

SHOW US

LENT AT HOME 2020 WORSHIP GUIDE



**Mennonite
Church**
USA



Lectionary Cycle A

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These abbreviations in the text refer to the following song collections by Herald Press:

HWB = Hymnal Worship Book

STJ = Sing the Journey

STS = Sing the Story

Lent At Home 2020

February 25 to April 12, 2020

Lectionary Cycle A

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INTRODUCTION

by Elsie Rempel

During the season of Lent, God's children reflect on the life and death of Christ. This year, we are invited to prepare by asking God to show us how to find our hidden God as well as our own safe hiding place, how to remember God's faithful, loving presence, how to reconnect with the Rock of our salvation, how to really see. As we do so, our Lenten journey will help us remember God's power over death and help us learn how to balance joy and sorrow from Jesus on the hard but worthwhile path to resurrection.

This resource for the home is adapted from the congregational worship resources for Lent, printed in *Leader* magazine published by MennoMedia.

Use this At Home worship guide whenever and however it fits into your home's routines and life stage realities. If your family has younger children, feel free to simplify, shorten and paraphrase the prayers and pondering thoughts. To use this booklet for daily worship times, repeat the litany for each day of the week and read the daily scripture recommendations which have been divided into seven short readings.

Pondering Questions

The pondering questions are designed to help each household member hear God speak in a personal way. Enjoy a short time of silence after each question and feel free to either share or ponder these thoughts in your heart.

GETTING READY FOR LENT

Items that can help you make holy space

- 1. A festive cloth:** It will mark your worship a center. A purple cloth would reflect both the royalty of Christ, our Lord, and the attitude of repentance, which dominates the season. For Easter morning, a celebratory cloth of yellow or white would be suitable.
- 2. A theme poster:** Create a poster featuring rocks, bare branches, a stream of living water and symbols of Christ's death and resurrection.
- 3. Candles:** Set one larger white Christ candle in the center and place six candles in translucent purple candle holders around it. Cover a clear glass candle holder with pieces of torn purple tissue paper that are painted onto the glass with diluted white glue.
- 4. A family Lent journal:** Write responses to reflective activities.
- 5. A Bible:** Read the daily scripture text.
- 6. This booklet:** Use it as a guide for your worship and response times.

SHROVE TUESDAY — Meeting God

February 25, 2020

Shrove comes from the old English word, "shrive," which means to hear a person confess their sins and receive forgiveness. It is one of the ways people traditionally prepared for Lent. On Shrove Tuesday, it was also traditional to make pancakes and use up the eggs, fat, and sugar that were in the house, because people would give up eating these foods for Lent. Now, many of us call it Pancake Tuesday. Here are some activities that have become traditional with this At Home series:

Invite another family from your church into your home.

- **Eat** a delicious pancake supper with your guest family, or participate together in a special meal your congregation hosts.
- **Play** a food game, like a relay race that includes flipping pancakes in a pan. Try to flip the pancake three times in each round.
- **Decorate** the dining area together, using balloons and cloth or paper banners to give it a festive look.
- **Write** words of praise such as, *Alleluia, New Life, New Sight, New Life, and Love Wins*, onto paper streamers or cloth strips to create celebratory banners. If you celebrate Shrove Tuesday as a congregation, decorate the tables with ribbons on which these words can be written as a table activity.
- **Promise** to encourage each other on your Lenten journey this year.
- **Pray** for attitudes of curiosity and courage as you get ready; curiosity to have God show you things and courage to leave behind some of the things that can distract you from engaging with God and God's way during Lent. The following prayer may help you do so:

Dear God, you have made us as people
with many different feelings
with many different ways of showing that we love you.
We are getting ready to learn from Jesus
on his journey to the cross and out of the tomb.
Thank you for the good times we can have with friends
as we encourage each other on this journey.
Thank you for our experiences as we follow Jesus during Lent.
Thank you that Lent is followed by Easter.
Thank you that we can trust your forgiving, renewing love.
Amen (spoken by all).

- **Send** half of the banners home with your guest family to celebrate with on Easter. Or, if you celebrate at church, distribute the ribbons to participants to take home or put the banners away to use again at your Easter breakfast and/or worship service.

ASH WEDNESDAY — Meeting God

February 26, 2020

Ash Wednesday gets its name from the ashes that were traditionally rubbed on the forehead of worshipers on this day. Ashes are a symbol of purification, because as fire burns it can separate what is valuable from what is not. In the same way, making crosses of ashes on each other's foreheads shows our willingness to be purified by Jesus and that we are making space for Jesus to empower us for new ways of abundant life with him.

