

Welcome to Holy Week



Holy Week, the time between Palm Sunday and Easter, is perhaps the most important – and action-packed – week in the Christian church year. Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, overturns tables at the Temple, washes the feet of his Disciples and shares the Last Supper with them, is betrayed, tried, and crucified, dies on the cross, is buried in a tomb, and rises to new life on Easter morning.

To help you mark this time at home, [Rock Spring Congregational UCC](#) in Arlington, VA has prepared this resource. Each day includes a scripture reading, image, song, reflection, and activity. We hope that you will find inspiration and meaning in these pages, and that they will help you prepare your heart for the celebration that is Easter.

PREPARE FOR HOLY WEEK: If you are able, print out the coloring pages included in this resource. Gather them, along with a Bible, markers or crayons, a candle, and any symbols that may be meaningful to you. The music links provided are on Spotify (<https://open.spotify.com/> – you will need to set up a free account if you don't already have one) or you can find them on your favorite online music service.

PREPARE FOR PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP: If you haven't already, go outside, collect some big leaves or grasses to be ready to wave on Sunday during worship. Or print the palm image below – color it and cut it out and be ready to wave your palms during worship. Or create a palm branch in any other way you would like!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK: This week, you might listen to these playlists on Spotify:

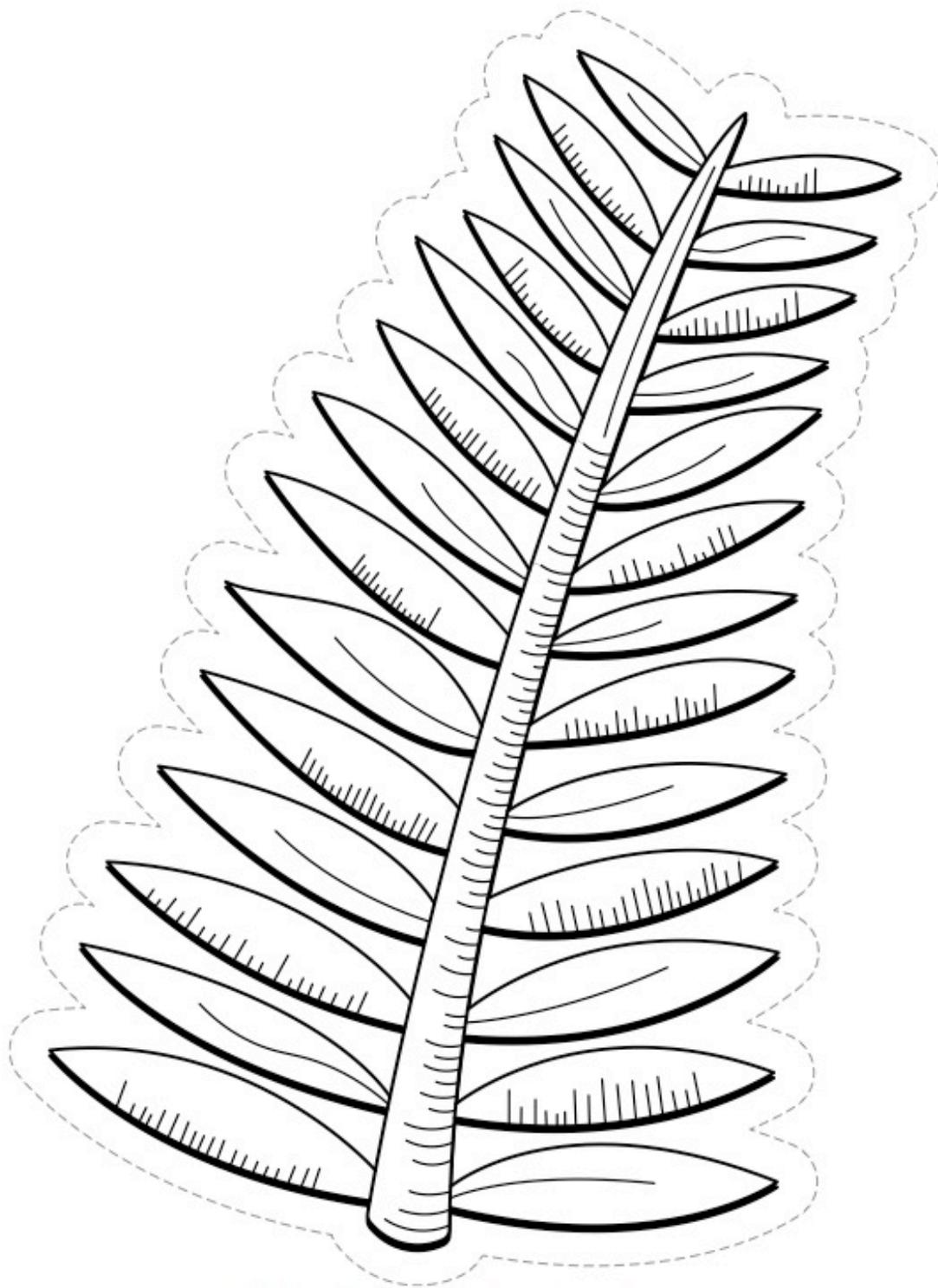
- “Lent Another Way” ([Lent Another Way](#))
- “A Playlist for Lent and Holy Week” ([Lent and Holy Week](#))

