

# Holy Week Devotional

with Kid Devotions



***Greatest Hits:***

***A compilation of staff devotions from previous years***



## **INTRODUCTION**

*Pastor Thomas Cross*

*“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”*

*- John 16:33 (NKJV)*

This year’s Holy Week Devotional features favorite devotions from previous years written by members of the Broomfield UMC staff, as well as a new devotion from Pastor Betty to introduce our meditations and set the tone for our reflections. In these tumultuous times, we hope that all of you are blessed and encouraged by these spiritual reflections.

We can be certain that Jesus understands what we are feeling in the midst of chaotic, unjust, violent events, for He, too, experienced chaos, injustice, and the brunt of violence as He journeyed toward the cross. As we turn to Him, Jesus walks with us through every season of our lives, fortifying us with His courage, calming us with His peace, and guiding us with His wisdom. May God bless you as we journey with the Lord toward the celebration of His resurrection!

*The Broomfield UMC kid devotions are derived from the reflections of the staff Lent devotion submissions.*

# Opening Devotion

Pastor Betty Nguyen

## Surrender Space for the Spirit

### Psalm 95:6-11(NRSVUE)

*O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!*

*For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. O that today you would listen to his voice!*

*Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your ancestors tested me and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.*

*For forty years I loathed that generation and said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they do not regard my ways."*

*Therefore in my anger I swore, "They shall not enter my rest."*

### Hymn "God of Grace, God of Glory" verses 2 and 3

*Lo! the hosts of evil round us  
scorn thy Christ, assail thy ways!  
From the fears that long have bound us  
free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the living of these days,  
for the living of these days.*

*Cure thy children's warring madness,  
bend our pride to thy control;  
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,  
rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
lest we miss thy righteous goal,  
lest we miss thy righteous goal.*

Dear friend, how are you? Tired? Angry? Weary? Exasperated? Energized? Inspired? Hopeful? Maybe all of it? The news cycle is gut-wrenchingly difficult. In addition, we are all tending to different needs and longings within our personal lives.

Perhaps sometimes it is too challenging to "worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD." Perhaps our hearts have hardened. As I consume the news and learn what is happening within our communities and around the world, verses two and three of the hymn "God of Grace, God of Glory" have been on my mind and I have not been able to shake it off. It has captured the cries of my being in the midst of the heaviness. I feel spent. The only posture I have left is to surrender. Surrender.

As we observe this Lenten season through reflection, confession, repentance, fasting, I wonder if surrendering is part of the journey as well – and emptying of sorts, to allow God's Spirit to fill and enliven us. Not surrender as in giving up, but a giving in to the work of the Holy Spirit. When there is confusion, frustration, fear, disappointment, unknowns, and chaos, may we let go of our grip and surrender in a way that opens up space for God's Spirit. May the Spirit fill us with courage, faith-filledness, peace, wisdom, and holy imagination.

### Prayer:

*O Holy One, I confess that in my exhaustion and despair, I am gripping onto my own ways of being. Help me surrender and empty myself in ways that open up space for the Holy Spirit to fill me, move me, help me lean into a new way of being; that I may show up in ways to reflect Your love and vision of rest and liberation for all. Amen.*

**Surrender to God**

**Read the Bible Story: Psalm 95:6–11**

**Kid Thought:**

Sometimes life feels overwhelming - like when you're tired, worried, upset, or just don't know what to do. Maybe things feel confusing or too big to handle on your own. God invites us to surrender, which means giving all those feelings and worries to Him instead of trying to carry them by ourselves.

In this verse, we hear about bowing down and kneeling before God. That doesn't just mean how we sit or stand - it means trusting God with our whole hearts. It means remembering that God takes care of us, just like a shepherd takes care of sheep.

Surrender doesn't mean giving up - it means trusting that God is strong enough to help you. When we try to hold onto everything, it can make our hearts feel tight and heavy. But when we open our hands and give things to God, we make space for His peace, love, and courage to fill us. God cares about everything you're feeling, and He is always ready to help you.

**Think About It:**

What is something you are worried about or holding onto right now?

**Try This:**

Open your hands and say: "God, I give this to You."

**Prayer:**

*God, help me trust You with everything I'm feeling. Fill me with Your peace and love. Amen.*

# Opening Devotion



## Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026 | Aimee David



### Matthew 21:7-11 (NRSVUE)

<sup>7</sup> they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> 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!"

<sup>10</sup> When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" <sup>11</sup> The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

There is buzz in the air that you can feel. So much curiosity and excitement pouring out of this passage. The crowds of people, some already having heard about Jesus or having seen the miracles He performed, now lined the path to catch a glimpse of Him. Who could blame them? Those that had heard of Jesus wanted to see Him. The person who had grown beyond any legend through His teachings and miracles. The person who had raised Lazarus from the dead only days before was now among them. They crowded the path and laid down their cloaks and palm branches. Have you ever felt so moved by a person that you offered your coat? Not for them to wear, but to walk on? I read this passage and find myself speechless because the beautiful thing about this moment was that it was something so much more than a moment.

