

STATIONS ON THE STREET

Connecting the Story of Easter to your Neighborhood

This exercise is intended to be adapted to your own context. It can be set up to walk in more urban/residential areas but could also be adapted to be driven in more suburban/rural communities. Please use it in whatever way best connects your place to the events of this incredible week.

The story of the arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus took place in Jerusalem 2000 years and thousands of miles from the streets that most of us walk. Sometimes this reality can become a barrier to being able to grasp how much this one week in history has impacted the entirety of the future of humanity. Purposefully walking the familiarity of your streets can bring the events of what we refer to as “the passion week of Jesus” to life in new and refreshing ways. We have mapped out a route ahead of time with 14 places to stop and reflect on each station. You are also free to just begin walking and stop where you feel led to stop. As you begin this journey, may God's Spirit open your eyes in new and restored ways to be able to see these events in the people, streets, and places that we often pass by without much thought.

Stations of the Cross

From early Christianity, when pilgrims came to Jerusalem, they visited sites where Jesus was known to have been. Eventually, following in the footsteps of the Lord, along the way of the cross, became a part of the pilgrimage visit. The traditional stations came about during the crusades, when it was no longer safe to visit the holy sites. In the 1500's, villages in Europe created “replicas” of the way of the cross, commemorating the places along the route in Jerusalem. They are presented here as an alternative to the traditional stations and as a way of reflecting on the Scriptural accounts of Christ's passion.

The Invitation to Walk With Christ

We do this practice meditatively as a way to experience Christ's road to the cross as the long, arduous journey that it was. It is an invitation to walk with Christ on this path to the cross and to accompany Him in his grief, betrayal, and suffering in solidarity with our world (and even our own neighborhood) now heaving and sighing, longing for redemption.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

-Book of Common Prayer

Station 1: IN THE GARDEN

location



Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

-Matthew 25:36-41

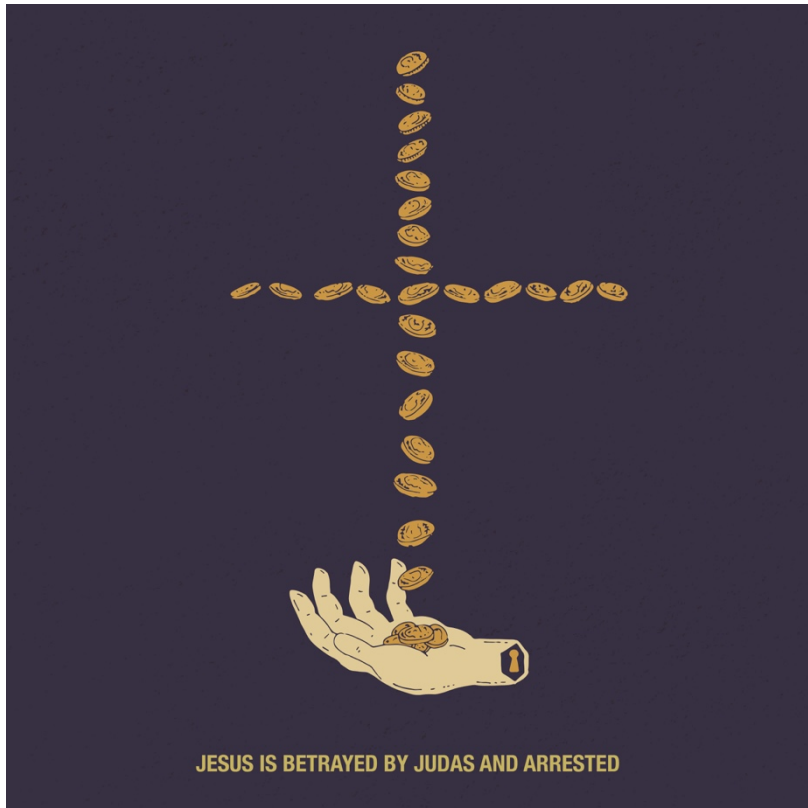
Lord, Jesus Christ, Teacher on the Way, death is an inevitable of the human situation. Even though we try to avoid it, the Paschal rhythm of death, burial, and resurrection teaches us that the only path to new life is through the narrow passageway of death. And yet this is a hard way. Jesus in his humanity, was deeply distressed and laden with sorrow, and yet he surrendered to your will. I admit my spirit is willing and my flesh is weak. Show me the places in my own life where I must die to self in order to be born to new life.

