



Richard Bavin- The Empty Tomb from the Methodist Modern Art Collection, © TMCP, used with permission. www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

A Journey through Holy Week

**Katy Hansford
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Welcome to our prayer resources for Holy Week and Easter, which will help us to reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross, his death and his resurrection.

The original intention was to set up prayer stations in the church but because of the building being closed, the stations have been adapted as a resource which can be used for prayer and reflection at home.

Accompanying this guidance leaflet is an at home prayer pack which will be delivered to the homes of our older and vulnerable members. If you have not received a prayer pack but would like one, please e mail katy.hansford@talktalk.net – spare packs will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

This leaflet provides some short reflections and suggestions about how you might like to engage with the different elements of the Easter story. However, this is YOUR time with God – just use the time for quiet reflection if you prefer.

The images used are from the Methodist Modern Art Collection - a fantastic resource. You can view the pictures (and the full collection) online in you prefer at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/index-of-works>

We hope you will be blessed by these resources at this challenging time. If you could let me have some feedback via e mail after you have used them, it would be much appreciated

With Every Blessing,

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A Prayer for a Pandemic (from the Corrymeela community)

God of the fire and God of the wind,
God of the silent sound,
when you speak to us,
you do so in ways we may not expect
but cannot ignore.
Allow us in this time of frantic noise
and eerie stillness
to listen again to the wind
and the earth,
to the gentle whisper of you
calling our name.
And may we hear in your voice
words of love and hope,
the good news of your presence with us still.

Amen.

Ready, Steady, Go

Prayer Labyrinth

You might want to start your journey with the labyrinth in your resource pack.

These are from the Labyrinth Society www.labyrinthociety.org/download-a-labyrinth

Classical Labyrinth – original drawing by Jeff Saward. Final graphic by Vicki Keiser.

Chartes Labyrinth – original drawing by Robert Ferre. Final graphic by Vicki Keiser.

Trace the labyrinth with your finger as you reflect on Jesus' journey to the Cross.
You can colour and decorate your labyrinth if you want to.

Prayer Station 1: Palm Sunday

Bible Reading: Matthew 21:6-11 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷ they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd^l spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ 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!'

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?'

¹¹ The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'



Christ enters Jerusalem by Sadao Watanabe (1913-1996) from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

In this print, most of the important elements of the Biblical tradition are present, although the onlookers are phlegmatic rather than enthusiastic. Jesus, largely in green, is at the centre riding the donkey over ground covered with palm branches, discarded robes and flower heads. Up in a spindly tree, is a figure who may be Zacchaeus, who climbed a tree to see Jesus. Luke records this at Jericho, but it is often included in the Entry into Jerusalem.

Commentary based on [***A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection.***](#)

Reflect:

Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey to cheering crowds waving palm leaves and shouting Hosanna. How quickly that crowd changed and turned against Jesus. Less than a week later those cries had changed to “crucify him”. The crown of a King became a crown of thorns.

Where are you in the crowd? What kind of follower of Jesus are you? What sort of follower would you like to be?

Give praise for who Jesus is and all he has done as we trace his journey to the cross.

To Do:

Hold your Palm Cross as you reflect on the story.

Think about who Jesus is to you? Write your thoughts down if you want to.

Resource Pack: A palm cross, pens, squares of coloured paper.

Prayer Station 2: Jesus Clears the Temple**Bible Reading: Matthew 21 12-14 NRSVA**

¹²⁻¹⁴ Jesus went straight to the Temple and threw out everyone who had set up shop, buying and selling. He kicked over the tables of loan sharks and the stalls of dove merchants. He quoted this text:

My house was designated a house of prayer;
You have made it a hangout for thieves.

Now there was room for the blind and crippled to get in. They came to Jesus and he healed them.

Reflect:

How can we reconcile the contrasting images of an angry Jesus and Jesus the healer? Jesus was righteously angry with the greedy money changers and merchants who were exploiting people who had come to the temple to worship. He was trying to get people to understand the holiness of God and his temple.

What does “A House of Prayer” means to you?

Is there anything you're angry about which you need to give to Jesus?

Pray for situations where there is disagreement and conflict – maybe within families, in our country, between countries.

To Do: Hold a feather as you pray for peace.

Resource Pack: A white feather

Prayer Station 3: Jesus is Anointed

Bible Reading: Matthew 26 6-13 (NRSVA)

⁶ Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. ⁸ But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, 'Why this waste? ⁹ For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor.' ¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, 'Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. ¹¹ For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. ¹² By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. ¹³ Truly I tell you, wherever this good news^[b] is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'

Reflect:

The woman's life had been deeply touched by Jesus and she wanted to show her gratitude by doing something special for him.

