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# STATIONS OF THE CROSS

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CONTEMPLATIVE ART EXHIBIT



COLUMBUS  
ANGLICAN  
MISSION

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# HOW TO WALK

## THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

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### 14 MOVEMENTS OF LOVE

The Stations of the Cross include 14 stations. At each stop, we pause to meditate on what this story reveals about Jesus, about ourselves in relationship to God, and our posture toward others. At the heart of this journey is a message of love.

This contemplative journey veers slightly from the traditional Catholic Stations of the Cross and focuses primarily on the Biblical texts which narrate the journey of Jesus. We begin with his passionate prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and end in the Garden Tomb awaiting his triumphant resurrection!

### HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

This guide includes four elements. You may read everything or you may choose to simply follow one or two elements.

1. Scripture
2. Summary of the Scene
3. Artist Reflections
4. Meditations Questions

Some of the scenes may be difficult or uncomfortable. Remember that this journey is about love. If you feel overwhelmed by shame or fear, take a break to pray and center yourself in the love of God.

A host is available to help engage your questions or to pray with you as needed.

### THE CONTEMPLATIVE ART

This Exhibit has been brought to life through the artists of Flourish Contemplative Center and is hosted by Columbus Anglican Mission. The collection includes original art and artist reflections alongside curated historic works of art and icons.

### TIPS FOR PRAYING WITH ART

1. Begin with silence and openness to God's presence. Ask God to speak to you while viewing the art.
2. Looking at the art, what is the first thing that catches your eye? Ask what draws you here. Proceed like this around the painting.
3. Step back and look at the whole. What, if anything, do you see that you didn't before?
4. What thoughts or feelings does it stir in you? What draws you in, what do you resist?
5. What does this reveal to you about the Passionate love of Jesus?
6. Close your eyes and allow your mind to recall what you've seen. What stays with you?
7. Listen. What might God be speaking to you?
8. Respond. What do you want to say to God in response?



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# THE ARTISTS

## OF FLOURISH CONTEMPLATIVE CENTER

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### **MICHELLE MORRIS**

*(Stations 6 & 13)*

Michelle Morris has been a working artist for over 30 years. She stepped away from art career to care for her father with Alzheimer's. During those years Michelle found and felt a call to spiritual direction. After receiving certification as a spiritual director, Michelle began to sense God's call to combine her previous art background with contemplative practices. She founded Art and Soul Ministries which combines her passion for art and contemplative life. Art and Soul Ministries is dedicated to helping people in their journey of faith through Spiritual Direction and contemplative life and art practices.

Michelle is also the Contemplative Art's Curator for Flourish Contemplative Center. Flourish is dedicated to cultivating spaces for contemplative listening and learning, active prayer and embodied practices, and creative arts and beauty-making.

Besides making art, Michelle enjoys being outdoors, knitting, reading, garden, birdwatching and spending time with family.

### **MICHAEL O'DONNELL**

*(Stations 2, 4, 7 & 12)*

Michael O'Donnell is a writer, artist, teacher, and the founder and director of Polishing Copper Studios - whose mission is to invite and equip people into the reality of life to the full through contemplative and creative endeavors. Through his Life/Art Workshops, retreats, and classes, Michael leads people to connect with the story of their life, and to discover the art they were created to share with the world. Michael lives in Worthington with his wife, Leanne, and their six children.

### **LYNN STAGGS**

*(Stations 3, 5 & 8)*

Lynn Staggs grew up on a farm in southwestern Ohio and is a nature lover. She is a Visual Artist of Sacred Spaces, using fabric, art, and elements of nature to enhance worship spaces, retreats, and spaces for prayer and meditation. As a spiritual director and retreat leader, Lynn who loves companioning people through disorientation on their spiritual journeys.

Lynn lives in San Antonio with her husband. She is a mother to two daughters and their husbands and a proud "Yia-Yia" to four beautiful grandchildren. She loves to garden, quilt, and travel but not to cook!



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# STATION ONE

# PASSION

## JESUS PRAYS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

As I prepared this meditation, my 4 year old daughter wanted me to tell her the story of Jesus in the Garden. I described how Jesus went to the garden to pray. He was suffering and wanted to talk to his Father.

My daughter asked, "What does suffering mean?" I explained that suffering means that someone is in a lot of pain.

Oh she said. "Like they feel really sad and want to run away?"

