



Your Guide to Stations of the Cross April 6-10, 2020

William Wey, a British Christian, visited the Holy Land in the mid 1500s and called the stops on his pilgrimage “stations.” **The stations of the cross were developed as a way to help people who could not travel to Jerusalem understand and connect with the story of Jesus’ last days on earth.** During this season of social distancing, many of us are unable to travel within our community, let alone to the Holy Land so the North Texas Conference has partnered with Discipleship Ministries, McKendree UMC in Nashville, Tennessee and with the artist Scott Erickson to offer this experience.

We are blessed to be connected to the body of believers! There are two ways for the people who live in your household to use these stations as we walk through this Holy Week.

What to do: You can travel all 12 stations in one day or maybe travel two stations each day (Monday-Saturday) this week. Read the scripture passages. Spend some time reflecting on and talking about the devotional material. If desired, point your phone camera at the QR code on this guide for a more interactive experience (no special app needed) . Each station contains a ‘Holy Week Action Step’ for you to consider and act upon in the days leading up to Easter.

MUMCKids & families: Some stations will include options of reflection questions and/or activities that are more accessible for children in 5th grade and below

Stay at home option: You can create 12 stations in areas of your home using a candle, cross or other items. Print this guide& travel together between stations or spending time being still as you reflect on Jesus’ journey.

Stay in your car option: Melissa UMC has prepared 12 stations around our community. Print this guide & take it with you! Drive to the address listed for station 1. **Remain in your car while you view the artwork.**

1. 3515 Camden Drive, Melissa (Liberty)
2. 3511 Washington Drive, Melissa (Liberty)
3. 4305 Ridgewood Rd, Melissa (North Creek)
4. 3618 Spring Run Ln, Melissa (Hunters Creek)
5. 2804 Berry View Ct, Melissa (Berry Farms)
6. 206 Covey Lane, McKinney (Dove Creek)
7. 1104 Haskell Dr (Villages of Melissa)
8. 1102 Chambers Ln, Melissa (Villages)
9. 382 Elk Trail, Melissa (Hunters Ridge)
10. 2912 Pioneer Dr, Melissa (Liberty)
11. 2806 Madison Dr, Melissa (Liberty)
12. 2104 E Graves Street, Melissa (Liberty)

1. JESUS IS TEMPTED

“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:38-39).

Jesus calls together his friends in his most desperate time of prayer. What drives you to such a desperate time of prayer? With whom could you pray in desperate times?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Call your friends together virtually through social media for a time of prayer.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Have you ever felt upset, frustrated or overwhelmed? What are some things you can do to help you feel better? How does God help in those times? How can you invite God into your life when you are feeling sad?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Do something nice for someone that you were angry at this week.



2. JESUS IS BETRAYED

“Friend, do what you came to do” (Matthew 26:50).

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me” (Matthew 26:20-21 NIV).

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests¹⁵ and said, “What will you give me if I betray him to you?” They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him (Matthew 26:14-16 NRSV).

The Son of God was betrayed by a friend for thirty pieces of silver. What does it feel like to be betrayed? What is the cost of doing what we know has to be done? What did it cost Jesus, God in flesh, to submit to betrayal at the hands of a friend? What was the cost of betrayal to Judas?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Find thirty coins in your home and send them, or any monetary donation, to an organization that helps people who are innocent victims in your community that might feel betrayed by society. It could be an organization that helps victims of abuse, poverty, racism, or other forms of discrimination.

Option for MUMCKids & families: One of Jesus’ best friends did something that a friend would never do. Have you ever been hurt by a friend? How did that make you feel? The hard thing to do in those moments is to still show that person love. How can you show love to someone who isn’t kind to you?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Make a card and send it to a friend saying that you miss them.



3. JESUS IS CONDEMNED

“Shall I crucify your king?” Pilate asked. “We have no king but Caesar,” the chief priests answered (John 19:15 NIV).

“But this is your hour - when darkness reigns” (Luke 22:53 NIV).

