

Holy Week Activities for Children and Families

Holy Week covers the time period between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Below is an outline that represent Holy Week, what happened, and fitting activities and food ideas to go with them that is adapted from our friends from Messy Church USA.

You are invited to discuss the parts of the story on the coinciding days and then do the craft/activity that follows. These activities are a opportunity for families to come together to understand what happened every day during the Holy Week.



*Jesus and His disciples make their entrance into Jerusalem.
Two of His disciples went ahead of the rest and brought a donkey for Jesus to ride.
Jesus is greeted by crowds waving palm branches and exclaiming,
“Hosanna to the son of David!”*

Scripture: Luke 19: 37-38

“As Jesus approached the road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the whole throng of his disciples began rejoicing. They praised God with a loud voice because of all the mighty things they had seen. They said, ‘Blessings on the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens.’”

Activity: Palms and Races

Need: Green construction paper, pencil, scissors, glue, Popsicle sticks.

Have each person in your family trace their hand four or five times on the green paper. Using the scissors, cut out the hands. Apply glue to the sticks and arrange the hands (thumbs together) on either side of the stick so they resemble a palm leaf. Once the leaves are finished, set up a start and finish line and divide into teams. Since the palms were laid so Jesus’s feet would not touch the ground, lay the palms, from your team, end to end and try to be the first one across without actually touching the ground. Once you step on a palm, lay another in front. Then, once you step on that one, reach back for the other and, again, place it in front. Keep this going all the way across the finish line

Prayer: Faithful God, we give you praise this day! The people gathered to surround Jesus with shouts of praise, yet here we are at home to keep our neighbors safe by social distancing. We join our “Hosanna!” with people all over the world you are praising you this day. Be with us as we walk with Jesus during this coming week. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Food Idea: Since Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem, take the opportunity to try some different foods from that region. Ideas include baklava or hummus.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

On this Holy Thursday, Jesus and his disciples sat down together to celebrate the Passover. This was a special meal meant to remind everyone of how God saved the Israelites and brought them out of Egypt. Before they ate the meal, Jesus knelt down and washed his disciples' feet. This was something that a servant would normally do and the disciples were shocked! But Jesus told them that they were to love one another like this, by serving one another. We call this day “Maundy” Thursday because “Maundy” means “mandate” – Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another the way Jesus loved them. At the end of the meal, frequently called “The Last Supper”, Jesus took bread and wine, which was tradition at the end of a Jewish meal, and he blessed them and told his followers to remember him whenever they gathered together. Later that Thursday night, Jesus is betrayed by Judas and taken to the house of one of the high priests where they begin to make a case against Him to use in a trial.

Scripture: Luke 22: 14, 19-20

“When the time came, Jesus took his place at the table, and the disciples joined him. After taking bread and giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, he took the cup and said, “This cup is the new covenant which is poured out for you.”

Activity: Cup Decorating

Need: Paper cup, stickers, markers, glitter, etc.

Decorate your paper cup any way you'd like so you can use it with your "last supper" meal.

Prayer: God of mercy, as we prepare this meal, we remember how Jesus told us to remember him whenever we break bread and share a cup with one another. We thank you for Jesus and for his love for us and we remember his teaching us to love one another. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN

Food Idea: Mimic a last supper meal with your own family. Choose a family favorite meal and use this time to talk about what feelings Jesus might have been experiencing at His own supper. Then, use the unleavened bread (or crackers) and wine (you can also use grape juice) to recreate communion. There are lots of easy unleavened bread recipes online so encourage your kids to help bake as well!



GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday is, by far, the most somber and arduous day of the Holy Week. On this day, our savior Jesus Christ was wrongfully accused in illegal trials and sentenced to death via crucifixion. He was nailed to a wooden cross and suffered for many hours before His death. Friday evening, Jesus is taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb.

Scripture: Luke 23: 44-46

“It was now about noon, and darkness covered the whole earth until about three o’clock, while the sun stopped shining. Then the curtain in the sanctuary tore down the middle. Crying out in a loud voice, Jesus said, ‘Father, into your hands I entrust my life.’ After he said this, he breathed for the last time.

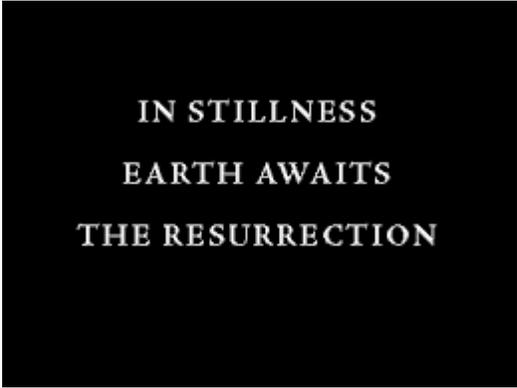
Activity: Cross Art

Need: Paper, painter's tape, paint, paint brushes.