- **Take down** the celebration banners from your Shrove Tuesday supper. Fold them up carefully and bury them, or store them in a dark place until Easter morning.
- **Discuss** how Lent helps us look at ourselves and choose activities that renew or strengthen our faith in God. Lent helps us notice our need for God. Lent helps Jesus show us his journey to the cross and the resurrection. Ash Wednesday is a good day to renew your intention to change things for the better.
- **Read God's Word:** Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21 and/or Psalm 51: 1-17.
- **Pick** a family giving project from your denominational website: <https://donate.mennonitechurch.ca/projects> or <http://mennoniteusa.org/give/>.
- **Make** and record a Family Lent Plan for the next 40 days. This might help you get started:
We will help each other get ready for Jesus to show us how to live by...
We will share God's love with others by ...
We will prepare to celebrate a Holy Feast at Easter by...
We will do these things privately: ...
We will do these things as a family: ...

- **Brainstorm** freely and respect the ideas of your children.
- **Sign** your Family Lent Plan with your names or fingerprints. (A bit of washable marker on a thumb helps make a great fingerprint.) Post your Lent plan where you can see it easily.
- **Write down or draw** a picture of some problem or attitude you would like to be freed from this Lent on separate pieces of paper.
- **Place** the Christ candle in a shallow metal bowl. Light it.
- **Take turns sharing** what you wrote on your papers and reread your family Lent plan.
- **Burn** your papers in the bowl with the Christ candle.
- **Use** the ashes from these papers to mark the sign of a cross on each others foreheads.
- **Wash** your hands.
- **Call** the family you shared Shrove Tuesday with and tell them about your plan.
- **Set up** your Lent Worship Centre, using the suggestions in this booklet.

show us your hiding place

Lent 1, March 1, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: God calls to us, "Where are you?" We, like Adam and Eve, hide in the garden and try to mask our shame. But we hear and come.

All: We are sorry about our wrong actions and choices. Please God, become our safe hiding place, our refuge from trouble. Help us worship and watch for you.

Candle lighter: We are so glad God finds us and helps us when we are in trouble, and forgives us when we fail. We light this first candle of Lent, to help us remember that God helps us resist temptation.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

Reflect on one of these passages each day. Psalm 32: 1-7, 8-11, Genesis 2: 15-17, 3: 1-7, Matthew 4: 1-11, Revelation 22: 6-9, Romans 5: 12-19.

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. How does today's reading help you with things that tempt you?
2. What feelings, ideas, or pictures do you get from today's Bible text?
3. What signs of God's hidden wisdom did you notice today?

Songs of the week

HWB 521 *Come, thou fount* or STJ 106, *Just a closer walk with thee*, STS 49 *I will come to you in the silence*, or listen to *You are my hiding place* by Selah (Check YouTube for music).

Closing prayer

Leader: Dear God, thank you for reminding us that we are beloved, that Christ is by our side when we are in trouble, and that your Holy Spirit is willing to guide us back to your way after we've been tempted to leave it.

Candle snuffer: We go now in peace to love and serve as Jesus showed us, glad God's Holy Spirit stays with us, even as we blow out this first Lent candle.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Create a Lent poster with this year's theme featuring rocks, bare branches, a stream of living water, a cross and an open tomb.
2. Create a maze in a shoebox that is big enough for small play-figures to use. Lead them into the maze to help them hide, and then help them find their way out. Think about how God helps us hide from trouble and find our way home.
3. Look for hidden signs of God at work, or at play, in nature and record them in your family Lent journal.
4. Create your own skit or puppet play about the good things that happen when people help each other resist temptations.
5. Take turns blindfolding each other in a room away from the worship corner. Turn the blindfolded person around three times and then challenge them to find their way back to the worship corner.
6. Read the children's book, *Where Are You Hiding, God?*, by Elisabeth Zartl, 2017, Westminster John Knox Press, about a child who wondered where God was hiding.
7. Share your own stories about hiding and seeking including the surprising things you found.

Show us your faithful presence

Lent 2, March 8, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: We gather to look for the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

All: We come to worship God from whom our help comes, and who faithfully leads us into new challenges. We are grateful God helps us and never leaves or forsakes us.

Candle lighter: We light this second candle of Lent to help us remember that God calls us and leads us in accepting the new challenges God shows us.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

This week, reflect on how God is accompanying people through these passages from God's word: Genesis 12: 1-4a, Psalm 121: 1-4, 5-8, John 3: 1-9, 10-17, Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17.