It is called the Triumphal Entry, and I wonder in my layperson's mind if this triumph has less to do

with the excitement and welcome of Jesus, and more to do with the conclusion of this week. It was triumphant because it fulfilled the scripture. It was triumphant because it was the beginning of the greatest gift ever given. It was triumphant because even with the knowledge of what would come in the days ahead, Jesus sat upon that donkey and let the crowds welcome Him just as He knew they would turn on Him in mere days. It was triumphant because it was the beginning. The beginning of God's eternal kingdom and eternal life.

Could you? Could you walk through victory knowing the devastation for yourself that lay ahead? Could you keep a clear mind with the glamour of the moment - recognition and awe - knowing that you would be "canceled" just a few days later? Jesus did. He asked for a donkey and prepared for His entrance, knowing the same city that welcomed Him with such zeal would days later tear Him apart.

What love.

That is triumphant to me. That is the beginning of the most precious gift ever given. It is the most triumphant entrance there will ever be.

#### Prayer:

*Dear Heavenly Father, Help me to shine with the light and love of Your Son. Help me to show my heart to all even when I know I am walking toward something that may be hard. Help me to remind others of Your love in all that I do and all that I say. Please grant me the honor of showing Your grace to everyone. Amen.*



**Palm Sunday – Jesus the King**  
**Read the Bible Story: Matthew 21:7–11**

**Kid Thought:**

The people were so excited to see Jesus that they laid down their coats and waved branches like a parade. They thought Jesus would be a powerful king who would fix everything right away. But Jesus came in a quiet and humble way, riding on a donkey instead of a big, strong horse. That shows us something important: Jesus is a different kind of king. He cares more about loving people than showing off power. Even though He knew hard things were coming, He still chose to walk into the city and love people anyway. That's what real love looks like - doing what is right, even when it's not easy.

**Think About It:**

Have you ever done something kind even when it was hard?

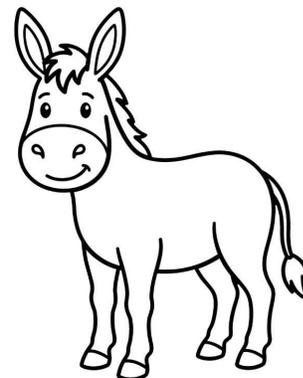
**Try This:**

Wave your hands like palm branches and say: "Hosanna! Jesus is our King!"

**Prayer:**

*Jesus, thank You for loving us even when things are hard. Help me love others like You do. Amen.*

# Palm Sunday





**Mark 11:12-14 & 20-25 (NRSVUE)**

<sup>12</sup> The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. <sup>13</sup> Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup> Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

<sup>20</sup> In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. <sup>21</sup> Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" <sup>22</sup> "Have faith in God," Jesus answered. <sup>23</sup> "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

<sup>25</sup> And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Many of us have had the experience at some time in our life of hearing the f-word and having some type of visceral response. Disgust, anger, fear. Maybe even for some of us, shame. I personally have experienced the churning of anger, disgust, fear, and shame when hearing it. That word some of us are probably tired of hearing. Forgiveness.

Contemplating Mark 11:12-25 led me down a path of unexpected reflection. Jesus cursed a fig tree (vs. 14) and as a result it withered. Withered right down to its roots! (vs. 20). At first, I thought, well good grief, it seems like Jesus had a hangry tantrum. How am I supposed to write about this? However, as I read the words in verses 22-24, a truth for me began to emerge. Christ gives a powerful and very realistic image of what happens when I don't live in faith. I look upon the withered fig tree as I have seen myself many times in my own life. Times when my faith in God has faded, so too have I. My mind, my body, my spirit. Weakened, depleted, withered.

In verses 22 and 24, Jesus tells me to have faith in God, to trust in God. That whatever I ask for in prayer, if I believe that I have received it, it will be mine. The imagery here, of visualizing my needs met, asking them to be met, and trusting it will come to pass, is serene.

That mountain in verse 23 that Jesus is referring to - those are my troubles. Not the little ones, the big ones. Those troubles that when shouldering them, feel like they could crush me into the ground with their weight - and He says I can just toss them into the sea when I really surrender to the power of faith and trust God to care for me (vs. 23). The kind of care that meets my needs. He does that.

Then, in verse 25, Jesus adds one more thing: By the way, while you're petitioning for your own needs, make sure to ask for forgiveness for those who have transgressed against you.

Violation. Forgive. Betrayal. Forgive. Abandonment. Forgive.

He's wrapping up His lesson by highlighting my greatest need of all: To forgive. That's the most immense mountain that I have shouldered. Frankly, it's been an entire mountain range.