As we walk this way together, teach me how to meet my own deaths — large and small — with courage and grace.

Give me strength to pray and keep watch with my neighbors in their sorrow and time of need.

Station 2: JESUS IS BETRAYED BY JUDAS AND ARRESTED

location



Then, while [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, "the man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely." He came and immediately went over to him and said, "Rabbi." And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. -Mark 14: 43-46

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, you know what it is to be betrayed by those in your inner circle, those closest to you. To be sold out for personal gain when others cannot face their own shadows. And yet you chose to forgive freely and to live freely. I too have suffered the pain of betrayal and sometimes I admit my resentments wall off my heart. Give me grace to let my guard down, to embrace vulnerability, and to trust you even in the face of my own hurt.

As we walk this way together, teach me how to keep my heart open and free.

Give me grace to forgive my neighbor again and again.

Station 3: JESUS IS CONDEMNED BY SANHEDRIN

location



When day came the council of elders of the people met, both chief priests and scribes, and they brought him before their Sanhedrin. They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond. But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." They all asked, "Are you then the Son of God?" He replied to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth." -Luke 22: 66-71

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, the truth of who you are and what you were about as you walked this earth offended those with power. They did not expect a messiah like this. So ordinary. So confounding. So controversial. Upending all of what they knew and had built their lives on – a shiny exterior of righteousness that you said was nothing but a whitewashed tomb. You said that the kingdom belonged not to the rich or the religious but to the poor, the hungry, the marginalized, the outcast, and the broken-hearted. These were blasphemous words. Fighting words. So much so, that they couldn't see their own salvation. Teach me to see you Jesus in the unexpected places — in the faces of the poor, the stranger, my enemy and my neighbor. Let me attend to the holy in the midst of the mundane and the ordinary, the small and the unimportant.

As we walk this path together, may the parts of your gospel that offend me invite me into new humble ways of being.

Help me to see you here in my neighborhood in the places I least expect.

Station 4: JESUS DENIED BY PETER

location



Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about!" As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus the Nazarene." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!" A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away." At that he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. -Matthew 26: 69-75

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, I admit that my spirit is willing and my flesh is weak. Though I say I will lay my life down for you, how easily I renege on my promise and choose the easy way. How quickly I choose self-preservation over self-sacrifice and fear over trust. How readily, I betray you, others and myself. And yet your love never condemns me but pursues me again and again, inviting me into your divine dance of healing.

As we walk this way together, give me grace to trust you enough to lay my life down.

Give me grace to forgive myself again and again.

Station 5: JUDGED BY PILATE

Location:



The chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." The chief priests accused him of many things. Again, Pilate questioned him, "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of." Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.... Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas... [and] handed [Jesus] over to be crucified. -Mark 15: 1-5, 15