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. I wonder how God's faithful presence shines through the writers or characters in today's Bible texts.
2. What part of God's faithful presence can we share with others?
3. What makes it difficult to see God's presence at work among us?

Songs of the week

HWB 299 *New earth, heavens new*, STJ 2 *Hamba nathi* (Come, walk with us), or STS 39 *Will you come and follow me*.

Closing prayer

Leader: Just as God called this week's Bible characters to new ways of being and acting, we have also heard God call us into newness. May the Lord bless us and help us live more fully into lives that show God's loving faithfulness.

Candle snuffer: As we blow out these Lent candles we gratefully remember the blessings of God who is always with us.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Draw pictures of new things you'd like to do that could make God smile.
2. Ask people in your congregation for their stories about God being with them in new situations. Were any of them asked to go into the unknown?
3. Use a Bible atlas to find where the Bible characters you have read about once lived.
4. Develop and act out a skit to show what a new earth and new heaven could be like.
5. Draw or write about times you noticed God's presence in your life in your family Lent journal.
6. Plant some multiplier onions, crocus bulbs, or tiger lilies so you can enjoy the way they grow and multiply. (Start indoors in a pot on a sunny window ledge to plant outside later.)
7. Enjoy the story by Aimee Reed (Author) and Matt Phelan (Illustrator) about Mister Rogers who sought to be God's presence in his neighbourhood, *You are my Friend: The Story of Mister Rogers and His Neighbourhood*, (2019, Abrams Books for Young Readers) or this story about a family that knew God was with them in all kinds of predicaments, *The Family Song* by Jane Hooper Peifer illust. Ingrid Hess, (2008, Herald Press)

Show us the saving rock

Lent 3, March 15, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak this in phrases that the others echo.)

Leader: Come and rejoice in God, our Saving Rock, from whom living waters flow, instead of getting lost in fear and doubt; thirsting for things that don't satisfy.

All: God, we remember the things we fear and long for and leave them behind to drink of your life-giving water.

Candle lighter: God understands our thirsts. This third candle of Lent reminds us that our spirit thirst can be satisfied by Jesus from the spring of life that pours from our Saving Rock.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

This week, reflect on how God, our Saving Rock, gives life-giving water in these passages from the Bible: Exodus 17: 1-7, Psalm 95, John 4: 5-15, 16-26, 27-30, 31-42, Romans 5: 1-11.

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. I wonder how worshiping God, the Saving Rock, can help them get over their quarrels.
2. I wonder why Jesus offered his living water to Sychar through this Samaritan woman.
3. How does God's living water gush up, refresh, and open up your spirit?

Songs of the week

HWB 515 *Jesus, Rock of Ages*, STJ 28 *We worship God the Rock or I can hear your message* from the CD *A New Heart*, by Bryan Moyer Suderman (2009), available from www.smalltallmusic.com.

Closing prayer

Leader: Dear God, we thank you for offering us living water from your spring of life. Help us share this good news with others and stay alert to the ways you are at work all around us.

Candle snuffer: May living water from God, our Saving Rock, spring up to feed hope, joy, and peace in us, even as we blow out these Lent candles.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Create pictures of the Saving Rock, and it's life-giving spring using charcoal (or pencil) and water colors.
2. Compare a quarrel in your household with those of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sin (This is the name of a place.) How did you and they find good solutions?
3. Act out or imagine the story in John 4. Think about all the different kinds of thirst in this story.
4. Pretend you are the woman at the well. Write a thank-you note to Jesus for recognizing the thirst in your spirit in your Lent journal.
5. Look for a fountain or spring in your neighbourhood. Watch it for a while, just thinking about how it is like God's Spirit in us.
6. Climb on some rocks and think about reasons God can be compared to a rock.
7. As part of your devotional, pour glasses of water for each person. Think about Christ's love pouring into our lives. Then drink your water together in silence.

Show us how to really see

Lent 4, March 22, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: Come, hear the call of our Good Shepherd, who gives us everything we need, and worship.

All: We hear our Good Shepherd, even though we do not always follow in the good ways you show us. Jesus, please forgive us and help us see and return to your ways.

Candle lighter: Jesus, as we light this fourth candle of Lent, open our eyes to see and our hearts to cling to what is good and right and true.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

This week read about how God helps people see in: 1. Samuel 16: 1-13, Psalm 23, John 9: 1-12, 13-23, 24-34, 35-41, and Ephesians 5: 8-14.