"Yes, that's how Jesus felt but he didn't run away."

"Why not?" she asked.

*Why not?* I thought for a moment. "Because of love. Because he loves you so much."

"Yes", she said, "Jesus loves everyone so much."

Jesus knew that Judas would come looking for him in the garden. There he suffered but did not run away. As you read this passage from the gospel of Luke, consider the long-suffering love of Jesus.

## CHRIST ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

*Art by Paul Gauguin*

This painting of Christ on the Mount of Olives is a self-portrait depicting the artist's despair. Gauguin wanted to depict Christ's suffering as both divine and human. "Jesus deserted by all of disciples, and his surroundings are as sad as his soul."

Some call this sacred art because Christ enters Gauguin's suffering. Others call it profane because Gauguin does not enter Christ's suffering but rather makes himself Christ.

How would you classify this painting? What difference will this perspective make as you journey through the next stations?

## ART REFLECTION

- What do you notice?
- What thoughts or feelings does it stir?
- What does this reveal to you about the passion of Jesus?
- How does this image connect to your own suffering or the suffering of others?

## Luke 22:39-46

And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

## MEDITATION 1

What does this passage reveal to you about the character and nature of Jesus and his relationship to his Father?

Meditate on these words from the gospel of John: "For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

Jesus was willing to suffer because of love. What is your gut response to this kind of self-denying, long-suffering love extended toward you?

## MEDITATION 2

Jesus is battling for his kingdom. He had taught you to pray: Our Father, your kingdom come, your will be done. Don't lead us into temptation.

Jesus wakes you and calls you to pray. How do you respond? What kinds of temptations and sorrows lure you away from prayer?



# STATION TWO

# BETRAYAL

## JESUS IS BETRAYED BY JUDAS

We enter the story in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus spent the night in fervent prayer. We are told that he suffered to the point of sweating drops of blood. His disciples fell asleep when he called them to prayer. Jesus interrupts their sleep a third time and declares the arrival of his betrayer.

As you read, notice everyone who betrayed Jesus and how Jesus responded.

## MEDITATION 1

What does this passage stir in you? Perhaps you have felt betrayed. Perhaps you have betrayed another.

Is there a wound of betrayal hidden somewhere in your heart? Talk to God about whatever is stirring now.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

*Art by Michael O'Donnell*

As I meditated on the Scripture describing this event, it was the darkness, the stillness of the Garden that stood out the most. There was a haunted reality in the story. The whole event is covered in the supernatural, with the whole realm of the spirit world alert, active, and participating in ways that we aren't yet able to grasp. There were ghosts in the Garden, make no mistake. It's the ghosts of the story that haunt me at this moment, when Judas betrays with a kiss.

For the image itself, I wanted to portray the haunting, the dark of the Garden, the stillness in the early morning, hours before dawn. I wanted the isolation of the Betrayal to come through.

There is a glimmer of copper in the upper right, a mournful reminder of the pain of enduring hope. Ghostly figure-like impressions hide in a clearing toward the center at bottom. A waiting stance, now that things have been set in motion that cannot be undone.

## Mark 14: 41-46

And he came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand." And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. And they laid hands on him and seized him. But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. And Jesus said to them, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." And they all left him and fled.

## MEDITATION 2

How would you respond to betrayal like this? Would you fight? Would you let your betrayer come close to you? Would you call - *Where are you going? Cowards!*

What did you notice about how Jesus responded to betrayal?

In what ways do the actions of Jesus call you to live your life differently?

*Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have mercy on me.  
I suffer the wounds of betrayal. I have  
betrayed. Forgive me. Thank you for your  
great compassion. Help me to receive your  
love and extend it toward others.*

## ART REFLECTION

- What do you notice?
- What thoughts or feelings does it stir?
- What does this reveal to you about the passion of Jesus?
- How does this image connect to your own suffering or the suffering of others?

# STATION THREE

## CONDEMNATION

### JESUS IS CONDEMNED BY THE SANHEDRIN

Jesus had spent the night in agony and prayer, sweating drops of blood. He was abandoned by his disciples and betrayed by his friend. An angry mob brought him to the courtyard of the high priest where he was beaten and mocked. At dawn, Jesus was taken to court.

The Jewish rulers believed they had divine authority over the people of Israel. Notice the contrast of power at play between the courtroom of man and the throneroom of God in the story.

