



Holy Week@Home: Using ALL your Senses

Written by Pastor Janelle Rozek Hooper, Program Director
for Ministry with Children, ELCA, March 2020

Welcome to an experience of Holy Week@home.

While HEARING the Holy Week story of Jesus, we will engage our other senses of SMELL, TASTE, SEEING and HEARING. Estimated: 30 minutes to do all.

1. The First Supper - John 12:1-8 - SMELL (Perfume/Cologne)
2. Abide in The Vine - John 15:9-17 - TASTE (Fruit)
3. Jesus Enters Jerusalem - Matt 21:11 - TOUCH (Coats)
4. Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet - John 13 1-10 - TOUCH (Water)
5. The Last Supper - Matthew 26:26-30 - TASTE (Bread)
6. Jesus Betrayed - John 22:39-46 - SEE (Sofa)
7. Jesus Died - Matthew 27:32-56 - TOUCH (Wood)
8. Anticipate Easter - Matthew 28:1-10 - SMELL (Peppermint)
9. *Optional Easter John 20:11-18 -HEAR, SMELL, TOUCH, SEE (Leaves)

Resources:

Adaptations of text are the author's own and inspired by the following:

The Spark Story Bible: Spark a Journey through God's Word, Sparkhouse. Minneapolis, MN. 2016.

Whirl Kid's Story Bible: Classroom Edition, Sparkhouse. Minneapolis, MN. 2016.

Materials Needed:

You'll need a perfume/cologne, grapes/fruit, bread (any kind), water, coats, a block of wood, peppermint candy or gum, the ability to touch plants indoors or outdoors.

This experience is created to work in a home setting. It takes us throughout the home as well as outside, so dress accordingly and plan for different mobility options. It's encouraged to have a child read whenever possible as well as help lead and or distribute any of the items.

Directions:

There are brief directions at the start of each experience. It's encouraged to start with the following opening prayer.

Opening Prayer: We gather in Jesus' name. Our names are, *(have each person say their name out loud one after another.)* We gather, to join our names with those who follow Jesus, through the worst and best of times. Amen.



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The First Supper -SMELL (Perfume/Cologne)

*Gather in the kitchen. Spray perfume/cologne on paper and have everyone smell it.
Read the story together.*

Jesus and his disciples were visiting the home of Lazarus, the man Jesus raised from death. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, had served them dinner. Then everyone stopped eating and stared.

They couldn't believe their eyes or their noses.

Mary was anointing Jesus' FEET.

With PERFUME. EXPENSIVE perfume.

Mary continued anointing Jesus with the dripping perfume.

With her HAIR.

The disciples looked at each other.

Some were confused.

Others were surprised.

Judas' face was bright red.

He jumped up.

"Why are you wasting that EXPENSIVE perfume?" he demanded.

"You could have SOLD it.

You could have bought FOOD for HUNDREDS of hungry people!"

Mary continued wiping Jesus' feet.

Jesus looked right at Judas. "Leave her ALONE."

Judas couldn't believe it.

Why did Jesus defend Mary?

"You will always be able to help hungry people," Jesus continued.

"But you won't always be able to show love for me.

Mary understands.

I am walking into danger in Jerusalem.

This might be her last chance to do something kind for me."



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Abide in The Vine - TASTE (Grapes/Fruit)

Stay in the kitchen. Have someone else read if possible. Eat grapes/fruit when cited.

Jesus knew he wouldn't be able to stay with his disciples forever. He wanted them to understand how much he loved them.

"God's family is like a vine full of grapes," Jesus said.

The disciples raised their eyebrows.

What did love have to do with vines of grapes?

"What happens when a branch is cut from the vine?" Jesus asked.

"The branch can't grow," answered James.

"When a branch is cut from the vine, it can't grow fruit. But what happens when branches are attached to the vine?"

"They grow lots of grapes!" Peter said.

**Eat grapes/fruit!*

Jesus nodded.

"I am the vine. You are the branches.

I love you so you can love others."



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Jesus Enters Jerusalem - TOUCH (Coats)

Head to your entryway closet where you keep coats. Have everyone hold a coat. Have someone read the story. Throw coats on the floor at designated time then of course hang up after the story.

Jerusalem was overflowing with people celebrating the Passover festival. Jesus waited to enter the town. He asked two disciples to bring him a young donkey.

“HOSANNA! HOSANNA!” the crowd in Jerusalem cheered. Jesus rode the donkey through the crowds. The people tossed coats and palm branches on the road to welcome him.

Have everyone toss their coats on the floor!

“Jesus! Over here!” A kid shouted joyfully.

Girls and boys waved palm branches in the air.

And people of all ages took off their coats and threw them at Jesus’ feet.

In the distance, religious leaders frowned.

They worried about the cheering.

And the shouting.

And the waving.

‘What is Jesus DOING?’ they grumbled.

‘All this NOISE could get us in trouble with the Romans.’

“One of the leaders ran up to Jesus and shouted, “Hey! Tell this crowd to BE QUIET!”

Jesus looked at the man. “Even if every PERSON was quiet,” Jesus said, “the STONES would shout out.”

The leader didn’t know what Jesus was talking about.

Frustrated, he stomped away through the cheering crowd.



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Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet - TOUCH (Water)

Go either to a hose outside or to a large bathroom. Have towels available. Read the story. At the end use the hose to spray water on people's feet or tub to get feet wet. Consider drying each other's feet.

Jesus loved his friends and wanted to show them his love in a very caring way. So during a Passover meal with his 12 disciples, Jesus put water in a large bowl and knelt down on the floor. He wanted to wash the feet of each disciple.