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. I wonder what God wanted David to see.
2. I wonder how the blind man felt after Jesus touched him and helped him see.
3. I wonder where we see ourselves in this week's readings?

Songs of the week

HWB 401 *This little light of mine*, STS 65 *Abre mis ojos* (*Open my eyes*) or STS 99 *The Lord's my Shepherd*.

Closing prayer

Leader: Dear God, you are like a good shepherd who gives us what we need. Help us see and follow your good and loving dream for the world. Thank you for your many gifts to us. Please help us see like you do and bless the people around us.

Candle snuffer: May God's vision of a good and loving world stay with us and guide us even after we blow out this fourth Lent candle.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Make a gratitude poster of God's gifts to and through your family.
2. Play hide and seek in the dark. Let the "seeker" have a flashlight to help find the "hiders." Give them a loving touch when you find them.
3. Place some refreshing cucumber slices on your eyes for a few minutes and imagine how the blind man felt when Jesus healed his eyes by putting mud on them.
4. Make two lists on a chart shaped like a T. On one side, list ways of touching that comfort and heal. On the other side, list ways of touching that frighten and hurt. Choose to join with God's dream by using healing rather than hurting touches.
5. Discuss the dream God had for David. What gifts did he have? What dreams do you think God has for each of you? Encourage each other to use your gifts as signs of God's love.
6. What makes people popular in your school or play group? How does that compare with the attributes God looks for in us?
7. Recall and share stories of people who use touch to heal and encourage others or read *I Can Show You I Care: Compassionate Touch for Children* by Susan Cotta, illustrated by Gregory Crawford (2003 North Atlantic Books).

Show us your power over death

Lent 5, March 29, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: Come and worship our God, who has power over death. We are so glad Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

All: God, you are amazing. When we are tired and hurting and cry to you for help you breathe new life into us.

Candle lighter: This fifth candle of Lent reminds us our hope is in you because you, Lord, have power over death and give us hope for our tomorrows.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

This week, reflect on how God's power brings new life in these passages from the Bible: Ezekiel 37: 1-10, 11-14, Psalm 130, John 11: 1-16, 17-37, 38-45 (older readers: Romans 8: 6-11, younger readers: Luke 8: 40-42 and 49-56).

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. I wonder how it felt to see the dead return to life.
2. I wonder how God decides when to do such miracles.
3. Imagine how great God is to be stronger than death!

Songs of the week

HWB 584 *They that wait upon the Lord*, and STJ 5 *Come and be light for our eyes* or "*Come Alive*" (*Dry Bones*)" by Lauren Daigle, Michael Farren (Find on YouTube)

Closing prayer

Leader: “Come out!” Jesus cries, calling us from our despair into a world of possibility and grace. Help us respond and also go out to live as your people.

Candle snuffer: May God’s love-filled life shine in and through us even after we blow out this fifth Lent candle.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Share seeds with each other. As you hold them, think about areas in your life that need new life. Then use those seeds in the next activity.
2. Begin a window garden by planting your seeds in a pot of soil. Take a “before” picture of your window garden, and draw a picture of what it might look like in a month. Glue or tape the pictures of the plants around the pot.
3. Tell stories of how God has brought new meaning and energy to you when you were discouraged or hopeless. Look for stories of hope in a recent copy of *The Mennonite* or *Canadian Mennonite*.
4. Make posters for your bedroom that say, “Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die.” (John 11:25b) or “The LORD has great power to redeem.” (Psalm 130:7)
5. Write a thank-you note to God for giving you hope when you feel hopeless.
6. Share God’s life-giving hope with a discouraged person by giving them a fragrant plant.
7. Plant some barley, or other grains, in a dish of moist soil and wait for the seeds to spring to new life in time for Easter.

Show us how to live in joy and sorrow

Lent 6, April 5, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: Come worship and learn from Jesus how to celebrate his life and honor his death.

All: This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad with those who waved palm branches. Help us remember God's faithful love endures forever; through the happy and the sad times we will reflect on this week.

Candle lighter: This last candle of Lent reminds us that God remains faithful and forgiving even when we don't and cause suffering. This is why we worship.

All: Amen.

Listening to God's Word

This week read these passages from God's word: Matthew 21: 1-11, Psalm 118: 1-2 and 19-29, Isaiah 50: 4-9a, Matthew 26: 1-5, Philippians 2: 5-11 (Saturday), Matthew 28: 1-20 (Easter Sunday). Additional passion narrative texts to consider are: Matthew 26: 20-35, 69-75, (Maundy Thursday) Matthew 27: 27-54 (Good Friday).

