



ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



HOLY WEEK

Worship Resources for Individuals and Families *April 2020*

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St. Andrew's is a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia, under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes.

Dear friends,

It is a sad and strange reality to prepare for Holy Week knowing that we are not able to gather in person as the faithful people of St. Andrew's. It feels like another layer of grief in this time of anxiety and fear, and it's okay – even important – to acknowledge that grief. And yet, even and perhaps especially in this moment, we are still the church. We are still God's beloved, called to follow Christ on the way of the cross, which is a journey from fear into hope and from death into life.

It may help to remember where the disciples were gathered on that first Easter morning. They were not gathered with the masses in parish churches. There were no trumpets or lilies that day. Rather, they were huddled at home, hiding in an upper room. They were gripped with fear and confusion, and it was there that they heard the news of resurrection.

Two centuries later, in the midst of a global pandemic, we are once more hunkered down in our homes, worried and fearful. And we have reason to be, with the mounting loss of life and no clear end in sight. We have one advantage over the disciples, however. No matter what unfolds in the days and weeks ahead, we know that Jesus is risen and that life and love will prevail. Let us therefore follow the journey of Holy Week, present to the suffering of our world yet confident in the promise of salvation.

This year, we will make the journey in our own homes, like the disciples of long ago. This packet provides at-home worship resources for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. You don't need any special materials or knowledge. You may choose to print out this packet, or you may use the digital version on your computer. You may adapt it as you wish, and you may follow along yourself or with loved ones. Remember, you also may access complementary videos on our St. Andrew's YouTube page, which will highlight a few of our Holy Week traditions, along with brief homilies and sacred music.

As you prepare to make the journey of Holy Week in your home, it may be helpful to create a sacred space that can help ground your observance. It could be the dining room table or breakfast table. It could be a coffee or end table, or even a folding table you bring out for just this week. Take some time to decorate your sacred space, almost like an altar. You might want to lay out a tablecloth and place a cross or a candle in the middle. Children could draw or paint some pictures to serve as icons. Keep it simple and inviting, a place to gather in prayer and faithful conversation.

Finally, as you travel this journey, feel free to share with us your experience. Share photos at standrewsnorfolkphotos@gmail.com and post in the comments section of our Facebook or YouTube pages. This will help us hold each other in our hearts in the days ahead.

Helpful Links:

St. Andrew's YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFjdJro27QQvUBO1n0QdOIA>

Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia - <http://www.diosova.org/>

National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. (for streaming Holy Week services)- <https://cathedral.org>

Faithfully,

John Rohrs



Palm Sunday (April 5)

The annual observance of Palm Sunday remembers Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. He was going to that sacred city to commemorate Passover, a Jewish holiday that honors God's liberation of the Israelites from slavery. It was near the end of his public ministry, and Jesus had become well known and had gathered a great many followers. His influence was spreading, and as a result the traditional religious leaders and regional Roman authorities were growing nervous. The Romans feared that Jesus' presence in Jerusalem on the occasion of the Passover celebration might spark an uprising.



This is the context of the Palm Sunday liturgy. Palms were symbols of victory and honor, and as Jesus entered Jerusalem his faithful followers laid branches of palms on the road along his path. They were hailing him as their leader, their prophet and king, maybe even their Messiah.

Preparation

To prepare for your Palm Sunday observance, you may want to cut some small branches from a bush or tree in your yard. These will serve as your palms, and they too can form part of your sacred table. But first, you may want to use them as part of a family procession (inside or outdoors), re-enacting the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. If you wish, you may go to our church [YouTube page](#) to download a video recording of the hymn "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," featuring some familiar faces.

Worship/Activity

Hold the palms up high as you begin your procession. Together, you say:

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

Then you may say together the following prayer:

We praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as king of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life. Amen.

After the procession, you may return to your sacred table and lay down your palms. You may wish to light a candle on your table/altar.

One person may then read the following passage from Matthew's gospel (Matthew 21:1-11):

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethpage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to

Palm Sunday—continued

me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, “Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Look, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.”

Responding to the Story

If you are gathered with others, take a few minutes to respond to the story together (or, if you are alone, you can do so yourself). With children, it is often helpful to ask “wondering” questions and invite their ideas and reflections. Here are some examples:

- ◇ I wonder how Jesus felt when the crowd praised him and laid palms at his feet?
- ◇ I wonder why Jesus rode a donkey instead of a horse?
- ◇ I wonder why the Roman authorities were afraid of Jesus?
- ◇ I wonder what kind of king Jesus would have been?
- ◇ I wonder what it would be like to live in Jesus’ kingdom?

You also may go to the [St. Andrew’s YouTube](#) page to watch a short video reflecting on this story and how it speaks to our context today.