Imagine Jesus standing before his accusers. How do you see him? Is he the omniscient God who knows what is about to happen and stands with divine courage? Or do you think of him as a man enduring the throbbing pangs of broken flesh and the deep emotional sting of abandonment? How difficult is it to hold both of these realities together?

### ARTIST STATEMENT

*Art by Lynn Staggs*

While working on this piece, I realized that it is fairly easy for me to recognize my voice of self-condemnation and the condemnation in the voices of others towards me. Yet, I am still surprised at the compassion in others. And I continue to need to be intentional in being compassionate towards my self.

I find it to be much easier to be compassionate towards others. Yet, we love because He first loved us! (1 John 4:19) Jesus first loved me and as I continue to grow in my love for others, I am growing in my love for me.

### ART REFLECTION

*Materials: Assorted papers and adhesives, acrylic paint sponged over plastic produce packaging.*

- What do you notice?
- What thoughts or feelings does it stir?
- What does this reveal to you about the passion of Jesus?

### Luke 22:63-71

Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." So they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

### MEDITATION 1

As you consider Jesus facing condemnation before his accusers, think about the voices of condemnation in your own life. Are they the voices of others? Are they voices of self-condemnation?

What are the voices of compassion in your life? Are you compassionate with yourself?

### MEDITATION 2

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. . . Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? - Romans 8*

Spend a few minutes pondering the love of Christ that releases you from condemnation and intercedes for you. How would you like Jesus to be interceding for you now?

# STATION FOUR

## DENIAL

### PETER DENIES JESUS

Simon Peter was one of the most earnest of Jesus' disciples. He is close beside his Master as Jesus tells him, "Satan demands to have you that he might sift you like wheat."

Despite his eagerness and piety, Peter denied Jesus three times before daybreak. And somehow, this tragic experience ultimately transformed Peter into the great leader of the early Church.

### MEDITATION 1

Imagine you are Peter denying your association with Jesus when the rooster crows. When Jesus turns and looks directly into your eyes, what expression marks his face? Is it rage? Is it pain? Is it compassion? Is it something else?

Take a few moments to notice the image of Jesus that you have in mind. Ask God to reveal what is true about his gaze toward you.

### MEDITATION 2

When Peter became aware of his weakness, he went out and wept bitterly. This was "the turning". From this point onward, Peter would be a new man.

Can you recall a time in your life when you have felt a great sifting, a temptation that consumed you or a loss of faith? Is this something you're walking through now?

### Luke 22:54-62

And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

### MEDITATION 3

*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. . . . And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you." - I Peter 5*

These words are attributed to Peter 30 years after his denial. Is there anything in your heart that requires a turning - a weeping, a humbling? What anxieties or suffering do you need to cast before God now?

### ARTIST STATEMENT *Art by Michael O'Donnell*

Of the Passion events, this story of Peter denying Jesus is perhaps the most overdone. And this was the most difficult for me to capture without the familiar motifs of the sunrise, the rooster, the look Jesus gave Peter, the people gathered around the fire.

I worked this image several times, layering one impression after another. It still doesn't feel right, and that's some of the point. I finally surrendered to that truth. The moment itself has so much tension, so much that is unsettled and unsure. It is a jarring event, and it increases in disorientation. I tried to capture that with the disjointed imagery.

The lower left of the image holds the memory of walking on water. Above it is the color of mud, evoking the blind eyes Jesus made to see. Stained glass in the middle is covered up, allowing faint impressions of color and light. We often can't see what we are because we do not always understand ourselves. Underneath the whole thing is the copper of the Brazen Altar of the Tabernacle. The whole image is washed from top to bottom. I'll leave the viewer to interpret this.

This is the last moment Peter has with Jesus before the Resurrection. I've heard stories of people who had an argument with a loved one and then the loved one died without the chance to reconcile. The look from Jesus was filled with compassion, I have no doubt. I also know the human mind, and no amount of reassurance in that moment could have assuaged Peter in his torment against himself.



# STATION FIVE

# JUDGEMENT

## JESUS IS JUDGED BY PILATE

The Sanhedrin pronounced Jesus guilty of blasphemy and took him to Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, with the request to sentence Jesus to death.

Jesus was brought before Pilate's judgement seat. Pilate declares to the Jews, "Behold your King!" but they cried out, "We have no King but Caesar."