So, for me, forgiveness and faith are one and the same. Practicing it and navigating all the visceral unwanted emotions that come with it, are necessary to prevent my withering. A practice that I often find difficult but so much easier than carrying around my mountains. And I don't have to. That's what Jesus did for me when He carried that cross.

**Prayer:**

*Heavenly Father, I pray forgiveness for those who have committed harm against me. You know my heart. You know my struggles. When I cannot give the grace or possess the desire to truly forgive, please place upon my heart the desire to forgive. Please endow me with the gift of forgiving myself for the ways in which I have hurt others with my selfishness and obliviousness. I pray for peace and grace for those who need it most. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*



**Monday – Faith & Forgiveness**

**Read the Bible Story: Mark 11:12–25**

**Kid Thought:**

When Jesus talked about the fig tree, He was helping people understand what happens when we don't trust God. A tree without fruit isn't growing the way it should, just like our hearts can feel empty when we forget to trust God. But Jesus also reminds us that faith is powerful - when we trust God, it's like we are growing strong roots. And when we forgive others, we are letting go of heavy feelings that can weigh us down. Holding onto anger is like carrying a heavy backpack everywhere, but forgiveness helps us set it down. God wants our hearts to be full of faith, trust, and love.

**Think About It:**

Is there someone you need to forgive?

**Try This:**

Pretend to throw a big "worry mountain" into the sea. Say, "God, I trust You!"

**Prayer:**

*God, help me trust You and forgive others, even when it's hard. Amen.*

# Monday of Holy Week





### Matthew 22:28-32 (NRSVUE)

<sup>28</sup> *In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.*

<sup>29</sup> *Jesus answered them, "You are wrong because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. <sup>30</sup> For in the resurrection people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels of God in heaven. <sup>31</sup> And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, <sup>32</sup> 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead but of the living."*

During the Lenten season, many of us reflect and freshly commit to our relationship with God. One tradition that has taken place for the last year or two, is for our staff to each write a page for our Easter Devotional. Recently, Pastor Thomas passed around a sheet for our staff to choose which day of Holy Week we'd like to write about. Without really thinking, I signed my name on the Tuesday slot. The Tuesday slot! What was I thinking? I guess I hadn't ever really thought about what Jesus' day looked like on the Tuesday of Holy Week. Have you? I usually focus on the Triumphal Entry or Jesus overturning the tables of the money changers. Then I sort of jump ahead to the Last Supper.

But as I began reading the passages Pastor Thomas had shared for Tuesday, I prayed that God had given me Tuesday so that I could not just write a page for the devotional, but also be reminded of whatever God may want to remind me in the process.

For sure, by Tuesday, Jesus had been celebrated by the people as He rode into Jerusalem. He had overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He had also healed the blind and lame. The Chief priests and elders of the people were suspicious and starting to realize that Jesus was like no one they had met before. They were wondering what authority Jesus had, to do all that He was doing and teaching. Jesus then began sharing parables with the priests and

elders. He used the parables to show them why their thinking was off. One of the parables was "The Parable of the Two Sons."

*Matthew 21:28-32: "What do you think? A man had two sons, he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not', but later he changed his mind and went. The Father went to the second son and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?' The priests and elders said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him."*

The first part of this parable of the man with two sons brought some conviction for me. If I'm being honest, there are days that I may be like the son who said he would do what his father asked, but he ended up not taking the time. On those days, I may have great intent and desire to be close to God, but I allow other things, unimportant things, to get in my way of spending time with my Heavenly Father. On other days, the best of days, I'm like the first son, and connecting with God several times a day.

In reading more about this parable, Jesus raises a simple point. **Actively** following God takes more of an effort than just **claiming** to follow Him. Let's all commit to one another that we **WILL** make a promise to follow Him and be in relationship with Him every single day! Watch for the ways you feel His presence in your life!

#### Prayer:

*Dear God, thank You for Your scripture that teaches us and directs our paths. Please help us to take time in Your presence each and every day, learning how to be more like You. Help us to see Your plans for us. Thank You for sending Jesus to teach us Your ways. We love You, Lord. Amen.*



Tuesday – Doing What We Say

Read the Bible Story: Matthew 21:28–32

**Kid Thought:**

In Jesus' story, one son said the right thing but didn't follow through, while the other didn't sound very nice at first but ended up doing the right thing. This teaches us that God cares about our actions, not just our words. Sometimes it's easy to say "I will help" or "I will pray," but then we get distracted or forget. God wants us to be people who follow through - who actually do the good things we say we will do. Even if we mess up at first, we can always choose to turn around and do what is right. God loves when we try again.

**Think About It:**

Do you follow through when you say you will do something?