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. What would Jesus have seen, smelled, heard, felt during the Palm Sunday parade?
2. How do you think Jesus' friends felt during this week?
3. I wonder how big Jesus' love and trust in God must be.
4. I wonder how we can best respond to this strong love.

Songs of the week

HWB 238 *Hosanna, loud hosanna*, STS 78 *Sizohamba naye* (We will walk with God) or STJ 75 *Be still*

Closing prayer

Leader: To you, Jesus, we give our hope, our worship, and our love. Please give us the courage and the peace we need to keep walking with you in all the ups and downs of our lives.

Candle snuffer: As we blow out these candles, we want to walk with you in joy and in sorrow.

All: Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Improvise palm branches and hold a parade for a donkey riding Jesus.
2. Choose songs of the week to sing as prayers for this holy week. Change the mood of your singing to match the feelings of each day's scripture reading.
3. Worship with a good picture book, such as *The Easter Story*, by Brian Wildsmith, (1993 Eerdmans Books for Young Readers)
4. Rearrange your worship center to include some rocks around a tomb. A small clay pot works well and will provide a good base for damp soil barley and some crosses made out of twigs. Place a rock in front of the opening until Easter morning. Write, "God's faithful love lasts forever," on a folded strip of paper to stand in front of the crosses.
5. Identify with Jesus and the disciples by using the Family Holy Week service and activity guides on the following pages.
6. As you decorate Easter eggs, do so as a sign of your love for and thankfulness to Jesus.
7. Pretzels resemble a traditional prayer position of arms crossed over the heart. Bake pretzels to remind your family to pray and worship our loving, forgiving, saving Lord. Share them with a neighbour or friend.

MAUNDY THURSDAY Foot-washing

April 9, 2020

Maundy comes from the Latin, "dies mandatum" which means "the day of the new commandment."

On that first Maundy Thursday, Jesus surprised his disciples by washing their feet. This was something servants regularly did when people came indoors, because the Palestinian roads were dusty and their sandaled feet were dirty. But Jesus was their teacher! By kneeling in front of them and washing their feet like a servant, Jesus taught them something very important. Jesus expects his followers to be like servants to each other, instead of trying to boss each other around. Listen to the Gospel words: "After he had washed their feet...he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.'" (John 13: 12-14) Even though most North Americans don't wear sandals and walk on dusty roads in March, we can still obey Jesus' new commandment and wash each other's feet. We can still obey what Jesus taught us about serving. We can imagine what it is like to have our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, kneeling in front of us and washing our feet.

Can your family participate in a congregational foot washing service on Maundy Thursday? If not, here's how you can have one in your home.

Getting Ready

Invite the family that joined you on Shrove Tuesday to join you for this activity.

Prepare

- A stack of small towels, one for each person who is participating.
- A large bowl, or plastic dishpan, to catch the water.
- A jug filled with warm water for pouring over each other's feet.
- Suitable songs to accompany the activity.
- Readers. Practice reading the scripture and prayers to communicate well.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Opening song: STS 49 *I will come to you in the silence*, Sing The Story 2 CD, (2008 Herald Press, track 18).

Scripture Reading: John 13: 1-20

Leader's Words of Invitation

Because Jesus, our Lord and Teacher, washed all of his disciples' feet, and told us to wash each other's feet, we invite you to do so with us, even if your feet aren't dusty and dirty. When Jesus washes us, his love cleans us, even on the inside, where bad attitudes can dirty our lives. Because we follow Jesus, we can help each other be cleaned by Jesus' love. (Pause)

Quietly take off your shoes and put them to the side so no one will trip on them. Take a moment to breathe out all the ideas and attitudes that make it hard for you to follow Jesus.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you washed the feet of your disciples to show us what you expect us to do. Let our participation in this foot washing strengthen us for your service, and fill us with your fairness, love, and peace.

All: To you be glory forever. Come, Lord Jesus.

Sing, or listen to STS 40 *We will follow*, Sing the Story 2 CD, (2008 Herald Press, track 15).

Foot washing instructions

- Everyone sits around the worship center during the foot washing.
- The oldest person goes to the foot washing chair and invites the youngest one to come and sit on the chair with the basin in front of it.
- They kneel down in front of the child, place a dry towel over one arm, take one bare foot in the non-dominant hand, make sure it is centered over the basin, and pour some warm water over the foot from the pitcher.