This moment harkens back to 1 Samuel 8 when the elders of Israel demanded a king saying,

*Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." Samuel was upset, but God told him, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.*

As you read this passage, turn your attention first to Jesus standing bloodied, beaten, and weary before the judgement seat. Placing yourself in the story, how do you envision Jesus? What's his demeanor? What tone of voice does he use when speaking?

## ARTIST STATEMENT

*Art by Lynn Staggs*

I was deeply moved by this station, especially when I was putting the chair together. A question arose from within, "What chair do I sit in when I'm judging others?" When I am reading the news or following the people that I agree with, where am I sitting when I judge others or decide that they deserve less than I want for myself or my children or my grandchildren?

Reflection: What chair do you sit in when you judge others as less than the person most precious to you?

*Materials: Assorted papers and adhesives, acrylic paint sponged over plastic produce packaging.*

## MEDITATION 1

Imagine Pilate looking with amaze at Jesus. What amazes him? What amazes you about Jesus?

Have you ever felt rejected or judged unjustly? What did that feel like? Is there a wound that needs healing? Can you bring it before Jesus now, knowing that he has taken on himself all of our griefs and wounds?

## MEDITATION 2

Consider the people in your world. Is there anyone that you judge? Anyone you feel contempt toward? Is there anyone in your life that you give into their demands even though it goes against your conscience?

What do the character and actions of Jesus invite you to change in your life?

**Mark 15: 1-15.** And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.



# STATION SIX

## SCOURGE

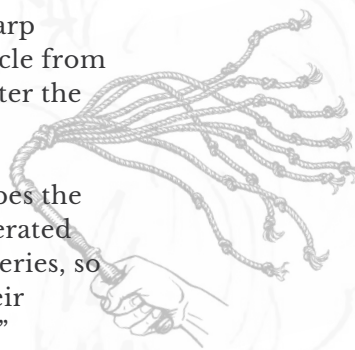
### JESUS IS SCOURGED AND CROWNED WITH THORNS

Pilate took Jesus and scourged him.” It’s one little verse and easy to pass right over. But, It was graphic. It was bloody. It was agony beyond our imagination.

According to Roman custom, scourging was to weaken the body to the extent that crucifixion would be a relatively quick death.

A Roman scourge was a short whip attached to sharp metal and/or bones designed to rip flesh and muscle from a naked body. The greater the scourging, the shorter the crucifixion.

The church historian Eusebius of Caesarea describes the horror of scourging this way. “They saw them lacerated with scourges even to the innermost veins and arteries, so that the hidden inward parts of the body, both their bowels and their members, were exposed to view.”



**John 19:1-3** Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him; and they began to come up to Him and say, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and to give Him slaps in the face.

### MEDITATION 2

Notice your first impulse to the following statements. Which rings more true in your heart?

*God so hated the sinful world that he killed his only son.*

*Or*

*God so loved the world that he gave his only son.*

### MEDITATION 1

How close is this description of Jesus being scourged to the image that you have held in your mind?

How do you feel about the graphic nature of the artwork? Does it cause you to recoil and look away, or are you drawn to it?

What does the art reveal to you about Jesus?

### MEDITATION 3

Jesus suffered as an expression of the ultimate divine love: “having loved his own in the world, he loved them to the uttermost”.

How does this uttermost love of Jesus invite you to live your life differently?

### ARTIST STATEMENT *Art by Michelle Morris*

As I pondered the passage I asked God how he wanted me to portray such a graphically violent scene. A picture began to form in my mind of the crown of thorns on His head and the blood dripping down—one last cruel act by His executioners. Meant as mockery, in my mind I saw Him wearing a translucent crown of Gold beneath the crown of thorns. For me this crown of thorns over the golden crown of a king, sums up the gospel.

I chose watercolor on paper and portrayed Christ in profile instead of face forward, so His face would not distract the viewer from the crowns and blood. I kept the gold paint on the crown light enough to let the white of the paper reflect the brilliance I envision the kingdom to hold—a gold so pure and brilliant—it is as white as pure light. I superimposed the crown of thorns over the gold crown and finished the piece allowing the watercolor to drip down like drops of blood would have.

I was moved with compassion for Christ’s suffering in a deeper way by creating this piece. I listened to the meditation each time I sat to work and felt a range of emotions from sorrow, fear and shame to triumph and joy. I felt a deeper communion with Christ and His suffering for my sins and as I completed the piece. I also felt the hope of the kingdom of God that awaited Christ and that awaits us. A greater awareness that it is both now and not yet.