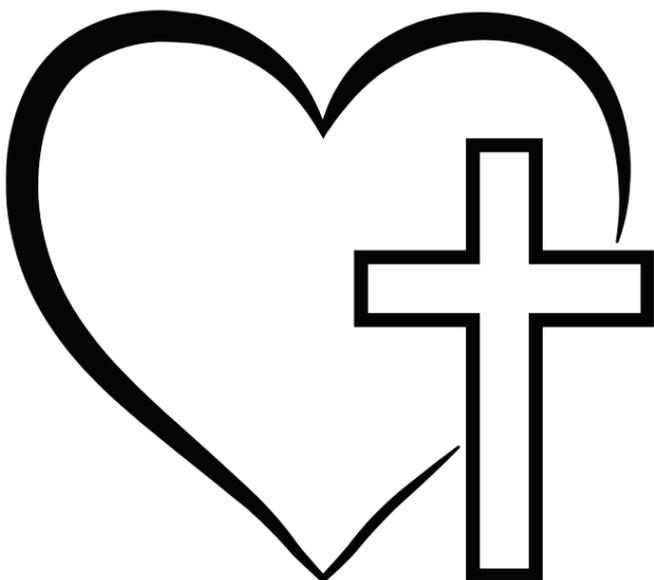
**Try This:**

Today, pick one thing you say you'll do - and actually do it!

**Prayer:**

*God, help me not just say the right things, but do them too. Amen.*

# Tuesday of Holy Week





## Matthew 23 & 24; Mark 13; Luke 21 (NRSVUE)

For me, Holy Week is a time of deep personal reflection. It is an opportunity to sit with the emotions of Jesus' final days, and to look for compassion and love for myself and those around me. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke each share what is known as The Olivet Discourse. In each of their accounts Jesus admonishes scribes and pharisees, foretells of the destruction of Jerusalem, and implores His disciples to keep watch. There could be many ways to read these chapters, so I'd like to share a few reflections that came up for me.

Much of these accounts replay Jesus' talk of the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem. In the NRSVUE there's use of a lot of eschatological or apocalyptic language. As Jesus is facing His death, these words ring as a plea to remember that what Jesus has taught will remain as things around us crumble. When I think about Jesus' humanity, how the world was closing in on Him, and human death was looming, I think about what this crumbling of temples and altars and things looks like in my life – and then I ask "what will endure?" Even in things that bring me joy there are highs and lows, successes and failures, there is opportunity and let down. In all of this Jesus offers a word of protection: "But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls" (Luke 21:18-19).

I'm reminded in the opening of Luke 21 of a pivotal moment in my faith life. Luke 21:1-4 tells the story of a poor woman giving a gift of two copper coins alongside the wealthy offering their

gifts. Jesus praises the widow for her generosity, even when it meant giving all she had. When I was in high school, I was on a mission trip to Guatemala. On the final day of the trip, we attended a small worship service at a local chapel. The church took an offering, passing around felt bags. It was the last day of the trip, and I had one quetzal (Guatemalan currency) in my pocket. As the bag came to me, I felt moved to give my last quetzal...but I didn't. I put it back in my pocket, thinking I might need or – or even just want it. I kept that quetzal with me for quite some time after, and that moment shaped the way I began to see the world. I was presented an opportunity to be generous, and even in my abundance, I could not do so. That moment instilled in me a new desire to strive to be generous – with my gifts, time, and talents. I am by no means perfect, but I think of that story often.

As I reflect on this Olivet Discourse, I see these words as more encouragement for personal growth – just like that moment in the Guatemalan pew. As in Matthew 23, Jesus implores His disciples to strive to be generous, humble, and genuine. As the things around me might crumble and fall in big or small ways, I'm encouraged to remember what will endure: Christ's unending love and protection over me. A love that will be demonstrated in the most miraculous way in only a few days.

### Prayer:

*Jesus, thank You for loving us when things around us crumble and fall. Help us to look for You in those moments, and to seek to live generously, with humility, charity, and love for ourselves and one another. Amen.*



**Wednesday – What Lasts Forever**

**Read the Bible Story: Luke 21**

**Kid Thought:**

Jesus talked about how some things in life won't last forever - like buildings, plans, or even things we enjoy. That can feel a little scary, but He also gives us hope. He reminds us that God's love will never go away. No matter what changes in your life - friends, school, or hard situations - God stays the same. His love is steady and strong, like something you can always hold onto. When everything else feels shaky, we can remember that Jesus is always with us, and that is something that will never change.

**Think About It:**

What is something that changes? What is something that never changes?