The musicals [Godspell](#) and [Jesus Christ Superstar](#) are both based on the events of Holy Week. The soundtracks are linked here; movie versions are available to rent on Amazon Prime Video.

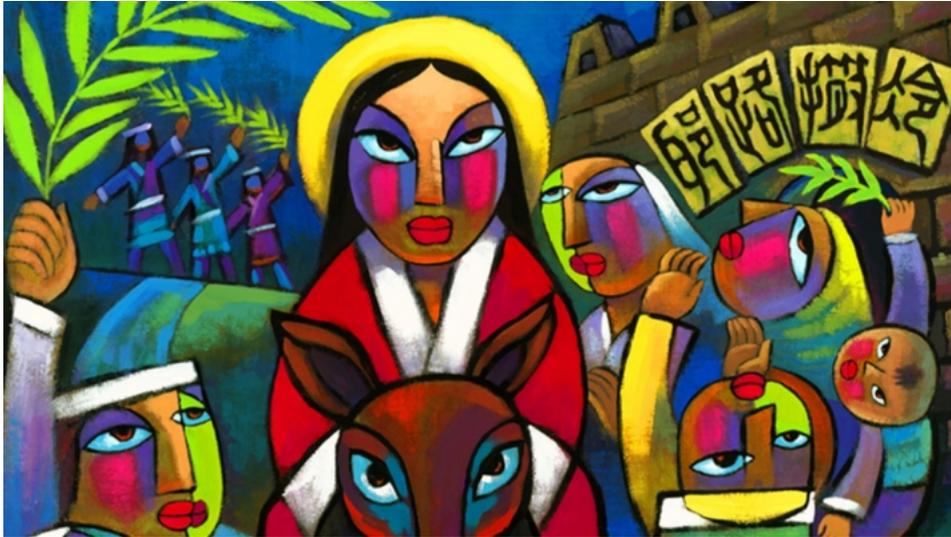
A note for families with school-age children: In many places, Holy Week always coincides with Spring Break. Many of you had plans that have been canceled or that no longer seem so different from “every day” life. While you grieve those plans, we hope that you will use this opportunity to mark Holy Week in new and different ways.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: In addition to using the prompts below, we encourage families to download this free resource: [Picture the Bible Holy Week](#), which includes child-friendly retellings of the Scripture and excellent “wondering” questions.

The coloring pages are from [Illustrated Ministry](#). Check them out for additional resources, some of which are free and some of which are available for purchase.



April 5: Palm Sunday – Jesus Enters Jerusalem



Our True Hosanna by James He Qi

Read: Matthew 21:1-11

Reflect:
In Their Eyes

In their eyes, I am a warrior,
And this colt – a massive warhorse.

They watch my fingers, tangled in the mane,
And see a kingly grip on a saving sword.
They watch my lips with expectation
For a sovereign command.