- Put down the pitcher and rub the foot gently. Rinse with some more water from the pitcher.
- Dry the foot gently, and then do the same with the other foot.
- After this is completed; get up and greet each other. (Watch for the reciprocal gesture and respond with the gesture preferred by the person who desires the least contact: folded hands with a nod of the head, high five or fist bump, handshake, side hug, or hug.)
- The child repeats the foot washing of the adult in the same manner.
- This continues until everyone's feet have been washed. If there are an odd number of people, the first person to wash feet can also be the last.
- After everyone's feet have been washed and dried, they pass the peace of Christ to each other by shaking hands (refer to the no-contact alternatives above) and saying, "The Peace of Christ be with you."
- All return to their seats for the final blessing.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for showing us how we can kneel and serve each other. Thank you for honoring our willingness to serve and to be served. Thank you that your peace and love fill us as we obey and follow you. And now we pray the prayer Jesus taught us: (recite the contemporary version of the Lord's Prayer together, HWB 731):

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.
 Amen.

After this foot washing ritual, it would be good to have a snack at which you remember the way Jesus ate with his disciples. If you wish to have a Seder meal together and celebrate Passover, a number of resources for this can be found at www.commonword.ca/go/365. Seder is a traditional Jewish feast ritual that marks the beginning of the Passover festival.



GOOD FRIDAY

April 10, 2020

This Friday is considered "good" because nothing, not even Jesus' painful death, could come between us and God's saving love and grace.

Getting Ready

- Make a copy of the litany page for each reading participant.
- Prepare for this service with some quiet worship music and silence.
- Light all the Lent candles and the Christ candle.
- Write or draw personal confessions on slips of paper before beginning the litany. (Keep them for the middle of the litany.)
- Add a metal bowl to your worship center, in which you can burn up your confession slips.
- Plan for family or household members to take turns snuffing out the candles.
- Have family or household members take turns reading the "One" part

Good Friday Litany

One: When we hate or are unkind to each other, the world becomes a darker place. (extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us to love each other.

One: When we want everything for ourselves, the world becomes a darker place.
(extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us to share with others.

One: When we scare or bully others, the world becomes a darker place.
(extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us that love is better than fear.

One: When we are jealous of others, the world becomes a darker place.
(extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us contentment.

One: When we lie, the world becomes a darker place. (extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us honesty.

One: People's hatred, greed, selfishness, jealousy, and dishonesty placed Jesus on the cross. (extinguish one candle)

All: For Jesus' friends the world seemed like a very dark place.

One: In the darkness, Jesus said, "O God, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." (extinguish one candle)

Sing: HWB 257 *Were you there*, STS 83 *Remember me*, or STS 84 *So much wrong* while you burn up your confessions, lighting them with the still-burning Christ candle.

(Finish the litany on Easter Morning.)

HOLY SATURDAY

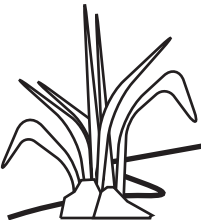
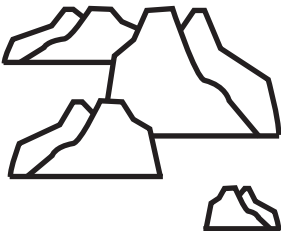
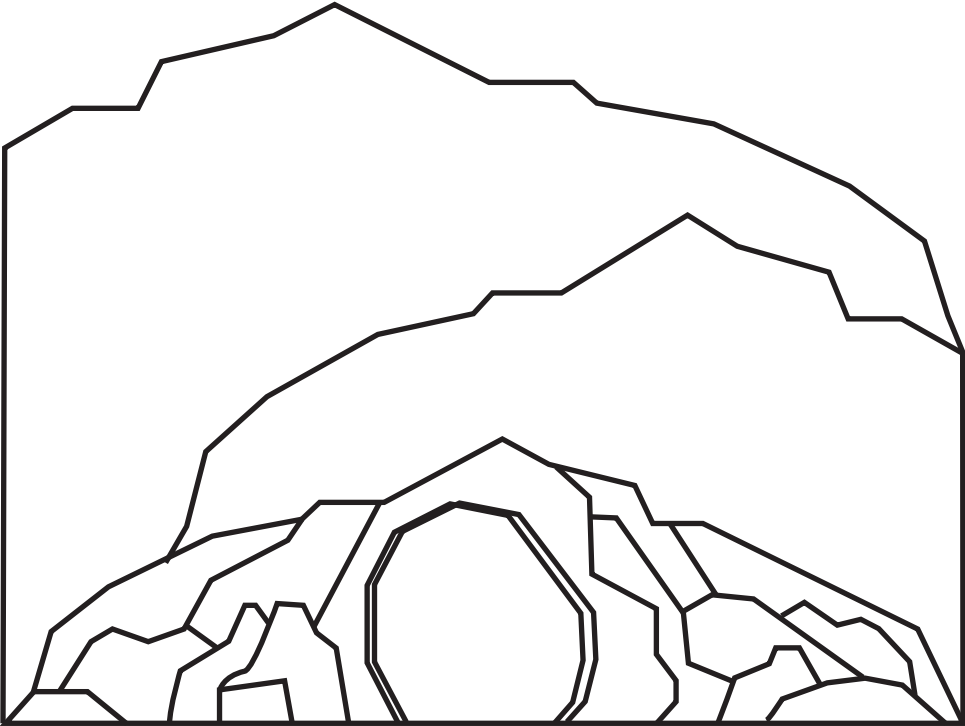
April 11, 2020