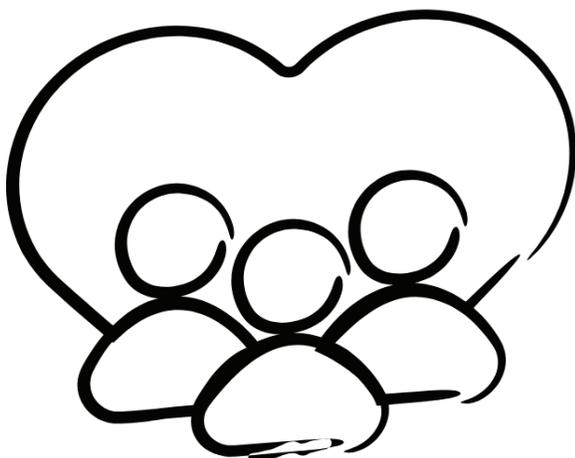
**Try This:**

Draw a heart and write inside: "God's love never ends."

**Prayer:**

*Jesus, thank You that Your love never changes. Help me trust You always. Amen.*

# Wednesday of Holy Week





## Matthew 26:36-46 (NLT)

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." <sup>37</sup> He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. <sup>38</sup> He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

<sup>39</sup> He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? <sup>41</sup> Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!"

<sup>42</sup> Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." <sup>43</sup> When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open.

<sup>44</sup> So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. <sup>45</sup> Then he came to the disciples and said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup> Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!"

There are times in our lives where we feel like we continually come back to God with the same requests. If you are like me, not only are you struggling with whatever the present circumstances are, you may also be frustrated with yourself at your persistent requests. We hear all the time "trust God, trust His timing, don't lose hope." However, we all know the crippling effect of anxiety and fear and we are utterly aware of our humanity. Jesus, in this passage, though fully God and knowing what was

to come, chose in this moment to still persistently present His request to His Father. This wasn't a lack of trust; I believe it was an example of true relationship. Jesus didn't shy away from His emotions, and He didn't shy away from sharing them with His father. In His time of where His soul was "crushed with grief to the point of death" and as He was "anguished and distressed" He didn't hold back from God until He had it all put together. He prayed to God like a child would talk/cry to a loving parent. The persistence in His request reminds us of the space that God holds for us all in our difficult moments.

God holds space for you. He creates that space with love and grace and welcomes you in regardless of how many times you've asked or will continue to ask. He's not offended by your real and raw emotions – in fact, He wants to hear you share your emotions. Just like a parent comforts a child even when the circumstances or situation can't change, God will still hold you close and fully listen to your cries. So, wherever your heart may be in this moment, present your full and emotion-filled requests to God over and over and over again trusting that He will listen and won't get tired of you.

### Prayer:

*God, we thank You for hearing us and for not requiring us to have it all together when we come to You with our requests. We know there are times in our lives when we'll sound like a broken record, but we're grateful that your love is constant and always for us. When circumstances appear to be grim and we're full of fear of what's to come, give us that peace that is bigger than anything we can understand and help us to lean into You and Your grace. It's in Jesus' name we pray. AMEN.*



**Thursday – Talking to God**

**Read the Bible Story: Matthew 26:36–46**

**Kid Thought:**

Jesus felt really sad and scared in the garden. He knew something hard was about to happen, and He didn't hide those feelings. Instead, He talked honestly with God - more than once. This shows us that we don't have to pretend to be okay when we pray. We can tell God when we're scared, upset, confused, or even frustrated. God isn't waiting for us to have the perfect words - He just wants us to come to Him. Just like a loving parent listens to their child, God listens to you every time you pray, no matter how many times you say the same thing.

**Think About It:**

What is something you want to tell God today?

**Try This:**

Whisper a prayer to God, just like talking to a loving parent.

**Prayer:**

*God, thank You for listening to me. Help me come to You with everything I feel. Amen.*



# Maundy Thursday



## Good Friday

April 3, 2026 | Mindy Davidson



Chosen Scriptures: Jesus' Last Words

### Reflection:

Take a moment and reflect on the last words you've spoken.

What if the words you said to a loved one today ended up being your last?

What would your last words to the world be recorded as? What would they mean?

Granted, our last words likely will not hold the significance of Jesus'. There are many interpretations of Jesus' last words. Scripture records them in seven places throughout the Bible.

1 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

Jesus prays for the forgiveness of His executioners.

2 "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

Jesus makes a promise to a fellow condemned.

3 "Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother." John 19:26-27

Jesus expresses His love for His mother, as well as asking His cousin, John, to watch over her.

The first three prayers, Jesus focuses on other's needs. In the last four prayers, Jesus focuses on Himself.

4 "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34

Jesus expresses His spiritual anguish.

5 "I thirst." John 19:28

Jesus expresses His physical thirst.

