned Gospel) outlines Holy Week events day by day:

- **Sunday** — Jesus traveled from Bethany and the Mount of Olives and enters Jerusalem to crowds cheering, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" Along the way, the people placed cloaks and branches on the path before him and welcome him as the promised Messiah from the line of David.
- **Monday** — Jesus returned from Bethany (where he stayed at night) to Jerusalem and went to the Temple to teach. He cleared out the moneychangers from the Outer Court of the Temple.

- **Tuesday** — Jesus taught in the Temple porticoes in Jerusalem. He answered questions from the Pharisees, taught about the greatest commandment, and praised a poor widow for giving more than anyone else did to the Temple offering boxes. Later, Jesus taught his disciples on the Mount of Olives.
 - **Wednesday** — Jesus remained in Bethany at the house of Simon, a leper whom he had cured. While he was there eating a meal, he was anointed with oil by an unidentified woman. This is also likely the day Judas and the authorities conspire against Jesus.
 - **Thursday** — Jesus went to an upper room of a home in Jerusalem to eat the Passover meal with his disciples. After the meal, he went to the garden of Gethsemane with his disciples to pray. There he was arrested. He was taken to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest, to be tried for treason.
 - **Friday** — Jesus was moved from the house of the high priest to the home of the Roman governor. {Pontius Pilate, where he was questioned by Pilate. Jesus was beaten and then taken to Golgotha to be crucified. Jesus died and was buried in a tomb near Golgotha.
 - **Saturday** — Jesus remained buried in the tomb.
 - **Sunday** — Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary, the mother of James, went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body, and they discovered that the tomb was empty. Jesus was alive.
 - **Bible Story:** Mark 11-16 (with other Gospels)
 - **Bible Verse:** "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34a)"
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At-Home Plan - to adapt and use as is helpful: This follows the regular rhythm of Sunday School when we're at church together. Now we get to be church together at home! You can either follow this outline on your own, or watch a video of Pastor Amy leading Sunday School:

[TO WATCH A VIDEO OF PASTOR AMY LEADING LEADING OUR BREATHING, SONG AND STORY ONLINE PLEASE CLICK HERE.](#) The video will be posted on this page following a recording of our worship service by Sunday afternoon.

- **BREATHING AND QUIET - Centering down and listening for God**
 - Perhaps begin your time with quiet - focusing on your breathing or sitting in quiet and opening our ears to listen to the sounds around you. If you have a chime or singing bowl you could use that. We listen for God in the stillness and quiet.
- **CIRCLE: (Connecting, Listening and Praying together)**
 - This is the time when we sit together and share what is on our hearts
 - You might ask one another and share: What are you grateful for this week? Is there anything that is making you feel sad or worried? Is there anything you are looking forward to or worried about in the coming week? Is there anyone we should pray for?

- *Practice praying together for the things that were shared. Add a prayer for the people of our church...*
- **SING:** Jesus Loves Me
 - [Click here for a recording of this song](#)

Jesus loves me this I know
 For the Bible tells me so
 Little ones to him belong
 They are weak, but he is strong
 Yes Jesus loves me, Yes Jesus Loves me, Yes Jesus Love me
 The Bible tells me so

Jesus loves me, this I'll sing
 He turns winter into Spring
 Crocus breaking through the ground
 Once was lost, but now is found
 Yes Jesus loves me, Yes Jesus Loves me, Yes Jesus Love me
 The Bible tells me so

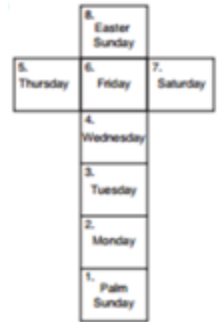
Jesus loves me, I'll sing on
 Through the night into the dawn
 Love so big so round so bright
 Takes what's wrong and makes it right
 Yes Jesus loves me
 Grace Wide as the Sea
 Yes Jesus loves me
 The Bible tells me so

- **STORY: Preparing to Walk Through Holy Week**
 - *The hope today is to share the events of Holy Week, day by day. You can share the day-by-day timeline outlined above*
 - *Watch Pastor Amy share the story in the video on the Website*
 - **For older kids;** *I also recommend this video from The Bible Project;*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>
 - *Discuss;*
 - *I wonder if you can find the book of Mark in the Bible?*
 - *I wonder if you can share the story and remember what happens each day?*

- *I wonder what questions you have?*
- *I wonder what the disciples must have felt like on each of the days, especially toward the end of the week Jesus (e.g. scared, confused, sad, overwhelmed)*
- *I wonder what this story might have to tell us this year as we deal with this virus and having to stay inside*
- *I wonder what it means that Jesus has also walked through a time that was scary and really bad and knows what it's like...*
- *I wonder what lessons Jesus has for us? (e.g. on Holy Tuesday he tells us to love God and Love our neighbors - see last week's lesson; on Holy Thursday he washes his disciples feet - how can we be servants; on Holy Thursday he also eats with his friends and tells them to gather around the table and remember him when he is gone; on Good Friday, he asks God to forgive those who persecute him; on Holy Saturday, everyone is sad, not sure what to do or what comes next...)*

● **GAME (OPTIONAL - With thanks to Rev. Sandra Summers for this game)**

- ****Materials needed:** tape, small plastic/stuff donkey, paper with days of the week
- **PREP:** Make a cross hopscotch on the floor with tape. Put days of the week in the hopscotch. See image. If it is a nice day, feel free to go outside and use chalk!
- Say, "Today in art we are going to be making something that reminds of Holy Week. The games we are going to be playing different games to help us remember the story of Holy Week. The first game we are going to play is Holy Week Hopscotch."
- Invite a child to toss a toy donkey (or other beanbag/stuffed animal) onto the hopscotch board. Have the child say the day of the week down on the square where the donkey lands, and then say something that happened on that day from the final week of Jesus' life. (Refer to first page.)
- The child then hops to the spot on the board, picks up the donkey, and then hops back to the beginning of the board. Have each child take a turn.
- Ask, "What day do you imagine wanting to be a part of? Tell me why."