When it was Peter's turn, Peter said to Jesus, 'You will never wash my feet!' Jesus replied, 'Peter, you don't understand what I am doing now, but you will later.'

Peter loved Jesus so much that he said, 'Then don't just wash my feet but my head and hands also!'

Peter wanted to be as close to Jesus as possible.

**Wash and dry feet (or perhaps show off your stellar hand washing.)*



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Last Supper - TASTE (Bread)

Head to your kitchen or dining room table. Eat a little bread while reading the story.

Jesus picked up bread.

**Eat bread together.*

Jesus blessed it and gave some to each of his friends,
saying, "Take this bread and eat it. Think of it as my body.

Then Jesus picked up a cup of wine.
Jesus gave thanks and said, "Drink this.
Think of it as my blood.

Like a pregnant mother, who gives her very body and blood to her child,
I give all of myself to you. And I promise I will ALWAYS be a part of you."

When the meal was over, Jesus and his friends went to a place called the Mount of Olives.

Jesus said sadly, "I told you, I will always be a part of you. But you will not always be able to keep that same promise to me. Soon you will all leave me."

Peter felt bad.

"Even if all the others leave you, I promise I won't" he said.

Jesus looked in Peter's eyes and said quietly, "Even before the sun rises, you will pretend you don't know me; not once, but actually three times."

Peter said, "Jesus, I love you too much to ever do that to you!" I promise!
And all the other disciples said the same thing.



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Jesus Betrayed - SEE (Sofa)

Head to your living room. Get comfortable on the sofa, even lay down. Read the story.

Jesus hung out with several different friends the week he died; including Peter, Judas, Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

One night, Jesus told some of his friends that he thought his life was about to end. Jesus felt so sad about it, that he went to a quiet place in a garden and prayed. "Please God," Jesus prayed, "I want to run away. But I know I can show people that love wins. Hold me and don't leave me.'

Jesus had asked the disciples to come to the garden and keep him company by staying awake while he prayed. But they had gotten TOO comfortable and had fallen asleep.

In the morning, Jesus said to the disciples, "Wake up. Wake up. Wake up!" Having felt God's closeness through prayer, Jesus was ready to go and face hard things. It was good Jesus was ready, because that morning, in the garden, soldiers came to arrest him.

Jesus had friends. Jesus also had enemies.

Some people were scared that Jesus would change the world too much with love.

They thought the best thing to do was to hurt Jesus.

But when Jesus didn't hurt them back, it showed love wins.



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Jesus Died - TOUCH (Wood)

Move to your garage or outside. Hold a piece of wood or touch a tree and follow the motion when cited. Read the story (perhaps an adult because of content).

The soldiers who arrested Jesus teased him.

They took his clothes.

They made a crown --like a king's, to put on his head.

But this one was made of vines with sharp thorns, not gold.

They were pretending they had beaten a king.

The soldiers made Jesus carry a heavy wooden cross.

The cross was too heavy for him.

Jesus fell and skinned his knees, and the cross tumbled to the ground.

Drop the wood on the concrete. Or rap your knuckles against the tree

A person in the crowd stepped in to help Jesus, carrying it the rest of the way.

The soldiers hung Jesus on the cross to die, between two other people, also on crosses.

Many women were there for support, including Mary Magdalene and others.

After a while, the world grew very dark, as if a terrible thunderstorm was coming.

It was as if all of creation was crying.

Jesus was feeling all alone and prayed to God.

Finally, Jesus said, "God, the work you gave me to do here is finished. My followers must keep on sharing your love." And Jesus breathed his last and died."



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Anticipate Easter - SMELL (Peppermint)

Return to the living room. Have someone read after inviting everyone to suck on a peppermint or chew a piece of spearmint gum (or for real young'uns invite them to smell either item.) (The reader can have candy/gum after reading.)

Eventually the darkness lifted.
The sun peeked over the trees.
The sky was filled with pink and orange light.

It had been three days since Jesus died so they hurried to the cave where Jesus was buried. It was Mary Magdalene and three others. They loved Jesus, and their job was to honor the body by bringing spices to make it smell good.

When the tomb of Jesus came into sight, they froze.
The women slowly stepped closer.
The huge stone door was GONE!

The women explored inside the tomb.
Ooh! It was dark in there.
Brr! It was cold in there.
Drip, drop! It was damp in there.
What? It was EMPTY in there!
Jesus' body was GONE!



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Easter - Hear, Touch, See, Smell (Leaves)

Head outside. Touch a living plant (leaves, flower, tree).

The women blinked their eyes and saw something shining.
It was a sparkling angel!

“Don’t be afraid,” the angel said.

“You are looking for Jesus who isn’t here.

Jesus is alive!

GO and TELL the disciples that Jesus is RISEN from the dead!”

As the other women went to share the GOOD NEWS, Mary stood outside the empty tomb confused. She looked around and saw someone else standing there, she thought maybe it was the gardener.

She asked the gardener, “Excuse me, I’m looking for my friend Jesus.”

The person used her name, “Mary,” and she knew immediately it was not a gardener but Jesus!

Mary was comforted that Jesus was alive, even though he didn’t say very long.

It was no longer Mary’s job to anoint the dead with spices,
but to tell everyone Christ is risen!

And people responded to the GOOD NEWS by saying, “Christ is risen indeed Alleluia!”

(repeat as many times as desired for people to respond:)

Reader: Christ is Risen!

People: Christ is Risen indeed! Alleluia!



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