6 "It is finished." John 19:30

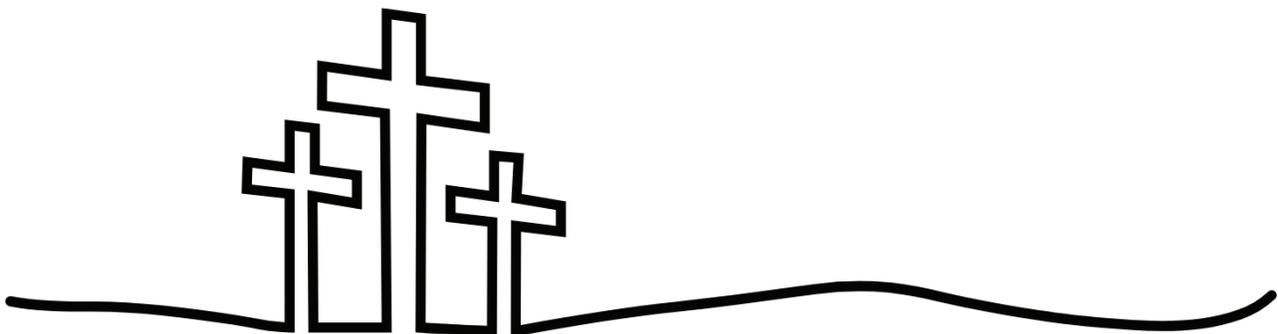
Jesus acknowledges His life is ending, but also expresses His purpose on earth is being fulfilled.

7 "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." Luke 23:46

Jesus' last words, after many hours nailed to the cross, He commits His spirit of life, as a flesh and blood man, back to God.

### Prayer:

*Blessed Lord, thank You for what we may learn from Jesus' last words. Help us to remember to pray for others, to put their needs before our own. Remind us to pray for our own needs, to ask for help when we need it. Help us to cherish our spirit of life granted only through the gift of Your Son. Lord we are grateful for the ultimate outcome of Good Friday, the joy of celebrating Jesus' resurrection on Easter! Amen!*





**Good Friday – Jesus’ Love**

Read the Bible Verses from the previous page.

**Kid Thought:**

Even while Jesus was hurting on the cross, He was still thinking about other people. He forgave those who hurt Him, took care of His mother, and showed love until the very end. That is incredible love - loving people even when they are not being kind. Jesus didn't just say He loved us - He showed it in the biggest way possible. This reminds us that love isn't always easy, but it is always powerful. When we choose to forgive, help, and care for others, we are showing a little bit of Jesus' love to the world.

**Think About It:**

How can you show love to someone today?

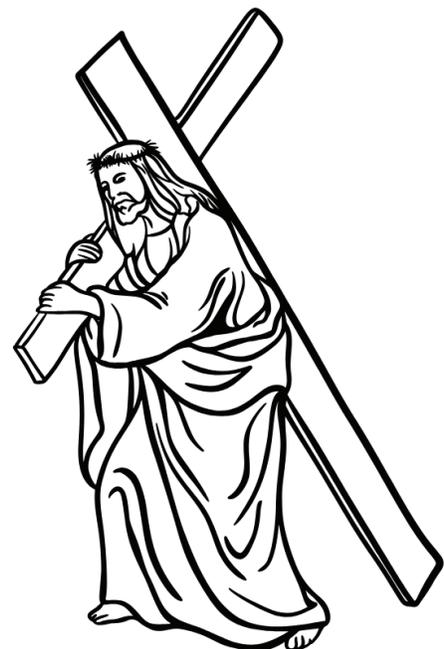
**Try This:**

Do one kind thing for someone—without being asked.

**Prayer:**

*Jesus, thank You for loving me so much. Help me love others like You. Amen.*

# Good Friday



## Saturday of Holy Week

April 4, 2026 | Mike Orr



### Matthew 27:57-61; John 19:38-42 (CEB) (Burial of Jesus, Guards at Tomb, & Sabbath)

*Matthew 27: <sup>57</sup> That evening a man named Joseph came. He was a rich man from Arimathea who had become a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> He came to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate gave him permission to take it. <sup>59</sup> Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, <sup>60</sup> and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had carved out of the rock. After he rolled a large stone at the door of the tomb, he went away. <sup>61</sup> Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting in front of the tomb.*

*John 19: <sup>38</sup> After this Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus. Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one because he feared the Jewish authorities. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and took the body away. <sup>39</sup> Nicodemus, the one who at first had come to Jesus at night, was there too. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloe, nearly seventy-five pounds in all. <sup>40</sup> Following Jewish burial customs, they took Jesus' body and wrapped it, with the spices, in linen cloths. <sup>41</sup> There was a garden in the place where Jesus was crucified, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. <sup>42</sup> Because it was the Jewish Preparation Day and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus in it.*

Falling action. Denouement. This part of the story feels like the tidying of details after the big climax of the crucifixion. But it's not. It's a short rest before the biggest event in human history. If you ask a bunch of

people how many disciples Jesus had, I think the most common answer would be twelve. But we'd leave out Joseph of Arimathea. He shows up in all four gospels, and both Matthew and John call him a disciple of Jesus. I wonder how many others there were that we never hear about.

