

Outside the Box





Vent and Easter

Ash Wednesday Service

7:30 PM at St. Paul's UMC

Maundy Thursday Service

7:30 PM at St. Paul's UMC

Good Friday Service

7:30 PM at St. Paul's UMC

Easter Sunrise Service

7:00 AM at Salem UMC in the Cemetery

Easter Service

9:30 AM at Salem UMC

Salem UMC

12 High Street

Brookeville, MD 20833

St. Paul's UMC

21720 Laytonsville Rd,

Gaithersburg, MD 20882



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Note from the Pastor

Have you ever gotten stuck in a box? No, not like the TV box you played in as a kid. I mean a mental box. Have you ever gotten stuck in thinking life is a series of “this vs. that” or “right vs. wrong” or “my way vs. their way” or “mask vs. no mask” decisions? As if life can be condensed into perfect choices on one track or another! Often, (unfortunately) there are no perfect choices. There are shades of grey, nuances, and unknowns that make it hard to even make good choices, let alone perfect ones.

In our Lenten scriptures, we’ll see Jesus, his disciples, and the other people around them try to understand that life is more complicated than “this vs. that” and living inside our carefully constructed boxes. When Jesus is confronted with two equally poor choices he always rises above and steps out of the box. We are called to do the same. Join us this Lent as we seek to step out of our confining boxes and onto a path of life with God.

This Lenten Booklet is for people who want to go deeper. We will journey through weekly scripture readings, daily practices, and thought-provoking questions as we try to break out of the boxes the world tries to shove us into. If you are tired of division and are looking for a better way, this is the study for you. We will have small group discussions about the weekly readings every Wednesday night on Google Meet from 6:30-8:00 (discussion starts at 7:00pm).

Blessings,
Rev. Emily Hart



Week 1

Death or Life?

Do you need a resurrection? Mary, Martha, and all their friends believed that death had taken Lazarus for good. Jesus proves that he is not subject to life and death by bringing Lazarus back to life. What situations around you are “dead” and need a resurrection? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

Holy, death-defying God, you are so good and somehow, you love us. And yet, we are so stuck in our ways. We tend to believe we know more than you do. Help us to be humble. Help us to reach out to you when we see death. God, we need resurrection. Break us free, as you broke Lazarus, Mary, Martha, and all their neighbors free from their expectations. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 11:1-44

11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. 3 So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” 4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” 5 Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, 6 after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. 7 Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” 8 The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” 9 Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. 10 But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.”

11 After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” 12 The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” 13 Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. 15 For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” 16 Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. 21 Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” 27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” 29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34 He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 Jesus began to weep. 36 So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Wednesday: Study

Day 1

Take time today to study God's word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 2

What happened "outside the box" in our scripture today? What are your "Wait, what??" questions for today? Jesus did not rush to Lazarus' side when he was sick. How does that make you feel? What does "resurrection" mean to you? Are there situations in your life that need a "resurrection?"

Friday: Engage

Day 3

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 4

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 5

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week's scripture.

Monday: Share

Day 6

Now that you have wondered, prayed, and practiced, share your stories of stepping outside the box with your loved ones. Ask about times they have sought or needed resurrection. Ask how they define resurrection.

Tuesday: Reflect

Day 7

What was it like to spend a week thinking about life, death, and resurrection outside the box? What surprised you? What made you curious? What else did you feel?



Week 2

All or Nothing?

Will you ever have enough? Peter was offended that Jesus, his Teacher and Lord, would bend down to wash his feet (a job for servants!). Jesus tells him the washing is necessary, and Peter immediately oscillates to another extreme, “well, Lord, wash all of me!” Peter, like many of us, doesn’t understand “enough.” Washing his feet is enough. It’s sufficient. What is already “enough” in your life that doesn’t need more improvement? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

God-who-defies-binaries, we thank you. You, who created dusk, dawn, midday, midnight, and the unnamed time between, are our creative, cleansing God. When we would define the world into “this” or “that;” into simplistic “right” or “wrong;” you create a middle way filled with possibility. Help us to be content with clean feet. Give us the love to wash others. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 13:1-17

13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4 got up from the table,[a] took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” 7 Jesus answered, “You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”

8 Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” 9 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” 10 Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet,^[b] but is entirely clean. And you^[c] are clean, though not all of you.” 11 For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.” 12 After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. 14 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16 Very truly, I tell you, servants^[d] are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. 17 If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Wednesday: Study

Day 8

Take time today to study God’s word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 9

What happened “outside the box” in our scripture today? What are your “Wait, what??” questions for today? Jesus acted as a servant to Peter and Peter was deeply uncomfortable. How would that make you feel? Peter insists first that his feet don’t need to be washed. Then Peter insists that Jesus wash all of him. Why do you think he oscillates so much? Do you tend towards “all or nothing” thinking? Or are you more comfortable in the middle ground? What is “enough” from Jesus?

