

For God So  
**LOVED**

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## FAMILY WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

### How to Use the Lent 2019 Family Worship Experiences

The **Family Worship Experiences** are intended to be used during a family worship experience during Lent—where all ages are worshiping together. There are experiences for these services during Lent: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. Activities to accompany the Sunday services during Lent can be found on the **Family Worship Activities** document.

Each service has three Family Worship Experiences to choose from. Prepare one packet of supplies for each child. Pass out the packets before the service. A Bible is also needed during each service.

You can post the instructions for each activity on a screen during the service. Or, if you'd prefer, you can print out the instructions and include one in each packet.

Some of these experiences will require a flat surface or table for children to work on. You could also provide a clipboard or sturdy piece of cardboard for children to use when writing or drawing. Do whatever works for your context.

Send home the **Family Take-Home Activities** and **Scripture Art Journal**.

# ASH WEDNESDAY FAMILY WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

## MARCH 6, 2019

**Scripture:** Isaiah 58:1-12

Believe it or not, Ash Wednesday is a great place to include children in worship. It's naturally multisensory and image-rich, but the liturgy and ritual of an Ash Wednesday service also deserve some explanation.

### STEP 1: TALK ABOUT IT

Explain Ash Wednesday to your kids. A great resource you may consider using is Kyle Tyler's blog, *How to Explain Ash Wednesday to Your Children*, found online at The Foundry Community blog <http://www.thefoundrycommunity.com/how-to-explain-ash-wednesday-to-your-children/>.

### STEP 2: INCLUDE ALL WORSHIPERS

Invite families to participate in an Ash Wednesday service together. If your church doesn't host an Ash Wednesday service or offers separate activities for kids on Wednesdays, including Ash Wednesday, there are still many ways to engage kids in the experience.

### STEP 3: ENGAGE

Using one or more of the three options offered here, help kids make a tangible, relatable connection to the symbolism and the meaning behind the ritual of Ash Wednesday.

#### *Option 1: Create a Mural*

##### **Supplies Needed:**

- Butcher paper or newsprint rolled out in a long mural-style strip
- Coloring supplies (markers, crayons, or colored pencils)

Fasting is a discipline that people often participate in during the season of Lent to make space to hear God. Sometimes, however, fasting can become about people trying to look holier or better to God. That's not what God is interested in at all.

Isaiah 58 reminds us in a very pointed fashion that sometimes the most faithful fasting is taking time to notice the injustice around us and sharing what we have as a part of the solution. Invite kids to share places where they notice "injustice," where life seems to be hard, unfair, or wrong for someone they know, know about, or have seen on the news. Encourage each participant to draw that injustice on the big mural paper. Invite the participants to include themselves somewhere in the picture. How might they help provide food, shelter, clothing, friendship, or a voice of advocacy?

Find a place to hang the mural throughout Lent as a reminder that God is calling us to see the injustice around us and take action.

### ***Option 2: Foil Cross Impressions***

#### **Supplies Needed:**

- Thin foam sheets found at craft stores OR foam trays often used for fruit or pre-cut items in grocery stores (Don't use foam trays that held meat products.)
- Aluminum foil or foil tape
- Pencils, ball point pens, or embossing tools

**Before the Service:** If you used foam trays, wash and dry them. Cut the foam into cross shapes. Cover the foam cross with foil.

**During the Service:** Use the end of a pencil, ballpoint pen, or embossing tool to create a design in the cross that illustrates what the cross means, particularly during the season of Lent. It may be helpful to read *Isaiah 58:6-9* and talk about images and impressions that come to mind.

### ***Option 3: Charcoal Art***

#### **Supplies Needed:**

- Cardstock
- Artists charcoal (can be purchased at craft supply stores or on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com))

Invite participants to use the artists charcoal to make fingerprints, a picture, or a cross as they reflect on the meaning of Ash Wednesday, the experience of having a cross marked on their forehead, and the need for a Savior.

# MAUNDY THURSDAY FAMILY WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

## APRIL 18, 2019

Scripture: Mark 12:22-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

### *Option 1: The Basin*

#### Supplies Needed:

- Air-dry clay, salt dough (find a simple recipe online), or play-doh
- Paper towel
- Paper plate

Form your clay into a bowl. Perhaps you want to make a coil pot by rolling out your dough into a long snake and then coiling it around and around. Perhaps you want to smooth the sides and make it look like a pitcher. As you work, think about what it would have been like for Jesus to wash the feet of the disciples. Place your dough on the paper plate to make it easier to take home with you.

#### Ask:

- *What is so humbling about washing feet, especially feet that have been walking on very dusty (and perhaps manure-covered) roads?*
- *Who was supposed to do that job?*
- *Why was it such a big deal for Jesus to wash the disciples' feet?*

### *Option 2: The Towel*

#### Supplies Needed:

- Plain dishtowels from the dollar store, craft store, or online
- Fabric markers or sharpies

Think carefully about the way Jesus dried his disciples' feet after he washed them. Decorate your towel with words or symbols that remind you that we are all called to serve with love and humility just like Jesus did.

#### Ask:

- *What do you think it would feel like to have Jesus gently and carefully wash and dry your feet?*
- *How might God be calling us to serve others in a similar fashion (Hint: It may or may not have anything to do with feet)?*

### *Option 3: The Table*

#### **Supplies Needed:**

- A printed or projected image of “The Last Supper” by Leonardo da Vinci
- Whiteboard and dry erase markers OR paper and coloring supplies

Read **Mark 12:22-26**. Take a careful look at the famous “The Last Supper” painting by Leonardo da Vinci. Make some observations. Then, draw your own version of the Last Supper on your whiteboard or paper.

#### **Ask:**

- *What do you notice about da Vinci’s painting, “The Last Supper”?*
- *What do you think was important to the artist? Why?*
- *How do we remember or commemorate the Last Supper today?*

# GOOD FRIDAY FAMILY WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

## APRIL 19, 2019

**Scripture:** Psalm 22:1; John 18:1—19:42

### *Option 1: Handcuffs*

**Supplies Needed:**

- Construction Paper
- Tape or glue
- Scissors

Create a pair of handcuffs. Try them on. Imagine yourself falsely accused and arrested like Jesus.

**Ask:**

- *How would you feel?*
- *What would you say or do to defend yourself?*

### *Option 2: Truth*

**Supplies Needed:**

- Paper
- Coloring supplies

Write the word "Truth" in the middle of your paper. Then, use a pencil, colored pencils, or different colors of crayons to trace around the outside of the word, making it bigger and bigger each time.

**Ask:**

- *What is Truth? Pilate asks this question in John 18:38, but Jesus has already told him that he came to testify to truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to Jesus.*
- *What does it mean to listen to Jesus?*

### *Option 3: Kingdoms Not of This World*

**Supplies Needed:**

- Cotton balls
- Vinegar (Any kind will do, but red wine vinegar would work well for both color and smell)
- Snack-sized resealable plastic bags

**Before the Service:** Dip 1 or 2 cotton balls per child in a small amount of vinegar (just enough to capture the scent, but not enough to create a soggy mess) and place them in a resealable plastic bag.

**During the Service:** Open your bag. Take a deep breath. Pay careful attention to what you smell. **John 19:28-30** says, "Jesus said, 'I am thirsty.' A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.'"

**Ask:**

- *What did you smell in your plastic bag? What is your reaction to that smell?*
- *What other smells might you have experienced if you had been at the crucifixion?*
- *The soldiers gave Jesus vinegar for his thirst. What other hurtful and humiliating things did they do? Why was Jesus willing to endure them?*