Holy Saturday is a day for silence and quiet anticipation of Easter Sunday joy. The sadness of Jesus' sacrificial death lingers with us, but we already anticipate resurrection joy. If your family life includes young children, it is good to let them know that we will soon be singing alleluias. This is a day where Easter eggs are traditionally painted, so we can crack them open and eat them on Easter Sunday, like the tomb that held Jesus' body for a while was opened on Easter morning.

Activities to enrich this day in a silent, anticipatory way

1. Take the chocolate that you may have been resisting during Lent and quietly chop it into chunks. Use the chunks in your favorite chocolate chip cookie recipe, and quietly shape the cookies into rock shapes, so they can remind you of the rock closing the tomb in which Jesus' body lay. Allow the smell to remind you that Easter and its joy are almost here. Save the "Rock-Chocolate" cookies for Easter breakfast and beyond.

2. Bake "Empty Tomb" buns. Use your favorite dinner roll recipe and quietly shape each dinner roll around a marshmallow. Seal it tightly, place the seams facing up on the pan, and wait for them to rise. Quietly wonder what will happen. As the roll bakes, the marshmallow will dissolve and leave a mysteriously empty, but sweet, cavity or tomb. Save these "Empty Tomb" buns for sharing the good news, "Christ is risen! He is not in the grave!" with each other on Easter morning.



EASTER SUNDAY:

Show us your resurrection

April 12, 2020

Call to Worship: (Leader can speak the "All" parts which are echoed by others.)

Leader: Come and celebrate God's resurrection power and love. Hear and believe the good news, for he is risen! God's promise and God's love have broken the barriers; there is nothing between us and God's great love!

All: Yes, praise the Lord! Thank-you, God, for bringing Jesus back to life with more energy and goodness than ever. Alleluia!

Candle lighter: We light all our candles today to celebrate God's resurrection power and love.

Listening to God's Word

Read John 20:1-18. Other scriptures for this week are Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; Colossians 3: 1-4

Pondering thoughts to choose from

1. I wonder what you wonder about this story.
2. I wonder which part of today's story you like best.
3. I wonder what it was like for Mary to meet Jesus again after he died.

Songs of the week

HWB 267 *Christ has arisen*, HWB 269 *Thine is the glory*, or STS 89 *Blessing and honor*.

Litany (continued from Good Friday)

One: On that first Easter, God raised Jesus to life and the world became a brighter place. (light Christ candle)

All: Jesus' love came to lighten the world.

One: Jesus' love shines through each of us and makes the world a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Jesus' love shines through loving actions and words.

One: When we share with those who have less, the world becomes a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Jesus wants us to share.

One: When we trust God and are no longer afraid, the world becomes a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Jesus wants us to trust.

One: When we are content with what we have, the world becomes a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Jesus will supply our needs.

One: When we are honest, the world becomes a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Jesus helps us be truthful.

One: When Jesus lives in us, the world becomes a brighter place. (light one candle)

All: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

(You may want to add your own spontaneous prayers here.)

Easter Sunday Prayer of Thanks (The family worship leader prays this prayer aloud, inviting the others to cross their arms over their chests as they pray together.)

