SEVENOAKS ALLIANCE CHURCH

a collection of scripture readings and reflections

HOLY WEEK

PRAYER GUIDE

HOLY WEEK PRAYER GUIDE

Holy week is the week immediately preceding Easter. It is a particularly special time for followers of Jesus as we prepare ourselves for the death and resurrection of Christ. It is a week full of emotion; from the triumphal joy of Palm Sunday, to the deep sorrow of Good Friday; from the solemn reflection of Holy Saturday, to the surge of rejoicing on Easter Sunday. This year we'd like to supplement your reflection through inviting you to engage in this Holy Week Prayer Guide. This guide is designed to help you engage with Jesus during this most special of times in a deep and reflective way. Each day there is some form of prayer exercise – devotional, spiritual exercise, prayer activity – to help you delve deeper in your spiritual walk. Each day also highlights (in bold) an emotion that is descriptive of that day.

Sunday March 28, 2021

Palm Sunday

TRIUMPHAL

Today, on Palm Sunday, we invite you to reflect on the 'triumphal entry' of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem that marks the beginning of Holy Week. As you read the scripture passages there is space for you to note down anything that catches your attention. There are then some questions for you to consider and some prayer points for you to pray through.

Read John 12:12-19 and Zechariah 9:9

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Questions

1. As you picture the triumphal entry, what would you be doing in the scene? (rejoicing with the crowd, confused with the disciples, frustrated like the Pharisee's?)
2. Are there areas of your life (work, finances, relationships, goals) where Jesus is not king?
3. We all tend toward rejoicing when things are good and complaining when things are bad. Reflect on how you might learn to rejoice, and trust Jesus as king, when you are going through hard times.

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the courage to rejoice in difficult circumstances
2. Pray for those in your life who are struggling to rejoice
3. Ask God to help you give over all areas of your life to Him.
4. Pray that you might encounter Christ in His death and resurrection more powerfully this Easter season.

You are also invited to join with your brothers and sisters in Christ at the Sevenoaks online service. We Livestream at 8.45am and then the recorded livestream is available any time after about 10.30am. www.sevenoaks.org

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Monday March 29, 2021

CONTRITE

FOCUS: IN

As we move through Holy Week, we get closer each day to the great events of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. At the beginning of Holy Week we invite you to start with preparation. Prepare you heart through confession and repentance. Though we all fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23), God, in the events that form the climax of Holy Week, has provided a way for us to come back to Him. To receive mercy and forgiveness, to have the slate wiped clean and to enjoy the beauty of fellowship with Him.

Confess

Take a few moments of silence and reflect on the ways you know you have been living in sin. If you wish, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anything unconfessed. If it helps, write those things down below.

[23] Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my thoughts.
[24] See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalm 139:23-24

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Repent

Spend some time confessing your sins back to God. Be honest. Own your sin. Ask Him to forgive you in the full assurance that He is pleased to pardon and forgive you.

[9] If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
1 John 1:9

When we confess and repent we often feel a weight lift from our souls as we receive God's forgiveness. In response to His mercy spend some time in worship. You may wish to play some worship music, read a psalm of thanksgiving (e.g. Psalm 34, 95, 100, 107, 118), or simply put thanksgiving in your own words in prayer. Perhaps you wish to write out your prayer. Feel free to do so below.

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Amen.

"To confess your sins to God is not to tell Him anything he doesn't already know. Until you confess them however, they are the abyss between you."
Frederick Buechner

Tuesday March 30, 2021

DESPERATE

FOCUS: OUT

Today we'd like to encourage you to pray for your neighbours. It is God's desire that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9). We also, as followers of Jesus who are called to imitate Christ, ought to be growing in our desire to see others come to Christ. We should be asking God to create in us a desperation for the lost. Today, we encourage you to prayer walk your neighbourhood, through the halls of your condominium building or on the streets around where you work or go to school. If you cannot get out then pray in your living room. Here are some prayer ideas:

- Pray for your neighbours and co-workers to come to the knowledge of Christ
- Pray that this Easter the cross and resurrection of Christ would become relevant to them
- Ask God to bring divine appointments into their lives
- Pray God's peace and blessing over their lives and homes
- Ask God to use their struggles, heartaches and pain in a redeeming way

When you get home, write down anything you sensed the Lord putting on your heart or anything you heard the Spirit whisper. If He's calling you to do something, obey.

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[7]So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. [8]All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. [9]I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.
John 10:7-9

Wednesday March 31, 2021

PRAYERFUL

Yesterday we prayed for our neighbours, today we encourage you to pray with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

This evening at 7pm we will be hosting a Livestream Prayer event that you can join. Visit our website (www.sevenoaks.org) and look for the 'watch live' button. You can use the chat function to share a prayer request.

[19]Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. [20]For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'
Matthew 18:19-20

Thursday April 1, 2021

Maundy Thursday

LOVING

Maundy Thursday is the day Jesus shared the Last Supper with His disciples in the upper room. It's also the day where He washed the disciple's feet and commanded them to both "do likewise," and to love one another. "Maundy" is a shortened form of mandatum (Latin) which means *command*. It's a reference to this command of Christ to love each other.

Read John 13:1-28

As you read the scripture passage there is space for you to note down anything that catches your attention.

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Questions

1. If you were dining at the Last Supper table when Jesus got up to wash the disciple's feet, how would you respond to Jesus? Like Peter? Differently? Why?
2. Jesus says "I have set an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." Is there anyone God is calling you to humbly serve today?
3. Jesus doesn't just suggest that we love one another, but he commands that we do. Who have you been finding it difficult to love? Why?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the courage to love those you find difficult to love and then resolve to do so
2. Pray for your church family – that we would abound in love for one another
3. Pray for those who feel they've betrayed Jesus and are thus unforgivable. Pray that they'd find their way back to Him.

Friday April 2, 2021

Good Friday

SORROWFUL

You are also invited to join with your brothers and sisters in Christ at the Sevenoaks online Good Friday service. We will Livestream at 10.30am and then the recorded livestream will be available any time after 12.30pm. www.sevenoaks.org

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Saturday April 3, 2021

Holy Saturday

SOLEMN

Holy Saturday is the day between death and resurrection. It is the day that remembers Christ's body lying in the tomb. It is typically a day of solemnity after the harrowing events of Good Friday.

Today you are invited into silence, inactivity and solemnity.

Set aside an hour (or more) with a journal and pen

- Reflect back on the week and ask God to speak to you.
- Spend some significant time in silence and listening
- Journal what you sense the Lord saying to you – it could be an inner prompting, the still small voice of the Spirit, some kind of impression, a word or picture.
- Respond to the Lord with worship, prayer, thanksgiving…

Sunday April 4, 2021

Easter Sunday

REJOICING

You are invited to join with your brothers and sisters in Christ at the Sevenoaks online service. We Livestream at 8.45am and then the recorded livestream is available any time after about 10.30am. www.sevenoaks.org