# STATION SEVEN BURDEN

## THE KING TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Only one verse in the Bible mentions Jesus bearing his cross. Yet this image of Jesus dragging the cross is one of the most prevalent artistic renderings of the cross.

Jesus had just been striped naked and scourged by Pilate's soldiers. The scourging was intense and would have ripped the flesh from his back and cut through to the bone.

As you read this short verse, enter into this single moment and consider what it took for Jesus to bear the weight of the cross upon his body.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

*Art by Michael O'Donnell*

This is the only time in my four passion paintings, where I employed something recognizable. I simply couldn't picture anything other than a solitary Jesus, determining to shoulder the beam and heading towards the spot by the side of the road where He would finish the work. Jesus is depicted bracing Himself to carry the beam, embracing it as He wrestles with its meaning.

The Place of the Skull is another image that I couldn't escape. It is too poetic, haunting, and mournful for me to leave out.

Hills surround Jerusalem, and while Jesus wasn't crucified on one of them, the motif seemed to speak to the lowliness of the King's position at that moment.

The vertical lines were added at the end, and as I reflected on what they mean, I felt as if they were speaking to the reality that Jesus gladly would have surrendered to any stake, a thousand different crosses, for the great Love of the Father for His children. That thought caught me by surprise, and just about broke me open.

## ART REFLECTION

- What does the artist's statement help you see in the painting that you did not notice at first?
- What thoughts or feelings does it stir? What does this reveal to you about the love of Jesus?

## John 19:17

So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

## MEDITATION 1

The burden of Jesus was not only the weight of the Cross. *"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross."* (1 Peter 2:24).

As you read these words from Pilgrim's progress, consider the burdens that you carry. Imagine you are Pilgrim. Can you stand before the cross in wonder? What burdens do you need to lose from your shoulders?

*"There stood a cross, and a little below, in the bottom of the hill was a tomb. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do so until it came to the mouth of the tomb, where it fell in, and I saw it no more. . . Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death. Then he stood still awhile to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him, that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his Burden."*

## MEDITATION 2

Now consider the burdens carried by others. Jesus came to break the bonds of wickedness and oppression and he calls us to join this work of liberation.

*"Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?"* (Isaiah 58:6).

How are you moved by the burden and suffering of others? What would it look like for you to heed this call and share the burdens of others?



# STATION EIGHT FALL

## SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

After Jesus was beaten and scourged, he was handed over for crucifixion. The gospel of John says that Jesus carried his cross toward Golgotha. The other gospel writers tell of another man who carried the cross of Jesus. Tradition suggests that Jesus fell under the weight of his cross and a bystander was commissioned to carry it for him. This man was Simon of Cyrene, a port city in North Africa.

It has been believed that Simon of Cyrene was so moved by his experience of carrying the cross for Jesus that he and his family became devout leaders and missionaries in the early life of the Church.

According to the Gospel of Luke, Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Was this the same Rufus mentioned in Paul's letter to the Romans? Was Simon one of men of Cyrene who went up to Antioch to preach the gospel?

We don't know for sure. However, it's clear that this man Simon and his sons came to be known by the gospel writers on a first name basis. They did not disappear into anonymity after their encounter with the cross and the man crucified upon it.

As we focus on Simon of Cyrene in this passage, consider how he might have been impacted by the blood, tears and sweat of Jesus smeared upon his body as he heaved the weight of the cross upon his back.

How might it have impacted you to share the weight of sin and the weight of glory with Jesus?

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*Art by Lynn Staggs*

As I worked on this piece, I reflected on Jesus, weak and bloodied, receiving the help of a foreigner who was most likely a stranger. Then, I reflected on Simon who was pulled from the crowd into this duty. Truth be told, I am a good and joyful helper. However, I have had to learn to receive help. Then I had to learn to receive help graciously and gratefully. Truth be told, I am still learning.

### Luke 23:26-27

As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him.

## MEDITATION 1

Imagine that you are Jesus. What might it have been like for Jesus to share his cross with another - with a foreigner? How do you feel as you watch him hoist the cross upon his shoulders?

Now imagine that you are Simon of Cyrene. How do you feel as you hoist the burden of another man's cross upon your shoulders? Do you feel compelled to carry the burden of the cross out of fear, obligation, or love?