Joseph (or Joseph and Nicodemus in John's account) prepares Jesus' body for burial. This was part of Jewish custom. They place Him in a tomb. Some details differ in the four gospels, but all agree that a large stone was placed in front of the tomb. It feels like a punctuation mark. An ending.

Is there something in your life that feels like an ending right now? Something that feels like the closing of a final chapter? There are times in every person's life that feel that way, like there's no way to move forward after this moment. It's over.

But it's not.

What if this moment in your life isn't the end of a chapter? What if it's only the beginning? What if God has new life in store for you? What if this is just a rest? What if this is just Saturday, but Sunday is coming...

**Prayer:** *God, when everything feels dark and the stone blocking me in is way too big for me to move, remind me that You are the one who rolls stones away, You are the one who brings new life, You are the one who makes beginnings out of what feel like endings. Amen.*

# Sunday is coming...



**Saturday – Waiting**

**Read the Bible Story: Matthew 27:57-61 and John 19:38-42**

**Kid Thought:**

Saturday was a quiet and confusing day. Jesus' friends were probably sad, scared, and unsure about what would happen next. It may have felt like everything was over. Sometimes we have days like that too - when we feel stuck, sad, or like nothing is happening. But even when it feels like nothing is going on, God is still at work. Saturday reminds us that waiting is not the end of the story. Just because we can't see what God is doing doesn't mean He isn't doing something amazing behind the scenes.

**Think About It:**

Have you ever had to wait for something good?

**Try This:**

Sit quietly for one minute and remember: God is with you, even in the quiet.

**Prayer:**

*God, help me trust You, even when I have to wait. Amen.*

# Saturday of Holy Week



# Easter Sunday

April 5, 2026 | Pastor Don Bird



## Romans 8:17 (The Message)

*This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us an unbelievable inheritance!*

I'm reminded of a scene in the movie *The Hunger Games*. There is an exchange between President Snow, who fears that Katniss Everdeen's victory at the games will bring about a revolution in far-flung districts, and the game-master Seneca Crane, the one responsible to make the Games serve the needs of the oppressive empire.

President Snow says, "Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. A spark is fine, as long as it's contained." Seneca Crane asks: "So?" and Snow replies, "So, CONTAIN it."

For a brief time, hope had been contained for the disciples. There are times it is contained for us as well. Holed up behind the big rock of fear and despair. But Easter surprises us and reminds us that hope is not to be contained. It is to be unleashed!

I'm not talking about the sentimental, misleading hope that politicians throw around, but the hope that makes us human, fuels the imagination, and gives us the vision to see the world, not as it is, but as God created the world to be.

God gives us a vision for a world that is whole. When we live without hope, we only see the world in its brokenness and we fail to view the world as God intends it to be. When we walk with hope... when we walk in hope...we begin to embody resurrection and our lives point to a hope that brings wholeness to our lives, our communities, and our world.

Hope is not the end result of our lives. It is not something we try to achieve. It is not empty optimism. It is the essence of our very being. It is the breath we breathe. It gives us new eyes with which to see the world. It helps us to see beyond the darkness, the conflict, the violence, the brokenness, the vitriol, the pain - not to dismiss it or pretend it isn't as bad as it seems - but to walk with it and speak hope and life into those places and spaces.

Every time we live in hope; every time we love; every moment we offer mercy and grace; every time joy bursts out of us; every time we speak-up for those with no voice; every time we find beauty in life; resurrection happens and we can call out to God, "What's next, Papa?" Happy Easter!

### Prayer:

*God of Hope, May the same power that rose Jesus from the grave be in me as I re-commit myself to walking in Your Way and being the hope You desire to see in the world. Amen.*

**HAPPY EASTER**



**Easter Sunday – Jesus is Alive!**  
**Read the Bible Story: Romans 8:17**

**Kid Thought:**

Easter is the happiest day because it shows us that Jesus is alive! The sadness of Friday and the quiet of Saturday didn't win - God's love did. This means that hope is stronger than fear, and life is stronger than death. Because Jesus is alive, we can have joy, courage, and hope no matter what is happening around us. Easter reminds us that God can bring new life out of anything - even things that seem impossible. That's why we celebrate - because Jesus changes everything!

**Think About It:**

What makes you feel hopeful?