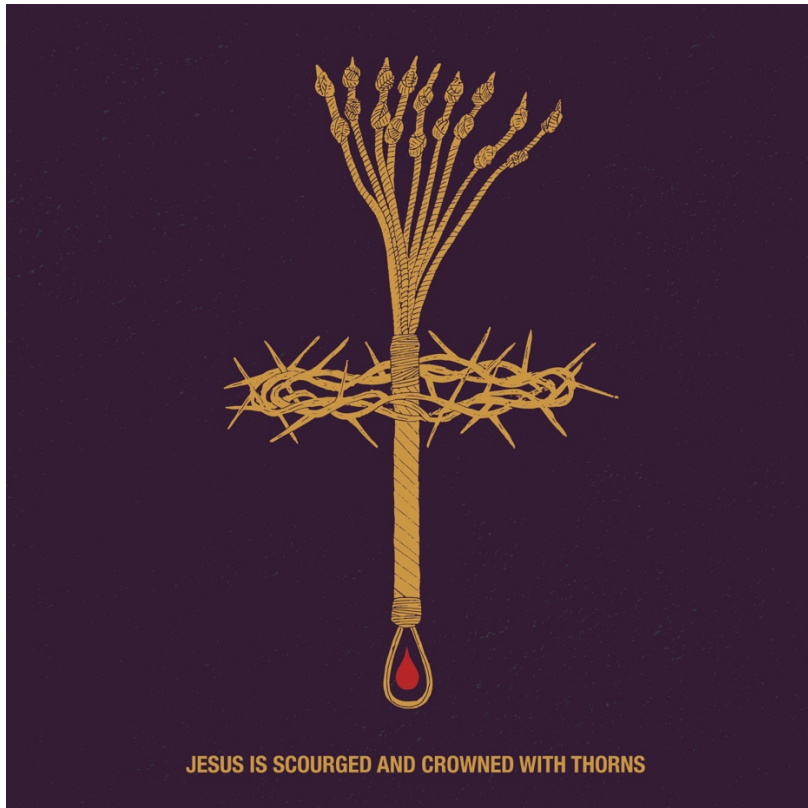
Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, we are all subjected to death. Sometimes we bring it on ourselves; sometimes it is in the hands of others. You were condemned to die for a crime you didn't commit. The ultimate injustice. The greatest humiliation. You being God, with all the power in the world, chose to give up your power. I admit that I balk at the thought of being wrongfully accused or suffering injustice. I do not easily give up my power or my need to control. Show me the way, O humble king, to face accusation and injustice with quiet dignity and strength.

As we walk this way together, show me the path of descent and give me the grace to give up power, privilege and position for the sake of love.

May I put the needs of my neighbor before my own. May I consider them more important than myself.

Station 6: JESUS IS SCOURGED AND GOUGED BY THORNS

location



Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. -John 19:1-3

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, you know what it is to suffer. You have experienced the depth of human suffering and abuse: flogging, beating, mockery, nakedness, slander, public humiliation, false accusation, unjust incarceration, dehumanization, and lynching on a tree. It is hard for me to even sit with you in your passion and your grief. My defense mechanisms of denial, numbing and avoidance kick in. Because to consider your suffering brings up the pain of my own. Help me not to run too quickly from this place, knowing that by your wounds, I am healed.

As we walk this way together, teach me how to acknowledge and tend to my own wounds.

Give me grace to sit with others in the place of suffering.

Station 7: JESUS BEARS THE CROSS

location



When the chief priests and the guards saw [Jesus] they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." ... They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. -John 19: 6,15-17

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, sometimes the call upon our life seems like more than we can bear. We are tempted to shrink from the challenges and hardships of our path. We wonder if we can make it all the way up the hill. Lord Jesus Christ, you carried your own cross with strength and perseverance and were undeterred by those who demeaned you along the way.

As we walk this way together, show me what is my cross to carry, my burden to bear, and teach me how to shoulder it well. Show me what it means to take up my cross and follow you.

Lord, teach me your self-sacrificing love on behalf of my neighbor.

Station 8: JESUS IS HELPED BY SIMON THE CYRENIAN TO CARRY THE CROSS

location



They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. -Mark 15: 21

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, sometimes we need help. We need companions on the way to help us shoulder our burdens when they get too heavy. And yet, we are embarrassed to ask for help or unable to receive when it is given. As we walk this path together, forgive me for my proud self-sufficiencies and for all the ways in which they wall me off from you and from others. Save me from the exhaustion that sets in when I am unable to receive the help I need.

As we walk this way together, help me learn to recognize the help that you send and to humbly receive it when it is given.

May I receive the gift of my neighbor.

Station 9: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

location



A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.' At that time, people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?" -Luke 23: 27-31

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, teach us how to grieve. We do not know how to grieve and what to grieve for. Like the women of Jerusalem, our grieving is full of melodrama and it usually misses the point. True grief, the kind that comes from seeing and grasping our true situation, is so deep it can hardly be spoken. It can only be endured. Lord Jesus Christ, our brother and our friend, our journey with you must be one of true sorrow and true conversion.