They spread their cloaks in the dust for a savior,
But they don't know what that means.
They sing their praises for my kingdom,
But they point at Jerusalem.

Yes, hosanna, blessed is the king
Who comes in the name of the Lord...
But, oh –
Blind children.

My kingdom is not of this world.
Judith L. Roth

Listen: [Come Ye](#) by Sweet Honey in the Rock

Do: Watch your church's online worship service. If your church doesn't have one, feel free to watch with Rock Spring Congregational UCC in Arlington, Virginia at 11:00 a.m. (<https://bit.ly/RSlivestream>) Be ready to wave your "palms" during the service.

April 6: Monday – Jesus Goes to the Temple



The Cleansing of the Temple – Alexander Smirnov

Read: Mark 11:15-18

Reflect:

Manifesto:

The Mad Farmer Liberation Front

Love the quick profit, the annual raise,
vacation with pay. Want more
of everything ready-made. Be afraid
to know your neighbors and to die.

And you will have a window in your head.
Not even your future will be a mystery
any more. Your mind will be punched in a card
and shut away in a little drawer.

When they want you to buy something
they will call you. When they want you
to die for profit they will let you know.
So, friends, every day do something
that won't compute. Love the Lord.
Love the world. Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it.

Denounce the government and embrace
the flag. Hope to live in that free
republic for which it stands.
Give your approval to all you cannot
understand. Praise ignorance, for what man
has not encountered he has not destroyed.

Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millenium. Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophecy such returns.
Put your faith in the two inches of humus
that will build under the trees
every thousand years.

Listen to carrion — put your ear
close, and hear the faint chattering
of the songs that are to come.
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful
though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap
for power, please women more than men.
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy
a woman satisfied to bear a child?
Will this disturb the sleep
of a woman near to giving birth?

Go with your love to the fields.
Lie down in the shade. Rest your head
in her lap. Swear allegiance
to what is nighest your thoughts.

As soon as the generals and the politicians
can predict the motions of your mind,
lose it. Leave it as a sign
to mark the false trail, the way
you didn't go.

Listen: [Strange Fruit](#) by Billie Holiday

Do: What is a current policy that makes you angry? Write a letter, postcard, or email to a policymaker urging them to “overturn the tables” of that policy.

Be like the fox
who makes more tracks than necessary,
some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.

~ *Wendell Berry*

April 7: Tuesday – Jesus Washes the Disciples’ Feet



Photo by Jessica Quinn (UCC Justice & Witness Ministries) of UCC pastors washing immigrants' feet to honor their difficult journeys.

Read: John 13:1-16

Reflect:

Christ Has No Body

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

~Teresa of Avila

Listen: [Ella's Song](#) by Holly Near

Do: Write a thank you note or create a sign to thank someone who is continuing to provide essential services during this time of COVID-19. Some ideas are postal workers, garbage collectors, doctors, nurses, grocery store employees.

April 8: Wednesday – The Last Supper



Last Supper Blue by Ivan Guaderrama

Read: Luke 22:7-20

Reflect:

Setting the Table

As I lay the fork near the plate,
Let me remember this is Your table, not mine.
As I set the water glasses down
And fold the napkins, let me be reminded
That every setting at this table
Is Yours, not mine.

Each one who will partake of this meal
Is a particular someone You love, a someone
You have made and whom You sustain.
In You nothing and no one is forgotten.
How vast and providential is the memory
With which You keep us all.

It is only we who forget You
And then one another.
It is we who starve each other
And exclude each other.
Give me new eyes.
When the glass is raised by my friend
Let me see You drinking.
When the fork is lifted by my child,
Let me recognize You eating.
You are the hidden joy which feeds
And keeps everything. You are the table,
The guest, the meal, and the
commemoration.

Make in my person a place setting for You.
Remind me of my true nature
Which is recalled only in You.

~ *Gunilla Norris*

Listen: [Room at the Table](#) by Carrie Newcomer

Do: As you sit down for dinner tonight, pray for people who may not have a table at which to sit, and “invite” them to join you at your table. If you are able, make a donation to an organization working to relieve hunger in our area.