Is this true for you? What can you offer Jesus? What are your gifts? Pray for opportunities to use and develop your gifts so you can be church safely in the current climate.

To do:

Use a favourite perfume or rub some scented hand lotion into your hands as you reflect on the story and/ or use the scented candle in your resource pack.

Resource Pack: scented candle

Prayer Station 4: The Last Supper

Bible Reading: Matthew 26 26-29 (NRSVA)

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' ²⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'



Jacques Iselin - The Elements of the Holy Communion from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

The 'elements' of the Holy Communion are the bread and wine. This painting explores them and their origins. As well as the chalice of wine and the long loaf of bread, Iselin portrays wheat from which the bread is made, some mysterious, half-hidden objects, and a fish. The fish is a Christian symbol. The Greek word for fish is made up from the initial letters of the Greek words 'Jesus, Christ, of God, the Son, Saviour'. This combines the literary aspect of the liturgy with the mysterious presence of Christ in the Communion. The rich bright background suggests the textiles often used for altar frontals or priests' vestments at Communion services. While not a traditional representational painting, this is not an abstract work, but a symbolic, figurative exploration of the central mysteries of the Church and Christianity.

Commentary based on *A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection*.

Reflect:

It is Passover, and over the traditional meal of lamb, bread and wine, Jesus tries to prepare the disciples for what is going to come - his death and what it means for them and for the whole of humankind. Whilst Jesus probably knew what lay ahead, it seems unlikely that the disciples realised that it would be their last meal with Jesus. The Last Supper is a story we reflect on regularly through Holy Communion, where we look back and remember what Jesus did for us on the cross; where we experience Jesus' presence through the bread and the cup; where we are called as faithful disciples to serve others as Jesus did and where we look forwards to the glorious feast that lies ahead.

Think about special meals you remember and pray that your eyes will be open to recognise special moments as they happen.

To do:

Write a word or draw a picture that signifies a special meal you remember.

Resource Pack: small pieces of paper and pens

Prayer Station 5: The Garden of Gethsemane

Bible Reading: Matthew 26 36-39 (NRSVA)

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' ³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸ Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' ³⁹ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'



Fool of God (Christ in the Garden) by Mark Cazalet from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

The title refers to the Russian idea of 'Holy Fools', who 'set God's will above worldly wisdom, even to the point of martyrdom'.

Cazalet portrays Jesus with a single serpentine brush stroke. The reddy-brown contrasts with the greens and olives of the spare landscape. He seeks to capture the 'moment of (Christ's) most profound incarnation, fully in dread at the fate he knew would come as a man, yet faithful and obedient in his divine fulfilment of the sacrifice'.

Commentary based on [*A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection.*](#)

Reflect:

In the Garden of Gethsemane, we see a very human Jesus – struggling, in pain, wrestling with what he knows he must do. Yet he remains determined. He has a mission to accomplish and he is going to see it through. Say the Lord’s Prayer and pray for people who have difficult decisions to make - this might be you.

To Do:

If you’re “crafty”, have a go at making a flower out of pipe cleaners to hang on a plant or a tree in your garden. Here’s a link to a site showing you how to do this.

<https://www.wikihow.com/Make-Pipe-Cleaner-Flowers>

Resource Pack: Pipe cleaners

Prayer Station 6: Jesus is Betrayed and Arrested

Bible Reading Matthew 26 47-50

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.' ⁴⁹ At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.



Judas Iscariot betrayed our Lord Jesus for R.3.00 by John Muafangejo from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

This work is divided into two parts. On the right, a clean-shaven Judas is shown embracing Jesus while two bearded figures, with weapons in their hands and sheathed swords, look on. They must be part of the high priest's entourage. Above are words from Luke's Gospel (22:48). On the left Judas is shown hanging from a tree: three 1-rand notes (the currency of South Africa where the artist was born), the price of betrayal, can be seen below the foliage. The words on this side are non-biblical.

Commentary based on [*A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection.*](#)

Reflect:

Judas's betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver is regarded as a particularly wicked act. Jesus washed Judas's feet and Judas was amongst the disciples at the Last Supper. It was the love that Jesus felt for Judas which made his betrayal so painful. Another of Jesus' disciples, Peter, went on to betray Jesus too by denying and disowning him. Peter subsequently repented and went on to become the rock of the early church.

Sadly, we are all capable of betrayal. Think about times you have betrayed others – maybe you've said unkind things. Maybe there have been times when you haven't acknowledged Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.