Jesus is calm in the face of difficult times. Jesus is calm in the midst of the storm. How do you stay calm “when darkness reigns” and you face tough situations? Do you see Jesus as king? What does the image tell you about whether the chief priests accepted the kingship of Jesus?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Light a candle and pray for the light of Christ to bring you peace in dark times.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Have you ever felt angry? What made you mad? What did you do about it? Jesus lives a life of peace and love, even when people around him are angry. What are some things that you do to calm down when you are angry? How can you ask God to help you?

- ❖ Use the same action step as above! It works for everyone.

4. JESUS IS MOCKED

“But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?” (John 18:23 NIV)

They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said (Matthew 27:28-29, NIV).

These soldiers bully Jesus. Possibly, bullying was their common response to Jewish prisoners. Imagine the Son of God being bullied by others. How does it feel to be bullied? Share times when you were bullied for your beliefs.

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Write a letter or use social media to share words of kindness and encouragement with someone who has been bullied.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Have you ever been bullied or has anyone ever made fun of you? How did that make you feel? Did this happen because of something you did or did you feel like there was not a reason? A lot of people in our world are bullied for things they can’t control like the color of their skin, the amount of money they have, or even the way they talk or dress. How would you feel if that happened to you? Jesus loves EVERYONE and can help when we are bullied because He knows what it feels like.

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Draw a picture of you playing with someone who is different than you.



5. JESUS IS GIVEN HIS CROSS

The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived (Numbers 21:8-9 NIV).

“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him” (John 3:14-15 NIV).

How is Jesus like the bronze snake that Moses lifted up in the desert? This image reminds us of the caduceus, which is a symbol for medicine that has a snake wrapped around a staff. What kind of healing can Jesus offer us from the cross?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Pray for those in the medical field who are helping those who are sick.

Option for MUMCKids & families: What does it mean to be “lifted up”? When Moses was in the desert the snake was a sign that God would continue to heal and love his people. How is Jesus like that symbol? What healing and love can we get from the cross?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Make a card and send it to someone who works in a doctor’s office or hospital to thank them for everything they do to help keep us safe and healthy.



6. JESUS FALLS

“Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds” (John 12:24 NIV).

This station, although not found in scripture, is traditionally in three stations. It symbolizes his humanity and his ever-decreasing strength as he moves towards his public death. Imagine Jesus experiencing weakness and distress in a public setting with nowhere to hide. Imagine the exhaustion of the last twenty-four hours of his life. How can you tell when you are exhausted?



How does this image compare with John 15, where we read that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches? Like leaves falling from a branch, do we feel that we are more disconnected from God or one another during this time? Like falling leaves, what have we had to let go of in the past few weeks? How do we feel about that?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Rest and do something that can help your physical, emotional, or spiritual exhaustion.

Option for MUMCKids & families: What is it like to be really, really tired? When you are tired, do you want to talk to lots of people, or help your parents with housework? When you are tired, are you kind and gentle with people? Even in his weakest moment, Jesus was still putting others first and thinking about their needs.

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Do something extra nice for the people in your family.

7. SIMON CARRIES JESUS' CROSS

Simon the Cyrene carries his cross: As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus (Luke 23:26, NIV).

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24 ESV).

Imagine being pulled from the crowd and carrying this man's device of death. What is it like to walk alongside Jesus in this? Who needs you to walk alongside them as they face difficult times? Like the image of the branch, how can God use you to help people stay connected to God and others?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Offer to help someone with something.

Option for MUMCKids & families: What do you do when you see someone else is having a hard time with something? Do you try to help, ask for help from someone else, or ignore the problem? How can you have a heart and eyes and ears like God to help others in need?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Have table talk about some things that are hard for you all individually and what helps you get through it.



8. JESUS IS STRIPPED

"If they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?" (Luke 23:31, CEB)

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots (Luke 23:34 NIV).

Romans crucified criminals naked. Just as bark covers a tree to protect it, clothes cover us up. When clothes are removed, it can make us feel vulnerable. What makes you feel vulnerable? What don't we want others to see about us?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Write down things that make you feel vulnerable and share those things with God in prayer.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Jesus was embarrassed on the cross in front of a lot of people. What makes you embarrassed? Is it better or worse if lots of people see it?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Read a story about someone who got embarrassed. Here are some e-book links to make things easy for you!