As we walk this path together, lead me beyond the melodrama of public weeping and flailing into the godly grief that keeps me in touch my with my humanness and leads to true repentance. Let me know the comfort promised to those who truly mourn.

May I mourn with my neighbors who are mourning and may they also experience your profound comfort.

Station 10: CRUCIFIED

location



When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."] -Luke 23: 33-34

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, the time has come. The moment to which your whole life has been leading. I look at you and see that you are not afraid. You are resolute and committed and I am in awe of what I see. Is there any word that could come from my mouth, any sentence that could capture what is happening now? You die for me and for the sins of the world, you become the Man of Sorrows so that we can have joy.

As we walk this path together, I learn that sometimes there are no words...

May my neighbors know the depths and heights of your stunning love demonstrated on the cross.

Station 11: JESUS PROMISES HIS KINGDOM TO A THIEF

location



Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." -Luke 23: 39-43

Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, you extend a generous and lavish mercy unlike any other. Your abundant grace blows me away again and again. This is good news indeed. For in spite of my propensity to look down at other "sinners", I am frustrated with the ways that I myself fall. I keep hoping that last time would be the last, but it is not. I keep wishing that at some point on the journey I could be certain that we can transcend our own human frailty, never to fall again. But I am learning that this will always be a part of the journey. And though I am prone to judge and often stingy with grace, your mercy abounds to me. And I am eternally grateful.

As we walk this path together, may I freely give the mercy I have received.

Lord, grant me a merciful heart that I may join in your reconciliation and forgiveness to all.

Station 12: JESUS SPEAKS TO HIS MOTHER AND DISCIPLE

location



Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. -John 19: 25-27

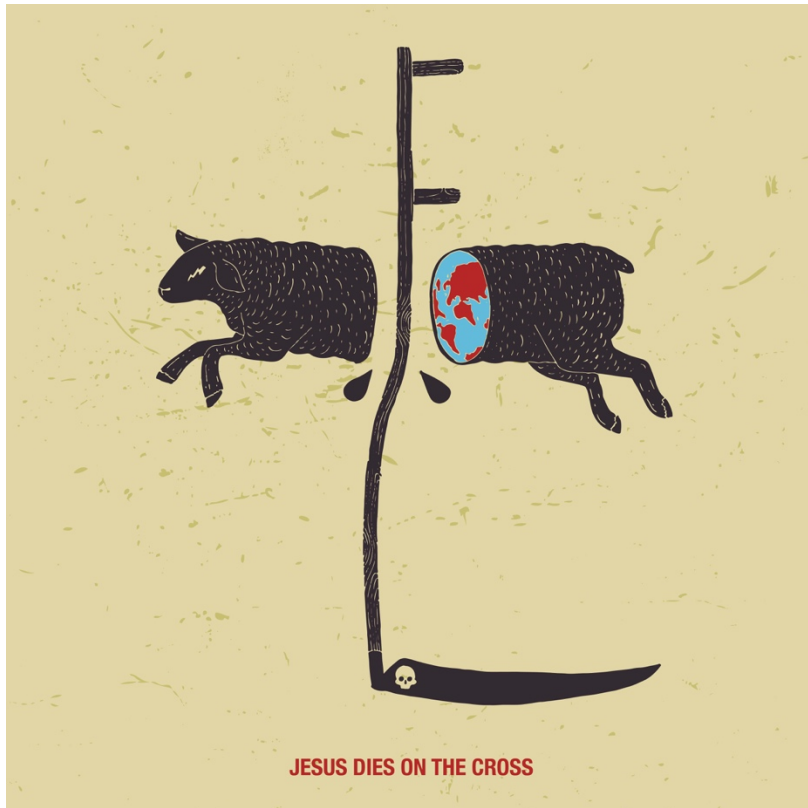
Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, your life on this earth was shaped by a mother who was utterly given over to the will of God in her life. Her prayer, "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word," reverberates throughout history as a picture of what it means to be totally given over to the will of God. I wonder what it was like to look into her eyes this day and see the pain that such willingness brought upon her. Who could have imagined that it would all end so horribly? Was there any regret in her eyes? Lord Jesus Christ, our brother and our friend, your mother's life teaches us that sometimes we must let go of that which we have birthed. We must allow it to be taken from us in order for it to be returned to us again. Sometimes it seems like this is the deepest pain of all.