April 9: Maundy Thursday – Jesus Prays in the Garden



Praying at Gethsemane by James He Qi

Read: Mark 14:32-42

Reflect:
Gethsemane

The grass never sleeps.
Or the roses.
Nor does the lily have a secret eye that shuts until morning.
Jesus said, wait with me. But the disciples slept.

The cricket has such splendid fringe on his feet,
and it sings, have you noticed, with its whole body,
and heaven knows if it ever sleeps.

Jesus said, wait with me. And maybe the stars did, maybe
the wind wound itself into a silver tree, and didn't move.
Maybe the lake far away, where once he walked
as on a blue pavement,
lay still and waited, wild awake.

Oh the dear bodies, slumped and eye-shut, that could not
keep that vigil, how they must have wept,
so utterly human, knowing this too
must be part of the story.

~Mary Oliver

Listen: [Gethsemane \(I Only Want to Say\)](#) from *Jesus Christ Superstar*

Do: Share Communion in your own home, with whatever form of bread and juice you have, then go outside (or open a window) to reflect and pray. This is a link to an at-home Communion Service that was developed by Maren Tirabassi that you might refer to for inspiration:
https://www.ucc.org/online_communion_palm_sunday_april_5_tirabassi

April 10: Good Friday – Jesus is Arrested and Dies



And God Saw by Kent L. Drake

Read: Matthew 26:47-56, 27:11-61

Reflect:

After great pain, a formal feeling comes –

After great pain, a formal feeling comes –
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs –
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?

The Feet, mechanical, go round –
A Wooden way
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought –
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment, like a stone –

This is the Hour of Lead –
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the Snow –
First – Chill – then Stupor – then the letting go –
~Emily Dickinson

Listen: [Were You There](#) by The Seldom Scene

Do: Watch your church's online Good Friday worship service. If your church doesn't have one, feel free to watch with Rock Spring Congregational UCC in Arlington, Virginia at 7:00 p.m. (<https://bit.ly/RSlivestream>) Before the service, be sure to have a candle to light. *This service will be somber, but not scary, and is appropriate for all ages and will include a Children's Moment.*

April 11: Holy Saturday – Jesus Is Buried



Jesus is laid in the tomb and covered in incense by Damian Gadal

Read: Matthew 27:62-66

Reflect:

Be Still

This day
Let all stand still
In silence,
In sorrow.

Sun and moon
Be still.

Earth
Be still.

Still
The waters.

Still
The wind.

Let the ground
Gape in stunned
Lamentation.

Let it weep
As it receives
What it thinks
It will not
Give up.

Let it groan
As it gathers
The One
Who was thought
Forever stilled.

Time
Be still.

Watch
And wait.

Still.

~Jan Richardson

Listen: [Be Still](#) by The Fray

Do: Be still. Find a comfortable spot and settle yourself. Feel the ground that is always beneath us, always holding us, and let yourself be firmly held by it. Set a timer (or use a meditation app like Calm) for 2-10 minutes, whatever feels like a challenge but not too much for you. Bring your attention to your breathing. And then simply be still. Notice whatever thoughts arise for you as Holy Week comes to a close. When the chime rings, bring your attention back to your surroundings. Take a moment to express your gratitude for the life of Jesus Christ. Amen.

If you prefer, find an outdoor labyrinth to walk (be sure to practice physical distancing – remain at least 6' apart from other walkers) or use a finger labyrinth (many are available online). As you move to the center, reflect on your journey through Holy Week. In the center, pause to examine how this experience has moved or changed you. As you move out of the labyrinth, reflect on how you might hold this new awareness as we move into Eastertide.

April 12: Easter Sunday – Jesus is Risen!



Apple Tree Bloom by Iris Pond

Read: Matthew 28:1-10

Do: Watch your church's online worship service. If your church doesn't have one, feel free to watch with Rock Spring Congregational UCC in Arlington, Virginia at 11:00 a.m. (<https://bit.ly/RSlivestream>) Join us as we celebrate the Good News of Christ's Resurrection!

Color the Alleluia butterfly on the next page. Half is designed for you, and the other half is for you to design however you'd like. As you're coloring, think of all the ways you might celebrate the Good News every day.

