

Lenten At-Home Experience

Again and Again

*we are healed
we are brought into community
the truth sets us free
God engages with us
calls us forward
walks a road of redemption and recovery*

Lent includes the 40 days in which we step into the life of Jesus with the intention of drawing so close to him again and again that we feel the swish of his robe and the dust from which he walks within the depths of our being. The journey begins as we gather together on Ash Wednesday to once again be reminded that God comes to us again and again in our brokenness to envelop us into God's very presence. In the weeks leading into the glorious triumph of Jesus entering the city of Jerusalem and the stunning silence of his death upon the cross we will be reminded that God comes to heal us, bring us into community, set us free, engage with us, call us forward and chooses to walk a road of redemption again and again on our behalf.

Join us as we step into the promise of Again and Again this season.

Good Friday Stations of the Cross At Home

Stations of the Cross are designed to move us through Jesus' journey from the Garden of Gethsemane to his last breath on the cross. Each station is designed to help us engage in the emotions in which Jesus might have experienced as he stepped into the darkness of death.

Typically there are twelve to fourteen physical Stations that capture the movement of Jesus' journey. This year we have combined some of the Stations to create an experience in which you can choose to do as an individual or as a family.

Please feel free to adapt and choose the action that fits your personal needs and situation. These stations do not have to be done all at once. You may choose to do some of them on Friday and finish them on Saturday. If you post pictures to social media, please tag Blakemore UMC so that we might experience this journey together.

Opening Prayer

God of power and mercy we step into this journey of walking to the cross with you in order that we might understand the power of how your death leads us to new life again and again. We seek to experience the gravity and wonder of the cross in each of these movements. Come Holy Spirit, come. Amen

Station 1

Matthew 26:36-41

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress.

Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying,

"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."

When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Take your favorite cup/mug and hold it in your hand.
 - Concentrate on the weight of the cup as you hold it in your hand.
 - Reflect on what God is calling you to do during this season within your life that leaves you feeling uncomfortable.
 - Imagine yourself letting go of the uncomfortable stance and stepping into what God has called you to do.
2. Spend time outside to experience the 'garden'.
 - Let the ground beneath your feet steady your soul.
 - Listen for the movement and songs of the animals
 - Breathe in the sounds of assurance.
 - Feel the breeze upon your face to be reminded that you are not alone.
3. Take a picture of the 'garden' that surrounds you or of your favorite cup to remind again and gain that God is one who fills your cup.

Station 2

Matthew 26:14-16

“Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priest and asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.”

Mark 14:43-46

“Then, while [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, “the man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely.” He came and immediately went over to him and said, “Rabbi.” And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him.

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Gather several coins and hold them within your hand.
 - Reflect upon your current financial situation, ask yourself what you would do to wipe away the debt that you owe.
 - As you continue holding onto the coins reflect on the ways that you rely on worldly titles and the approval of others.
2. Walk through your house to find all the silver items and reflect on how these items came into your possession.
 - Share memories verbally/ through journaling about the significance of a few of the main items.
 - Reflect on ways the ways that God values you.
3. Take a picture of stack of ‘coins’

Station 3

Matthew 26: 69-75

“Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said.

But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!”

After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.”

*Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!”
Immediately a rooster crowed.*

Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Peter remains silent when asked if he knows Jesus:
 - Take a few minutes to journal and reflect upon the ways that you have remained silent when you should have spoken out on behalf of someone else?
 - Reflect on the ways have you wept in silence for the harm that your actions have caused to another person?
2. Print off a black and white picture of a rooster for each member of your family and spend time coloring the picture.
 - If you are an doing this individually write a prayer of confession for the ways that you denied Jesus by harming another person.
 - If you are doing it with your children write down ways that we can be kind to our neighbor, your community and our church to remember who Jesus is.
3. Take a photo of a bird to represent the rooster crowing to remind you again and again Jesus calls us to proclaim his name not just with our lips with every action that embark upon.