As we walk this way together, teach me how to bear the pain of letting go.

Lord, grant me courage that I may be willing to stand by those in need.

Station 13: DEATH ON THE CROSS

location



It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last. -Luke 23:44-46

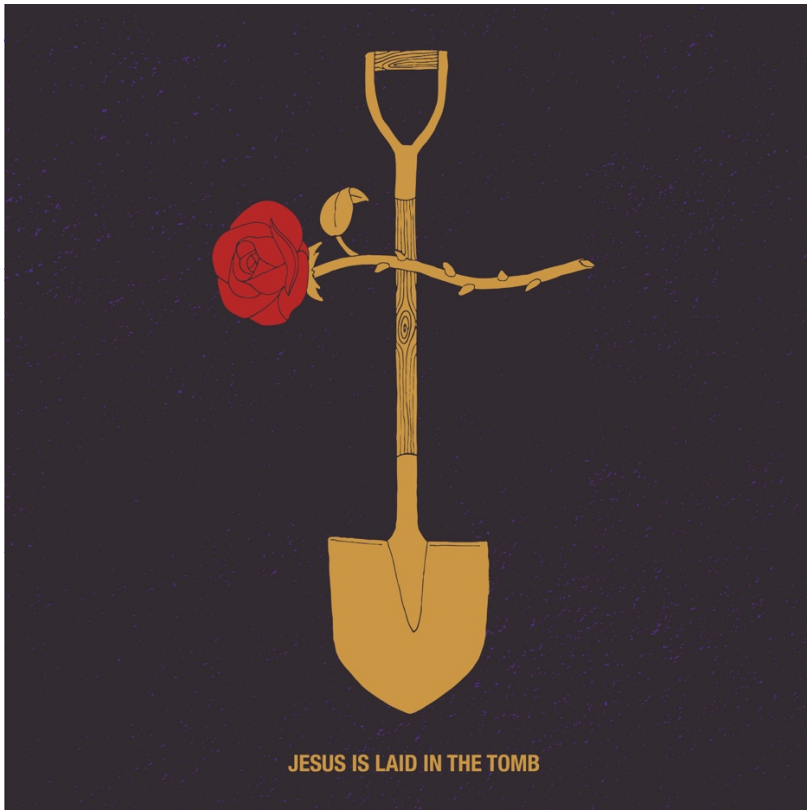
Lord Jesus Christ, our Teacher on the Way, how did you know when it was time to let go? How did you know when you had suffered enough and could finally and completely commend your spirit into God's hand? I confess that I don't always know when it is time to let go. I cling and grasp for every last straw. I do not lay my life down willingly and so it always has to be wrenched from me which always hurts more. As we walk this path together, teach me how to let go when it is time. Teach me to relinquish that very last breath of a thing that I think is mine to claim, so that I can live in total abandonment to you. But even in this, help me not to force what I cannot be or jump ahead of where I really am.

As we walk this path together, show me how to do what I do not yet know how to do.

Lord, have mercy on us all, to abandon ourselves to you.

Station 14: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

location



When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. -Matthew 27: 57-60

We watch in silence as Jesus' body is taken down from the cross, wrapped in a linen cloth and prepared for burial. We allow ourselves to feel the depth of Christ's love for us and the depth of our loss. We bow our hearts in response to this sacred moment.

Silent Prayer

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, your passion and death is the sacrifice that unites earth and heaven and reconciles all people to you. May we who have faithfully reflected on these mysteries follow in your steps and so come to share your glory in heaven where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Stations of the Street adapted by [The Practicing Church](#) from the [Neighborhood Liturgy Project](#) and [An Invitation to Walk With Christ Prayer Guide](#).