To Do:

Write sorry prayers on the acetate sheet and rub them off with a tissue or cloth

Resource Pack: acetate sheet

Prayer Station 7: The Crucifixion

Bible Reading: Matthew 27 45-50 (NRSVA)

⁴⁵ From noon on, darkness came over the whole land^[a] until three in the afternoon.

⁴⁶ And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' ⁴⁷ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' ⁴⁸ At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.'^[a]

⁵⁰ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

Reflect:

On Good Friday we remember Jesus's suffering and death on the cross. It is a day for sombre reflection but also of hope as we look forward to the Resurrection

Read Psalm 22, written by King David almost 1000 years before the birth of Jesus. This describes the suffering of the future Messiah in amazing detail.

Reflect on images of the crucifixion. Which one in particular speaks to you?

Here are two images for you to have a look at. You can view more pictures on line at www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/reflecting-on-faith/the-methodist-modern-art-collection/index-of-works



Crucified tree form - the agony by Theyre Lee- Elliott. from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

Lee-Elliott's Crucified tree form draws on a tradition dating from the thirteenth century in which the cross on which Jesus is crucified is a living tree. In this painting, he has developed the 'living tree' one stage further and created a crucifixion which conveys 'the agony' with the head and shoulders falling forward and the arms stretched up backwards, in a V. The cross, tree and body are fused into a single suffering whole. A modern touch is added with the strands of barbed wire. In fact, there is something of the First World War battlefield about the painting; the dead trees, now a familiar icon of the twentieth century, add an additional resonance to the work.

Commentary based on ***A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection.***



The crucifixion by William Roberts from the Methodist Modern Art Collection @ TMCP, used with permission www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection.

Although the three crosses are usually shown in a line, with Jesus's in the centre (as the Gospels record), Roberts shows them in a tight triangle on the right. Jesus is the left-hand figure yet remains central viewed from either direction. At the front, soldiers cast lots; on the left, more soldiers hold back the crowd; on the right, a man in brown/black may represent the Jewish authorities. Around the foot of the cross are three figures – one in yellow, one bearded in brown, and one in grey. The grey figure may be Mary, Jesus's mother. A fourth figure, in blue kneels towards the soldiers. A fifth, in black and brown, with his back to us, looks at the soldiers but raises his arms towards Jesus.

Commentary based on ***A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection.***

To Do:

Thank Jesus for dying on the cross so that our sins are forgiven.

Who do you need to forgive? Write your prayers of forgiveness on the cardboard cross. Colour and decorate it if you want to.

Resource Pack: cardboard cross

Prayer Station 8: Jesus is laid in the tomb

Bible Reading: Matthew 27 57-61 (NRSVA)

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away.



The deposition by Graham Sutherland from the Methodist Modern Art Collection@TMCP, used with permission. www.methodist.org.uk/artcollection

Jesus is conveyed schematically, almost abstractly, lying across a tomb. Behind stands the cross at the centre of a gap in a wall. Two strips of linen run in a gentle loop from the ends of the wall, either to, or behind, the cross. Jesus' body forms a concave arc, lying unsupported on top of the lidless tomb, his legs resting on the tomb's edge on one side and his shoulders on the other. His head, which is totally abstracted in a featureless semi-circular or semi-spherical form, falls back horizontally. A cloth wrapped around his feet falls in a wide, low loop under his body, secured at one end under his left shoulder. The cool blues and greys of the painting are central to the effect it produces on the viewer, creating an unemotional, calm and detached mood.

Commentary based on *A Guide to the Methodist Art Collection*.

Reflect:

Joseph of Arimathea made sure that Jesus's body was appropriately buried. The care Jesus's friends gave to his body provide a model of how we should care for one another.

Think about how Jesus' disciples must have felt, devoid of all hope and thinking they would never see Jesus again. Thankfully the story doesn't end with Jesus being laid in the tomb!

Pray for people you're parted from at the present time – family, friends and neighbours and think about ways you can care for them safely in the current climate.

Pray for people who have been bereaved and light a candle (resource pack)

To Do:

Light a candle as you pray for people who have been bereaved

Resource Pack: Candle

Prayer Station 9

Resurrection

Bible Reading: Matthew 28 1-8 (NRSVA)

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he^[a] lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has been raised from the dead,^[b] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." This is my message for you.' ⁸ So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples.

Reflect:

After three days of mourning and waiting, we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Life has overcome death; the Light of the World has conquered darkness. We too emerge victorious, rising above our failures, our burdens and our struggles.

Think about ways you can strengthen and renew your faith during this unexpected time out.

To Do:

Plant a seed to represent new life.

Eat a chocolate egg to remind you of the empty tomb and the Easter story

Resource Pack: pot and seed and chocolate egg