## MEDITATION 2

Not long ago, Jesus had told his disciples,

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? (Luke 9)

As Simon took up the cross and followed Jesus, he was called into solidarity with someone who is suffering. What does this call to solidarity sound like for you? What would be difficult for you to lose in order to follow Jesus?

**Materials:** Assorted papers and adhesives, acrylic paint sponged over plastic produce packaging.

### Reflection:

When called into helping, what is your way of being? When you need help, what is your way of being?

What do the colors, textures and postures stir in you?



# STATION NINE LAMENT

## JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

Through his torture, Jesus remained silent. Now, on his way to execution, he speaks. Though drenched in blood, he speaks not to his own suffering, but to the suffering of others. He speaks to the weeping daughters of Jerusalem: "Do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and your children."

These women openly associated themselves with the condemned. They cried aloud for Jesus while the disciples hid in the shadows of the text.

The weeping daughters of Jerusalem were likely professional mourners who sang the dirges of lament, helping the people to grieve and to repent. Jeremiah describes the mourners as wise and skillful. They announced the arrival of death. They wept for the violence that overtakes their land and their children. They raised their voices to heaven.

It is to these women that Jesus speaks. To them, he entrusts a message—a prophetic message to cry aloud.

Jesus warns the women of the impending doom of Jerusalem. Within a generation, the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and thousands of people would be slaughtered. Historian Josephus said that the Jordan River was plugged with bodies and the Sea of Galilee turned red with blood. Towns and fields were burned. The horrors led to unthinkable

## THE OUTCRY OF THE WOMEN

*Art by Adolfo Perez Esquivel*

Theme – Women's Empowerment – Full of compassion the women bewail the fate of Jesus. He, however, refers them to their own fate: "Do not weep for me..." The Biblical scene is transferred to Ayacucho, Peru, where many fathers and sons are killed and the women are left alone to provide for their families. They say: "Yesterday in the Bible group we read how the people of Israel were oppressed in Egypt. Aren't we in the same position? God wants to lead us to the promised land too. We should discuss this with the others!"

*Painting & Reflection in response to the casualties of the Peruvian civil war in the 1980s*

### John 19:17

So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

conditions and famine so severe that mothers were said to have eaten their young.

In the words of Hosea: "They will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' It would be better to be swallowed up by the mountains than face the destruction to come."

Oh daughters of Jerusalem, Cry aloud. Lift up your voices! On behalf of your own people, your city, your children - Wail and beat your breasts for all who suffer. Let those who have ears hear.

## MEDITATION 1

Imagine that you are one of the daughters of Jerusalem. As Jesus turns to you and breaks his silence, how do you hear his tone of voice? Does he speak with compassion, condemnation, commission or something else?

## MEDITATION 2

In the midst of his own suffering, Jesus turned to the grief of others. He called the mourning women to lift up their voices on behalf of the oppressed - to cry aloud for the children of Jerusalem.

Perhaps today it would be a cry for the children of Aleppo, sons of Furgeson, or daughters of Chibok? Who will you raise your voice for today? Where will you lead in the song of lament and repentance? Raise your cry to heaven now.

Jesus Christ,  
Son of God,  
Have mercy on us.  
Hear our cry. Amen

# STATION TEN WOUNDS

## JESUS BEARS OUR WOUNDS

Upon the cross, Jesus bore the wounds through which we find healing, justice, freedom and life.

## WHITE CRUCIFIXION

*Art by Marc Chagall*

Marc Chagall was a Russian-born Jew living in France. The *White Crucifixion* was his incredible response to the atrocities of "Kristallnacht" (Night of Broken Glass). Windows of Jewish owned stores, houses and synagogues were shattered and buildings brought down with sledgehammers. 2000 synagogues torched. Innocent, defenseless people brutally beaten in the streets by mobs of Nazi "brownshirts" and German civilians. Hundreds died and tens of thousands rounded up, arrested and taken to concentration camps.

Chagall brought together Jewish and Christian imagery in an unsettling way. The *White Crucifixion* became a bridge for both Jew and Christian to enter into the painting as a pathway to solidarity.

Unlike many European renderings of the cross, Chagall depicted Jesus as a Jew. He is one of the oppressed. For many Jews, the cross had been a source of oppression but Chagall used the cross as a symbol representing the suffering of the oppressed. For the Christian, Jesus not only bore witness to but bore upon himself the suffering of the oppressed.