Station 4

Mark 15:1-5, 15

“The chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He said to him in reply, “You say so.” The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him, “Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of.” Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.... Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barrabas... [and] handed [Jesus] over to be crucified.”

John 19:1-3

“Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they struck him repeatedly.”

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Walk outside and find a prickly plant.
 - Hold the plant in your hand, feel it pricking your skin.
 - Reflect on a specific hardship in your life; one that left you feeling exposed and broken.
 - Say a prayer that claims the ways the hardship has shaped you and molded you.
2. Find a purple object within your home.
 - Either holding onto the object or placing it in front of you reflect on the ways that Jesus has clothed you in unexpected ways.
3. Using purple markers, crayons, colored pencils write words or draw a picture that represent new life pouring over you in this moment.
4. Take a photo of the prickly plant, the purple object or your words to be reminded that again and again God brings new life.

Station 5

John 19:6,15-17

As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!"

But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him."

But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!"

"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.

"We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.

So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). "

Mark 15:21-24

"A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Find a cross within your home; if it is one that you can pick up and hold, take the time to carry it around for the next 5 minutes (or longer if you feel inclined to do so).
 - Reflect on the ways carrying the cross impacts your everyday movements.
 - Reflect on the places that you wanted to set the cross down in order to make your task a bit easier to accomplish.
 - How might carrying the cross on a daily basis be difficult and yet be life giving in your everyday experiences.
2. Draw a cross on a piece of paper.
 - After drawing your cross; on the horizontal write a sentence (or two) about a time in which God stretched open God's arms and embraced you in love, wisdom and wholeness when you felt as though you didn't deserve it.
 - On the vertical starting at the top moving to the bottom write adjectives of who God is for you today. With each word that you write take a moment to let that word fill you beginning with your mind, moving into your heart, down into your feet and over your entire being.
3. Take a picture of your favorite cross to be reminded that again and again God makes a journey toward and for us.

Station 6

Luke 23:32-3

“Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called ‘The Skull,’^[b] they nailed Jesus to a cross. Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive these people! They don’t know what they’re doing.’^[c] While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying, ‘He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God’s chosen Messiah!’

While the crowd stood there watching Jesus, the soldiers gambled for his clothes. The leaders insulted him by saying, ‘He saved others. Now he should save himself, if he really is God’s chosen Messiah!’ The soldiers made fun of Jesus and brought him some wine.³⁷ They said, ‘If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!’

Above him was a sign that said, ‘This is the King of the Jews.’

One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, ‘Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!’

But the other criminal told the first one off, ‘Don’t you fear God? Aren’t you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn’t do anything wrong.’ Then he said to Jesus, ‘Remember me when you come into power!’ Jesus replied, ‘I promise that today you will be with me in paradise.’

Stations of the Cross Actions

1. Find the heaviest nail/screw that you can find within your garage/home.
 - Take a few minutes to hold it in your hand.
 - As you hold the nail reflect upon a time in which God held you up and provided a way that was unexpected.
 - Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for the ways that God has been with you in difficult times.
2. Write a prayer of confession for the times that your actions have broken someone else’s spirit, that you have failed your neighbor and not done what God has asked you to do.
3. Take a picture of stack of nails to remind you again and again that God heals us.

Station 7

Mark 15:33-37

“At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).^[b]

When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.”

Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said.

With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.”

Station of the Cross Actions

1. Read Psalm 22, how does reading this Psalm deepen your understanding of Jesus’ final words on the cross?
2. Reflect and/or journal about a time when you felt like you were breathing your last breath and that God seemed to be distant and unresponsive to the cries of your heart.
3. Reflect and/or journal about how this time of quarantine and isolation has helped you feel the emotions of how lonely Jesus might have felt on the cross awaiting the day of his resurrection.
4. Walk outside and breathe in the deepest, longest breath that you can breathe. Let the fresh air fill your lungs and renew your spirit in this season of darkness and death.
5. Take a picture of something that represents the breath that God breathes upon us again and again.