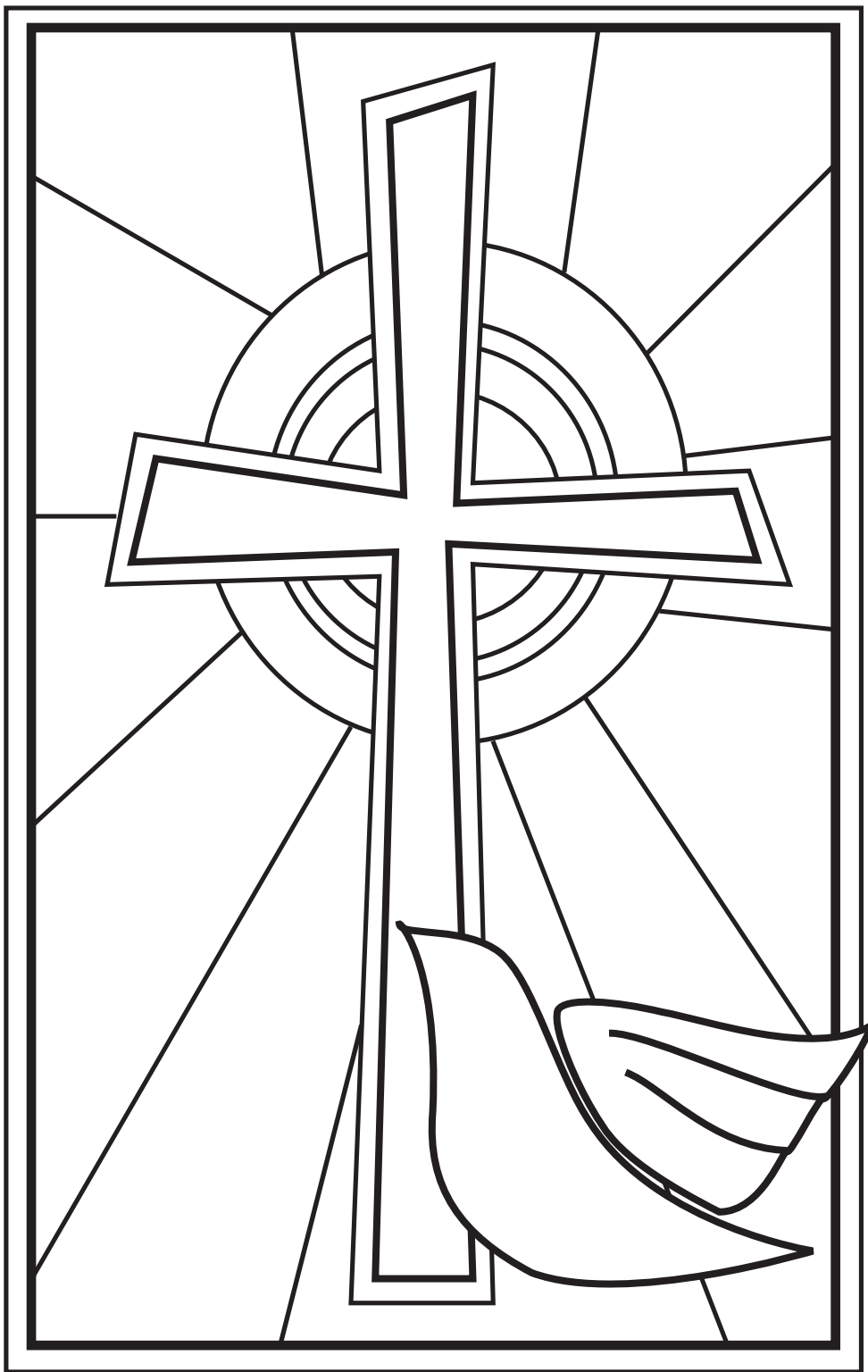
Dear God and Father of our living Lord,
we praise you for the power of your forgiving, life-giving love!
We thank you for raising Jesus from the dead.
We thank you for the wonderful gifts of forgiveness and salvation
that we can enjoy because of Jesus.
We thank you for the Bible,
which helps us see how God's love transformed the lives of Jesus' first
followers.
We thank you for Christians through the ages,
who have loved and followed you as they were transformed by your
love.
We thank you for inviting us to follow you, too,
and for your willingness to transform our lives and faith communities.
We love you and want to follow your son, Jesus.
Thank you for continuing to live in us and with us.
Thank you that your love, which is stronger than sin and death,
can and does lead through suffering to joy.
Alleluia!

Closing ritual (give each person a candle to hold)

Leader: We have gathered as a family of faith, rejoicing in the glory of
the risen Christ. We go, carrying Christ's light into the world, that all may
see Christ in us—that we may see Christ in others. Christ is risen indeed!

All: *As we blow out our Lent and Easter candles, may we stay hungry
for your presence and enjoy the feast of your love for all.*

(blow out candles) **Amen.**





**Mennonite
Church**
USA