You may close with a time of intercessory prayer, offering prayers for family members and friends, for government officials and healthcare workers, for our church family, for those who are sick, and for those who have died. Encourage everyone to offer their own prayers, and you may conclude the service by reciting together the Lord’s Prayer:

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.*

Maundy Thursday (April 9)

Our annual observance of Maundy Thursday is full of important Christian ritual and symbolism. The service recalls the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. Maundy comes from the Latin word *mandate*, meaning command, and it points to the command from Jesus to share the bread and wine of the Eucharist in his memory, and as a way of actuating his continuing presence in our lives and world. The observance also points to a second, related command – the command to love one another as symbolized in Jesus’ ritualized washing of his disciples’ feet. It was a startling act of humility and service, and we are to follow his example as we reach out to others in love.



One additional observance that is not part of the biblical narrative but has become a cherished tradition in many churches, including St. Andrew’s, is the practice of stripping the altar at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday service. This is meant to convey in dramatic terms the shift toward the bleakness and grief of Good Friday, as Jesus is crucified and all hope seems lost.

Preparation

If possible, prepare a simple meal for yourself or your family. Make sure it includes some bread and wine or juice, and maybe some fruits and cheeses and vegetables. Gather around the table for supper, ideally with your sacred space/family altar nearby or even laid out at the table. You may light a candle if you wish.

Worship/Activity

A parent or appointed leader begins with the following words, replacing the foot washing ritual with a practice of hand washing prior to the meal:

We begin by washing, as we were washed in our baptism. We cleanse our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of new birth. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we were commanded to love: and to cleanse our hands and gather in spirit is how we love the vulnerable, whom Jesus loved. May we be instruments of love. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.

Each family member then washes his or her hands (or you may wash each other’s hands in a basin of soapy water to add symbolic meaning) and sets the table. When all are seated, the leader says the following:

Tonight is a holy night. Tonight we join with Christians around the world as we remember the last night that Jesus spent with his friends. Though we are dispersed we are still together in spirit and in truth. Tonight is about friendship and love, as we eat a meal, share stories, and pray together.

Maundy Thursday—continued

The leader then holds up the plate/basket of bread and a bottle/pitcher of wine (or juice) and says:

On the night that Jesus gathered with his friends he took bread and wine and he blessed it and shared it with them. Just as God's people ate manna in the wilderness and were satisfied, so we share this bread and this wine with one another. May it nourish our bodies and quench the thirst of our souls, that we may share in the life of Christ our Savior and live as his hands and feet in the world.

The bread and wine/juice and the rest of the food is then shared and enjoyed. If you wish, you may pause at different points in the meal to invite family members to read one or more of the following passages, prompting discussion afterward with “wondering” questions.

Luke 22:14-20

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.’ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, ‘Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes.’ Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given 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.’ And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’

- ◇ I wonder how Jesus felt at this last supper with his friends?
- ◇ I wonder what Jesus meant when he said the bread was his body? I wonder what he was teaching them?
- ◇ I wonder if this story reminds you of any special rituals you do at home or at church?

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus answered, “You do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.” For he knew who was to betray him, and for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

Maundy Thursday—continued

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”

“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- ◇ I wonder why Jesus washed the disciples’ feet?
- ◇ I wonder how they felt when he did that?
- ◇ I wonder how we can show other people we love them like Jesus loved his disciples?

John 18:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “For whom are you looking?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, “For whom are you looking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back in its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has give me?”

- ◇ I wonder why Judas betrayed Jesus? I wonder how Jesus felt when that happened?
- ◇ I wonder why Simon Peter drew his sword?
- ◇ I wonder why Jesus told Simon Peter to put his sword away?

Maundy Thursday—continued

Closing Prayers and Stripping of the Table/Altar

At the end of the meal, the leader says the following:

After that meal with his disciples, Jesus was alone, under arrest, and waiting for his trial before Pilate. His heart must have been heavy with emotions. Tonight, our hearts are heavy also. We are missing our normal routines and our friends [and teachers] and family members. We miss our church community and the chance to gather in person. Jesus knows what sadness and loneliness feels like. He knows what it is like to be alone when you want to be with those you love. Tonight, we keep vigil with Jesus, and we remember the sick, the fearful, and all those who risk their lives to protect ours. We pray that God would draw near to them and to us, enfolding us all in love.

The leader may invite those gathered to add their own prayers, either silently or aloud, and you may want to conclude together by saying the Lord's Prayer (printed below). Those gathered are then invited to clear away their dishes and clean up the table in silence. In a symbolic manner, this will serve as a stripping of the altar, and you may wish to clear away the icons and candles and tablecloths from the dinner table and also from your sacred space/family altar. You may even want to get out a cloth or paper towel and wipe the surface(s) down.

If children are participating, you may want to help them understand the way in which packing away these icons reminds us of the sadness of Jesus' death. (Saturday night, after the children are in bed, you will unpack and recover these items and place them again on the table or in your sacred space. You may want to add some flowers from the garden or other Easter decorations to convey the joy of Easter morning.)

If you wish, you also may view on our [St. Andrew's YouTube page](#) a video of John and Andie ceremonially stripping the altar at church, while Stephen plays the organ in the background. In this way, your table/altar at home is connected with our communal table/altar at church; despite our distance, we are one in Christ as we share in the rituals of Holy Week.