Friday: Engage

Day 10

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 11

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 12

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week's scripture.

Monday: Share

Day 13

Now that you have wondered, prayed, and practiced, share your stories of stepping outside the box with your loved ones. Ask about if they are "all or nothing" thinkers, or if they think a different way.

Tuesday: Reflect

Day 14

What was it like to spend a week thinking about being all or nothing and letting God be enough? What surprised you? What made you curious? What else did you feel?



Week 3

Violence or Denial?

Can we live outside the box? Peter (poor Peter) can't decide if he should defend Jesus to the death or deny him completely. He can't see a way forward where he follows Jesus confidently without violently defending him. Have you ever struggled with living your faith? Sometimes, when we struggle, we want to defend it against all the odds. Other times, we want to bury our heads in the sand and ignore God for a while. Is it possible to live in a comfortable middle during challenges? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

Peace bringing God, we need you. When our faith or our way of life is challenged we are tempted to respond like Peter. Help us not to deny you or lean on violence but to respond in your peace. Jesus' composure is incredible. Help us to be like our Savior. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 18:12-27

12 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. 13 First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 14 Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

17 The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” 18 Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself. 19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20 Jesus answered, “I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said.” 22 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, “Is that how you answer the high priest?” 23 Jesus answered, “If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?” 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. 25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” 26 One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Wednesday: Study

Day 15

Take time today to study God’s word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 16

What happened “outside the box” in our scripture today? What are your “Wait, what?!” questions for today? Peter is so protective of Jesus that he literally cuts off someone’s ear to protect him. Jesus scolds him. Within hours, Peter is standing with servants and guards and denying that he knows Jesus at all. Have you ever struggled to live your faith authentically when things are tough? Peter certainly isn’t a “weak” follower. Why do you think he changes so much in such a short time? What would it look like for him to be “outside the box”?

Friday: Engage

Day 17

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 18

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 19

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week's scripture.

Monday: Share

Day 20

Now that you have wondered, prayed, and practiced, share your stories of stepping outside the box with your loved ones. Ask about times they have chosen between love or denial.

Tuesday: Reflect

Day 21

What was it like to spend a week thinking about love and denial? What surprised you? What made you curious? What else did you feel?



Week 4

Leader or Traitor?

What if Jesus is more than our categories? Pilate is a law-abiding law keeper. He wants Jesus to fit into a neat category where he is either leading a revolution or is a traitor to his people's peace. However, Jesus isn't interested in worldly categories of kingship. Jesus doesn't fit in the box. Do you struggle to put Jesus into a box? "He's just my friend," "He's just a teeny baby," "He's the King of all," "He's just a good guy." What if Jesus doesn't fit into your box? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

Indescribable God, wow. There aren't enough words in the universe to capture your majesty. And still, we are just like Pilate. We want you to be our King, our Messiah, our Savior, and we want to write the rules ourselves. Help us to see you as you are: as One Who Tells the Truth and as One Who Cannot Be Defined. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 18:28-40

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.[a] It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters,[b] so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." 32 (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters[c] again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” 34 Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” 35 Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” 36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.” 37 Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” 38 Pilate asked him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, “I find no case against him. 39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” 40 They shouted in reply, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Wednesday: Study

Day 22

Take time today to study God’s word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 23

What happened “outside the box” in our scripture today? What are your “Wait, what??” questions for today? If Pilate was a cop on TV, he’d be finding out if Jesus is a “good guy” or a “bad guy”, but Jesus doesn’t fit either role. He is actually stirring up the people but is also not trying to overthrow the government. He lives in a more complex middle ground. Do you ever try to categorize Jesus into just one box? Do you categorize other people into just one box? What would it take to step outside your own box?

Friday: Engage

Day 24

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 18

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 19

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week's scripture.

Monday: Share


Day 20

Now that you have wondered, prayed, and practiced, share your stories of stepping outside the box with your loved ones. Ask about times they have realized people are more complex than they realized.

Tuesday: Reflect

Day 21

What was it like to spend a week thinking about human complexity? What surprised you? What made you curious? What else did you feel?



Week 5

Law or Anarchy?

Are we ever called to break the rules? Because Jesus doesn't fit into our boxes, Pilate couldn't find a reason to crucify Jesus or to release him. The community leaders were dead set on crucifying him to protect their own power, so they do their best to force Pilate's hand. Pilate felt he had to uphold the law and keep the people happy, even though it went against his better judgment. Are there times when you feel you must follow a rule (in church, in the world, in your family), even when it is unjust? When should we break rules to get outside the box with Christ? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

God, you write rules and break them. You give and you take away. You are always just. Our world is filled with rules you didn't write and systems you did not endorse. Help us to navigate this topsy-turvy world with your ever-loving justice in our hearts. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 19:1-16a

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9 He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12 From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor." 13 When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." 16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus.