● **ART & ACTIVITY**

- **OPTION 1 - Make Paper Palms to get ready for next Sunday!**
 - Since we can't distribute palms like usual next Sunday, we have to get creative!! Find some paper around your house and see if you can make



palms to wave during our worship together next week!

○ **OPTION 2 - NOTICING NEW LIFE OUTDOORS**

- You may want to watch Pastor Amy's children's message from worship this morning: <https://www.ucw.org/2020/03/24/sunday-service-march-29th/>
- Go for a walk outdoors (keeping a safe distance from others). Notice how God is doing new things and bringing new life to places where new life didn't exist before.
- Do you see flowers coming up out of the ground? Do you notice the buds on the trees?
- It's hard to imagine that the dry bulbs and seeds in the dark and frozen soil in winter; or the grey-brown branches on trees; will produce such beautiful colors and green leaves, but we're already seeing signs of that!
- Where do you see hope and God doing new things in your home and family?

○ **OPTION 3 - PRAYER BASKET (you can use an Easter Basket)**

- **NOTE - We introduced this activity to the kids last week, but if you haven't yet started the practice, or if you haven't added any prayers of gratitude and concern yet today, this would be a great time to do so!**
- There is so much to be grateful for, and so much to hold in prayer these days.
- Create a prayer basket for your family. Add slips of paper with prayers of gratitude or joy; or prayers of concerns, or the names of specific people.
- Add to your basket as a family throughout the day, and then find a time to read the prayers together (e.g. before dinner).
- This website shares an example - <http://www.backtosomebasics.com/681-2/>



● **A FUN ART CHALLENGE!**

- **The following is from the The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts**
- "Self-Quarantine ART CONTEST for TABCOM young people (under 17)! Please send us your drawing of your family sharing in online worship during the self-quarantine. We will post drawings and winners will receive a \$50 scholarship to a TABCOM camp (Grotonwood/Oceanwood/CYC) and a special treat for your family by mail! "
- If you don't attend these camps, you can donate the scholarship to a child in need.
- How to enter:
 - Create a picture of your family joining your church in online worship. Any kind of art is fine!

- Scan or photograph your picture and email it to Pastor Amy (amy@ucw.org) and Executive Minister Mary Miller at miller@tabcom.org
- This is a fast contest - send in your picture by April 1st!

- **CLOSING:**

- *If you want, end your time with a blessing.*
 - *Say something like: "May God Bless you and bless our family, especially during these days when we are at home. May you always know how loved you are, and may we all we all share God's love with one another and our neighbors this week and always. Amen."*
- *This is also a great one if you would like to listen to or learn a new song: Call down a Blessing; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JgBpF_XjD4*

FEEDING OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS IN BOSTON AND NEWTON:

Common Cathedral in Boston: Our friends and partners at Common Cathedral in downtown Boston are doing incredible work to safely support and provide services to their congregation and those experiencing homelessness in Boston. We can help. If you click on the link to their website and scroll down, you'll see an updated section about COVID 19, with a donation button, and an Amazon wishlist:

<http://commoncathedral.org/>



Centre Street Food Pantry: The Centre Street Food Pantry is providing pre-packed bags of produce, dry/canned goods, and cold food to shoppers from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays through March at 11 Homer Street in Newton Centre. Both new and registered shoppers are welcome. For up-to-date information and to make a donation or volunteer, please visit the website at www.centrestfoodpantry.org.

Newton Food Pantry: The Newton Food Pantry is open to all Newton residents and distributing pre-packaged bags of fresh and non-perishable food, toiletries and household cleaning products on its regular days of operation - Wednesdays 1:30-5:30 and the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10 am-noon. (In April, please note it will be open on the 2nd Saturday - April 11th from 10 am - noon instead of the 3rd Saturday). The Newton Food Pantry is located at 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, City Hall. While Newton Public Schools are closed, families with children can shop twice a month at the pantry. For more information on how to get assistance or to donate, click here, or email the Newton Food Pantry at newtonfoodpantry@gmail.com. For more information visit: <http://www.newtonfoodpantry.org/>

Arabic Baptist Church Food Pantry: The Arabic Baptist Church Food Pantry serves people in the Newton area and is distributing pre-packaged goods on the second and fourth Friday of the month from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at 187 Church Street. For more information or to make a donation, visit: [http://www.arabicbaptist.org/Ministries/Food %26 Clothing Pantry/](http://www.arabicbaptist.org/Ministries/Food_%26_Clothing_Pantry/)

Post 440 Mobile Food Bank: The partnership between Post 440 and the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) provides approximately 32 pounds of food each month to veterans and anyone else in need on the third Friday of every month, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., at American Legion Nonantum Post 440, 295 California St. Next date: April 17, call 617-244-0440 for information. Participants can expect food to be pre-packed in bags and handed out in the parking lot.