Place the painter's tape, in the shape of the cross, at the center of the piece of paper. Then, pick out your favorite colors to paint with. Paint the entire piece of paper (including over the top of the tape) and wait for it to dry. When it has dried, carefully pull the painter's tape off to reveal a beautiful white cross among your artwork.

Prayer: Be with us this day, O God, as we remember that Jesus died upon a cross many years ago. We are sad yet we know that you are with us no matter how we feel. Thank you that your love for us is stronger than death. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN.

Food Idea: Make a rectangle pan of Rice Krispy Treats and empty it onto a cutting board. Cut the rectangle into a large cross and have fun decorating it with sprinkles and frosting before enjoying the delicious treat!



IN STILLNESS
EARTH AWAITS
THE RESURRECTION

HOLY SATURDAY

This day in the Holy Week is the day Jesus lay in the tomb. While many of his disciples had fled the scene, some of the women who followed Jesus stayed behind. They buried Jesus in a borrowed tomb on Friday before the Sabbath began. The tomb was then sealed tightly and guarded by Roman soldiers. On Saturday we remember how Jesus' disciples must have felt, thinking that everything was over, knowing that Jesus was dead.

Scripture: Luke 23: 55-56

“The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph of Arimathea. They saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was laid in it. Then they went away and prepared fragrant spices and perfumed oils. They rested on the Sabbath in keeping with the commandment.

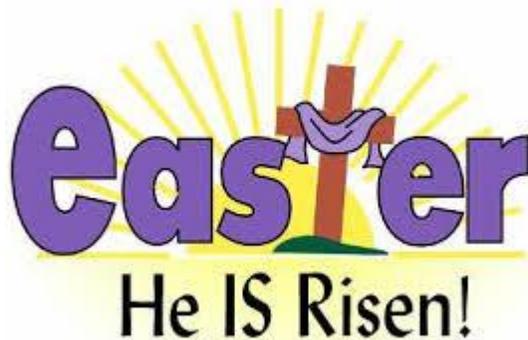
Activity: Moment of Silence

Need: Just yourself.

Take a moment out of your day as an individual or as a family and just be silent. Use this time to reflect on what happened to Jesus and the miracle that is to come. You can also use this time to pray if you'd like.

Prayer: We rest in your love, O God as we keep silence this day. We wait for the coming of the dawn of Easter light. In the name of Jesus, we pray, AMEN

Food Idea: We're quietest when we sleep so let's make food that makes us sleepy. Turkey has a naturally occurring amino acid that blocks proteins. Normally after consuming it, we become very sleepy. Make your families own favorite turkey dish and get some rest!



The Bible says that early on the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb to finish preparing Jesus' body for burial. When the women got to the tomb, they discovered that the tomb was empty! The large boulder that covered the entrance to the tomb had been rolled away and Jesus was gone. An angel appeared to the women and told them they need not be afraid. Jesus had risen! The women went back to the other disciples to tell them all they had seen.

Scripture: Luke 24: 1-6

“Very early in the morning on the first day of week, the women went to the tomb, bringing the fragrant spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. They didn't know what to make of this. Suddenly, two men were standing beside them in gleaming bright clothing. The women were frightened and bowed their faces toward the ground, but the men said to them, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He isn't here, but has been raised. He is ALIVE!

Activity: Secret Message

Need: Paper, white crayons, watercolor.

Use the white crayon to draw and write secret pictures and messages that have to do with Easter Sunday. Hand the paper to another member of your family and have them paint the paper with watercolor to reveal the secrets underneath! Ideas include the words “He is risen,” a hill with three crosses, an empty tomb, etc.

Prayer: God of life, we have experienced many different emotions this past week and today we are jumping up and down in joyful exuberance. Jesus is alive! What a surprise to remember that in the midst of dark times, you surprise us with new life. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! In the name of the risen Jesus we pray. AMEN.

Food Idea: Enjoy the evening with whatever traditional meal your family makes for Easter dinner. If you don’t have a tradition, put the eggs you just colored to good use and make some egg salad!

HAPPY EASTER !

Christ is Risen!

Christ is Risen Indeed

Hallelujah!

Hallelujah!

Hallelujah!