Through this painting, Chagall condemned the world for their silence and invited Christians to respond in light of their own teachings on Jesus. He reminded them that anti-semitism was fundamentally anti-Christian.

Surely, the Christian would hear the words of Jesus saying, "As you do unto these, you do unto me." Yet, the world remained silent.

**John 19:34-37** But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

## MEDITATION 1

As you gaze at the image, where do you see woundedness, wrongs, or injustice?

Surely he bore our diseases, and took our pains; yet we considered him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, and he was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought our peace was on him; and by his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. Everyone has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he did not open his mouth. As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he did not open his mouth. In his oppression his justice was taken away. Who will consider his generation? For his life was cut off from the earth. For the transgression of my people he was led to death. Is. 53

What insights about Jesus, the cross, and the world do these verses bring out in the painting? How might you compare and contrast them? Are there any assumptions you hold about Jesus that are revealed?

## MEDITATION 2

What present day sufferings would you paint in this scene? Pray as you consider how Jesus bore these wounds in his body.

Jesus Christ, Son of God,  
Have mercy on us.  
Hear our cry. Amen

# STATION ELEVEN

## THIRST

### JESUS SAYS, "I THIRST"

Between the sixth and ninth hour of the day, Jesus was nailed to the cross. The skies grew dark as the soldiers divided and cast lots for his garments. The crowds jeered and mocked him. His mother stood nearby in horror. Other women gathered, too; women whom Jesus had healed of evil spirits and sickness. They had followed him, ministering to him throughout his own ministry.

According to Matthew, as Jesus came close to death, he cried out to God, "Eli, Eli, why have you forsaken me?" Some thought he was crying for Elijah to come and save him. Another soaked a sponge in sour wine, attached it to a hyssop branch and raised it for Jesus to drink.

"I thirst" Jesus said. He took the wine and declared, "it is finished."

Surely Psalm 22 quickly came to mind for those who knew scripture. The Psalm begins, why have you forsaken me?

*"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet— I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."*

**John 19:28-29** After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

### MEDITATION 1

Jesus thirsts. He is fully God. He is also fully man. What does this passage reveal to you about the nature and character of Jesus?

### MEDITATION 2

Not long ago, Jesus said to his disciples

For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

Matthew 25:42-45

Wherever there is suffering, Jesus is present saying, "I thirst". Consider the hungry, thirsty, refugees, the poor, sick and imprisoned. Spend some time in prayer asking Jesus, "Where are you thirsty?" How would you like to use me?

## THE CRUCIFIXION, SEEN FROM THE CROSS (C. 1890, WATERCOLOR)

Art by James Tissot

James Tissot was a French fashion painter until he was caught up in the Catholic revival movement in the 1880s. He devoted the rest of his life to religious painting. This painting is one of 365 paintings on the Life of Christ. As his own life with Christ deepened, his art work moved into realism with watercolor while the majority of French artists moved toward impressionism with heavy oil washes. This image offers the unique perspective of Jesus on the Cross.

### Art Reflection:

- What does this perspective draw out?
- Jesus says "I thirst" while looking to a people desperate for living water. How does this strike you?
- What does this image reveal to you about the passion of Jesus?



# STATION TWELVE

## GRIEF

### JESUS ON THE CROSS, HIS MOTHER AND HIS DISCIPLE

When Jesus was a newborn, the prophet Simeon blessed him and told his mother Mary that a sword would pierce her own soul. Now, three decades later, Mary stands before her son hanging upon a cross.

Surrounding Mary are the other women who followed Jesus. But where are the disciples? Except for John who concealed his own name, they are all missing in the crucifixion accounts. Yet, these women are revealed by all four gospel writers and named by three. They are the midwives of the death and the resurrection of Jesus. The witnesses of a new covenant cut by his broken body and shed blood. The attendants of the first Eucharist.

But what was it like for Mary to stand there? Did she realize the extent of what was happening? In his beautiful Hymn of Mary, Ephrem the 4th century liturgist sings:

*"The Son of the Most High came and dwelt in me and I became his mother. Just as I gave birth to Him, a further birth too He gave to me, a second birth. He put on His Mother's robe, a body, while I put on His of glory."*

The womb that contained the uncontainable God. The incarnate word given birth through her very own flesh and blood, now offering her a second birth through his own flesh and blood. And so, every Eucharist, we return to the cross to stand among these women. And at their head, Mary. The mother of Jesus.