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.*

Good Friday (April 10)

Good Friday is our annual observance of the day of Jesus' crucifixion. It is the bleakest day of the church year, a day on which all hope seems lost. Traditionally, it is a day for solemn prayers, and often the recitation of the Passion story. Today, choose a time to gather around your sacred table or space. You may wish to gather around noon, which was the time of Jesus' death according to the gospel account.



Worship/Activity

Either a single leader or everyone gathered may begin by saying the opening collect:

*Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.*

You may now read the Passion, according to the Gospel of John (John 18:28 – 19:42). If you are with a group, you may wish to divide up the parts and read it aloud.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Good Friday—continued

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face. 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.” So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!” 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.” 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.”

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of

Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but the emperor.” Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill what the scripture says, “They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.” And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the

Good Friday—continued

scripture), “I am thirsty.” A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. *(Pause for some moments of silence)*

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

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. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 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. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Responding to the Story

Again, depending upon the age of the children participating, this is another opportunity for discussion and “wondering” questions, if desired and appropriate. Here are some examples:

- ◇ I wonder what Jesus meant when he said his kingdom is not from this world?
- ◇ I wonder what kind of king Jesus was? What would it be like to live in his kingdom?
- ◇ I wonder how Jesus felt when they put a crown of thorns on his head, and when he heard the crowd shouting?
- ◇ I wonder how Jesus’ mother and friends felt when they saw him dying? I wonder how Joseph and Nicodemus felt when they were taking care of his body and preparing him to be buried?
- ◇ I wonder if this reminds you of any sad feelings you have had in your life? I wonder what brought you comfort in those moments?

You also may wish to visit our [St. Andrew’s YouTube page](#) to watch a brief video featuring the painted Stations of the Cross in our nave, with choral music in the background.

You may then conclude your meditative time by praying the following Solemn Collects, written for Good Friday.

Good Friday—continued

Leader: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

All: Let us pray for the holy catholic Church of Christ throughout the world; for all those who meet in homes on these holy days, for those isolated due to illness or age, that all your people might be one.

(Silence)

Leader: Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

All: Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those to whom their care is entrusted, that by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

(Silence)

Leader: Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All: Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind; For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and the oppressed. For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled. For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish. For those who face temptation, doubt, selfishness, and despair. For the sorrowful and bereaved. For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger.

Leader: May God in mercy comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of God's love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

(Silence)

Leader: Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

All: Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

(Silence)

Leader: O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Easter Day (April 12)

Ironically, Easter Day may be the most difficult of these services to translate at home, because it is so associated with gathering together at church – surrounded by flowers and trumpets and smiling faces. Nevertheless, given our context this year of physical distancing amidst the spread of a pandemic, perhaps a quieter celebration makes sense. Easter is not the promise of a light-hearted or fleeting happiness, after all; it is the steely confidence of God’s victory over death, and the assurance that life and love endure even against all odds.



Preparation

Either Saturday night or Sunday morning, you will want to bring back out the icons and candles and decorations that had covered your sacred table or space. You may wish to add flowers or other signs of new life and hope to visualize the joy of Easter. If you are with family members, you may wish to share a special Easter breakfast together and enjoy worship and conversation in the context of the meal.

Worship/Activity

You may begin by saying the opening acclamation and collect for Easter:

Leader: Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All: *The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Next you may read the Easter story, according to the Gospel of John.

John 20:1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.

Easter Day—continued

Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Responding to the Story

Again, you may wish to ask some “wondering” questions if you have children with you.

- ◇ I wonder what the disciples felt when they saw the empty tomb?
- ◇ I wonder why Mary didn’t recognize Jesus at first?
- ◇ I wonder what the other disciples thought when Mary told them she had seen Jesus?
- ◇ I wonder how Jesus was resurrected? I wonder if and how he had changed?
- ◇ I wonder if anything has ever happened to you that felt hard to believe? I wonder if you have ever felt the experience of hope and joy and new life?

As in the other services, you also may wish to invite a time of intercessory prayers, perhaps ending with the Lord’s Prayer. You also may wish to go to the [St. Andrew’s YouTube page](#) to watch an Easter greeting and homily, along with a few favorite hymns from Stephen and a special slideshow video depicting our church family celebrating moments of hope and new life in the midst of these days of isolation and fear. The Easter message is alive and well, and life is stronger than death.

If you want a grander expression of the Easter acclamation, you also may want to visit the website of the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., which is offering online worship opportunities throughout Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Visit <https://cathedral.org>.

These liturgies are adapted from the following sources:

Book of Common Prayer and *Book of Occasional Services*. • “Holy Week at Home: Family Practices for the Triduum,” by Jerusalem Greer. On the Build Faith website (<https://buildfaith.org>), a ministry of Virginia Theological Seminary. • “Three Services for Holy Week,” adapted by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, Wash., and The Rev. Joseph Peters-Matthews, St. Hilda and St. Patrick, Edmonds, Wash. Posted on the website <https://barefoottheology.com>. • *Young Children and Worship*, by Sonja Stewart and Jerome Berryman, WJKP, Louisville, KY, 1989.