Wednesday: Study

Day 29

Take time today to study God's word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 30

What happened "outside the box" in our scripture today? What are your "Wait, what??" questions for today?

Are we ever called to break the rules? Because Jesus doesn't fit into our boxes, Pilate couldn't find a reason to crucify Jesus or to release him. The community leaders were terrified of losing their power to Jesus' out-of-the-box living, so they wanted Pilate to crucify him. Pilate wanted to both uphold the law and keep the people happy, even though it went against his better judgment. Are there times when you feel you must follow a rule (in church, in the world, in your family), even when it is unjust? When should we break rules to get outside the box with Christ?

Friday: Engage

Day 31

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 32

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 33

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week's scripture.

Monday: Share

Day 34

Now that you have wondered, prayed, and practiced, share your stories of stepping outside the box with your loved ones. Ask about times they have had to choose to follow a rule or their gut.

Tuesday: Reflect

Day 35

What was it like to spend a week thinking about rules and gut feelings? What surprised you? What made you curious? What else did you feel?



Week 6

Love or Hate?

How much is loyalty worth? For Palm Sunday this year, we are going to wrestle with love and hate. In John 12, the people love Jesus and praise him with palm branches as he enters Jerusalem on a donkey for his second Passover. In John 19, Jesus enters Jerusalem a year later to an entirely different crowd. This one is calling for his death. In just one year so much has changed. How quickly do your opinions change? When is it right to shift our opinions? When is it right to be loyal? Join us as we break out of our boxes together.

Daily Prayer

Lord, you have been loyal from generation to generation. Sometimes we struggle with loyalty from minute to minute. Help us to keep our covenants with you. Help us to love you like it's always Palm Sunday. Amen.

Weekly Scripture

John 12:12-27

12 The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—
the King of Israel!”

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

15 “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. 17 So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify.[a] 18 It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. 19 The Pharisees then said to one another, “You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!” 20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. 27 “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour.

John 19:16b-22

16 Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; 17 and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew[a] is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth,[b] the King of the Jews.” 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,[c] in Latin, and in Greek. 21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” 22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

Wednesday: Study

Day 36

Take time today to study God’s word and share your thoughts with others.

Thursday: Wonder

Day 37

What happened “outside the box” in our scripture today? What are your “Wait, what??” questions for today?

Normally, on Palm Sunday we just read the happiest text and celebrate Jesus entering Jerusalem. This year, we’re reading both the happy text and the challenging text where the people jeer at our battered Savior. What is it like reading these texts side-by-side? What do you think it would take to be loyal from year to year? Has there ever been a time when your loyalty was tested? What happened? When is it right to shift our opinions? When is it right to be loyal?

Friday: Engage

Day 38

Tell God what you discovered and wondered yesterday. Was any of it on your mind later in the day? Ask God your questions. Praise God for stepping outside the box into our lives. Ask God to give us the courage to do the same.

Saturday: Practice

Day 39

Throughout the day, notice your feelings and actions. Do you live inside the box or outside it? What do you think it would be like to step outside the box more?

Sunday: Worship

Day 40

Attend church in person or online. Rev. Emily will preach on this week’s scripture.



Bonus! Holy Week

For each day of readings ask:

If I were in the story, where would I be?

Does this scripture fulfill an earlier prophecy?

Which “characters” have shown up in John before? Which characters are surprising to see? Which characters are surprisingly absent?

What does this passage make you feel?

If you could say anything to God, what would it be?

Daily Prayer

God, open our hearts and minds that by the power of your Holy Spirit we may hear with joy what you say to us this day. Amen.

Daily Readings

Monday

John 19:23-25a

23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.

24 So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."

25 And that is what the soldiers did.

Tuesday

John 19:25b-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Wednesday

John 19: 28-30

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Thursday

John 19:31-37

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35 (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) 36 These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." 37 And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

Friday

John 19: 38-42

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Saturday

Rest, wait.

Sunday

John 20: 1-18

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 12 and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Notes

Notes

Notes

Like a WOMAN

APRIL 17 - JUNE 12

Follow



Mary
John 20:1-18

Survive



Hagar
Genesis 16: 1-13

Dance



Miriam
Exodus 15: 20-27

Refuse



Vashti
Esther 1: 10-19

Loyal



Ruth
Ruth 1:1-18

Advise



Deborah
Judges 4: 4-10

Desperate



Bleeding Woman
Luke 8:40-54

Lead



Tabitha/Dorcas
Acts 9:36-42





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Worship with us

In-person at 9:30 am

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