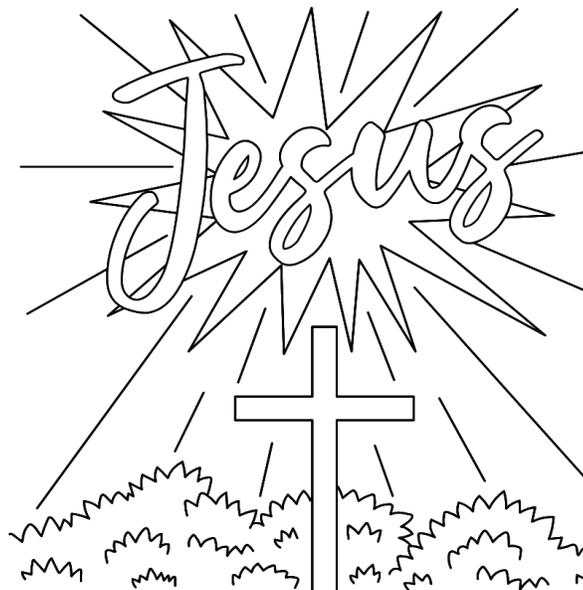
**Try This:**

Shout: "Jesus is alive!" and celebrate!

**Prayer:**

*Jesus, thank You for new life and hope. Help me share Your joy with everyone. Amen.*

# Easter Sunday



## Eight Days after the Resurrection

April 6, 2026 | Pastor Thomas Cross

### John 20:26-29 (NASB)

<sup>26</sup> Eight days later His disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be to you." <sup>27</sup> Then He \*said to Thomas, "Place your finger here, and see My hands; and take your hand and put it into My side; and do not continue in disbelief, but be a believer." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you now believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

You may wonder why I am writing this extra devotion. My reason is to consider my namesake, Thomas, and his response. He was not present on Sunday night, the day of resurrection, when Jesus appeared to the ten apostles. When they told Thomas, "We have seen the Lord," Thomas replied that he would wait for the firm evidence of seeing the scars on Jesus' body before he reached any conclusions.

For this response, Thomas has often been dubbed "doubting Thomas." I prefer to term him the first Missourian. Basically, he told his friends, "Show me; then I will believe." He wasn't doubting Jesus so much as doubting his friends. He may have thought they were delusional, or he may have been waiting for more data.

When John wrote his Gospel almost two generations later, and he was the only apostle left alive, the early church struggled with a dilemma: How do we believe in the testimony of people who are no longer alive? How do we transmit the faith to new generations when none of the original witnesses can produce any evidence to consider?

This story provides two clues. The first is the response of Jesus to Thomas. Jesus does not condemn him for insisting upon evidence. Instead, Jesus makes an effort to show up and meet him where he is. He begins with a blessing: "Peace be with you" (vs. 26). Jesus is not perturbed by Thomas; He greets him warmly and offers Thomas the opportunity to see His hands and side. John's

implicit message is this: The Living Christ still shows up and meets us where we are.

I have met so many people who have had tangible experiences of Christ's presence. They didn't always "see" Him, but they knew He was there. Some choose to remember and respond; others choose to ignore or forget. Our response doesn't change Christ's willingness to reach out to us and meet us where we are. The choice of what we do about it is ours.

The second clue is the final blessing Jesus offers: "Because you have seen Me, have you now believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." I believe that this saying became a mantra of the churches which John started. Future generations were not going to see the scars of Jesus, yet they could choose to step out in faith and trust Him. They would – and will – be blessed as they do so. So will you! This is an opportunity to try it out!

In the middle of this passage is an invitation from Jesus: "Do not continue in disbelief but be a believer." In other words, don't make up stories about Jesus being a fairy tale or a phantom of the apostles' imaginations. Don't try to explain the resurrection away as psychosis or a cleverly-devised story. Take the apostles' testimony seriously - and discover the Risen Christ for yourself. He is waiting to show you who He is and how much He loves you. He will come to you just as gently as He did to Thomas, bringing His peace with Him. You'll be blessed if you are open to what He shows you – and allow yourself to believe that Christ is alive.

### Prayer:

*Dear Jesus, we thank You for meeting us where we are, with all of our doubts and questions. You come to us with peace and help us to grow in our faith. Please help us to open our hearts to the wonder of Your resurrection so we can experience Your presence and love more deeply. Show Yourself to us in ways we can understand, and help us to thrive in relationship with You, so we can bless other people out of the overflow of Your grace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.*

**Bonus Day – Believe!**

**Read the Bible Story: John 20:26–29**

**Kid Thought:**

Thomas had a hard time believing that Jesus was alive because he hadn't seen Him yet. Sometimes we feel that way too—we have questions or doubts, and that's okay. When Jesus came to Thomas, He didn't get mad at him. He met him right where he was and helped him believe. That shows us that Jesus is patient and kind with us when we have questions. We don't have to have perfect faith—just a willing heart. Jesus meets us where we are and helps our faith grow step by step.

**Think About It:**

What questions do you have about God?

**Try This:**

Tell God your questions—He's not afraid of them!

**Prayer:**

*Jesus, help me believe and trust You, even when I have questions. Amen.*

# Eight Days after the Resurrection



HAPPY  
*Easter*



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