- <http://www.magickeys.com/books/gingerbread/index.html>
- https://www.amazon.com/Dragons-Breath-Children-Books-Health-ebook/dp/B071YPJFJJ/ref=zg_bs_155009011_f_5?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=MMYAN36QHIFEVENYTA07
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/pages/library-page> (Note: This site requires you to make an account but there are lots of great books here!)



9. JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

At about three Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," which means, "My God, my God, why have you left me?" (Matthew 27:46 CEB).

"When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me" (John 8:28 NIV).

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:32 NIV).

So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25 NASB)

The long physical pain of crucifixion was excruciating. What does the word excruciating mean? The word "excruciating" is derived from crucifixion. How does that change your understanding of the word "excruciating"?

In American Sign Language, the sign for "Jesus" is made by touching the palms of your hands as a reminder of the nails in Jesus' hands. How important are nails to understanding who Jesus is and what Jesus came to do?

Scars are a sign that healing has occurred in the body. Even though Jesus rose from the dead, the scars from the nails were still on his hands. Do you have any scars? How are they a sign of your healing?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Find a nail around the house if you have one, or draw a picture of a nail and hold it in your hand as you remember the excruciating pain Jesus experienced to bring healing to all of us.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Jesus was punished in his body. It was a terrible, harsh punishment. He did this so that we would know about God's love, healing, and salvation for all people. How does Jesus' death make you feel?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Do wall sits, planks, and burpees until you simply can't anymore, and then think about how Jesus still said yes to God, even though His body was hurt.



10. JESUS DIES

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13 NIV).

“It is finished” (John 19:30 NIV).

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46 NIV).

Jesus died. He died. Our greatest fear is death. The only way for Jesus to overcome death was to go through it. His physical body stopped working. His friends watched him die. How are we affected by the death of Jesus and the death of others we know? How has our way of life died? How has our social circle died? What in this story gives us hope because this is not the last station? Does our story end in death?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Give yourself the gift of time and space to grieve what cannot be in this special Holy Week. How has the season of Easter been special to you in years past? What do you remember or wish could be for Easter 2020?

Option for MUMCKids & families: When things end, it is hard for us to have hope. We may be stuck inside, unable to go to school, unable to play with friends, but there is still hope. What gives you hope when things do not feel normal?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Find a way to create some of your favorite Easter church traditions: palms, candles, lilies, butterflies, etc. at home. How can you decorate your home to be ready for Easter?



11. JESUS IS BURIED

“When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial” (Matthew 26:12 NIV).

Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. ⁵⁴It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment (Luke 23:50-56 NIV).

His friends buried Jesus. Have you ever buried a loved one? Imagine doing that with the one you believed was going to change the world and bring ultimate justice and healing. Like a rose, how is grief both beautiful like the petals of a rose and painful like the thorns?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Find something that looks like it is no longer good to be used for anything and use it as a base to create something beautiful.

Option for MUMCKids & families: Have you ever broken something so that it didn’t seem like it could be fixed? We often just “buy a new one” in our lives, but God loves to fix broken things. How has God made you a better person, and how are you still broken?

- ❖ Use the same action step as above! It works for everyone.



12. JESUS RISES

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays his life down for the sheep” (John 10:11 NIV).

“Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead” (Matthew 17:9 NIV).

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit (Isaiah 11:1 NIV).

“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades” (Revelation 1:17-18, NIV).

Consider the other side of our greatest fear. Jesus shows us that there is something beyond death. The leaves are not falling from the tree anymore; they are connected again. The shoot has come up from the stump. How does Jesus’ resurrection help us connect to God and one another? Look at the shepherd’s crook in the image. How does Jesus take care of us like a shepherd? How can we shepherd and take care of one another?

The disciples shared the story of Jesus after his resurrection.

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: How can you share the good news of Easter with someone this year?

Option for MUMCKids & families: Jesus’ resurrection is the end of one story, but the beginning of another, our story. Because the disciples shared the story of Jesus, we are here with faith today. How can you be like the disciples and share the story of God?

- ❖ Holy Week Action Step: Draw or write a story of what would happen if Jesus came to walk on your street or in your yard.



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