And as the sword pierced her son's side, it pierced her own soul. She was asked to repeat the *Yes* and *Amen* that she uttered three decades before. *May it be done unto me as you have said. I am your servant.*

### MEDITATION 1

Imagine you are one of the women standing with Mary before the cross. The disciples are lurking in the shadows. Why are you there? What are you expecting from Jesus?

### John 19:25-27

But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, 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 to his own home.

### MEDITATION 2

Despite Mary's grief and suffering, she was able to turn to John and say, *My son*.

In your own suffering, are you able to see Jesus in others? To be Jesus to the vulnerable? How might Jesus be asking you to care for others?

### MEDITATION 3

What was it like for Mary to stand before her son hanging on the cross? What dreams, hopes, expectations did she have for her son?

What dreams, hopes and expectations does Mary's "Yes" and "Amen" invite you to lay down before the cross?

### ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*Art by Michael O'Donnell*

So many images in this scene were becoming too familiar. I couldn't simply paint Jesus on the cross with Mary and John at His feet. I was looking for something to invoke the weight of the moment when Jesus said goodbye to his mother.

I couldn't.

Words seemed to be more effective than images here. So that's what I captured.

**Art Reflection:** How does this image reveal to you the heartbeat of Jesus in the final moments of his life.

What does the image stir in you?

# STATION THIRTEEN DEATH

## JESUS DIES

On the cross, Jesus battled against satan, sin, and death, the “un-holy trinity” of the curse. Under the cloud of thick darkness, Jesus shuddered at this victorious moment for the kingdom of darkness. Bearing the curse of our sins upon himself, he plunged himself into death.

But this wasn’t a victory for death. At that moment, the massive veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom. The veil was a blue, scarlet and purple tapestry embroidered with a panorama of the heavens guarded by cherubim. This enormous screen served as the boundary between heaven and earth, clean and unclean, sacred and profane, blessing and curse, life and death. It was the primal liminal space of sacred transformation.

As Jesus crossed the boundary between life and death, the curtain of the temple was torn from top to bottom. He became the door, the threshold through which God and human could meet. Heaven brought to earth, unclean made clean, profane made sacred, curse restored to blessing, death resurrected to life.

“Consequently, (as stated in the letter to the Hebrews) “he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Jesus, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”

## Mark 15:33–41

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

## MEDITATION 1

Something about Jesus led the centurion to declare, “Truly, this must be the son of God.”

What about this passage reveals Jesus as the Son of God to you? obligation, or love?

## MEDITATION 2

As you imagine the curtain of the Temple being torn from top to bottom, what does this evoke within you?

The torn veil is an invitation to draw near to God. What is your sense of closeness to God? As you reflect on what Christ has done in order to make this closeness to God possible, what is the invitation or challenge for you?

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT *Art by Michelle Morris*

As I meditated for station thirteen, I was struck by the darkness. I felt a work on the death of Jesus required the darkness of the hour. And so I chose to use vine charcoal. Vine charcoal is a fragile medium formed by burning grape vines in a kiln without air. This felt significant as I worked because God breathes us into life and Jesus had breathed His last into death. I also considered Jesus being the Vine and we the branches (John 15:5). Using the ashes of a grapevine to portray the scene seemed to complete the concept of death.

After reflecting on the simplicity of using nothing more than charred grape vine to depict Christ’s death on the cross, I felt I was standing on holy ground. I felt no struggle in creating the figure or need for perfection but instead left it rough. I intentionally framed it with a black mat and frame which further imbues the piece with the feeling of darkness.

### Art Reflection:

- How do you experience the darkness that surrounds Christ on the cross?
- After reading about the artist's experience with the vine charcoal, does this change how you view the piece?

# STATION FOURTEEN

## TOMB

### JESUS IS LAID IN A TOMB

The death of Jesus was the ultimate act of divine love. In this final station, we come to the tomb of Jesus. In Station 1, our journey began with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. And now, at this death, we return to a garden. A place where something is planted in order to bring forth new life. In this garden, the body of Jesus is laid in a freshly cut tomb.

It brings to mind something Jesus said to his disciples before his death: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

The women who came to the tomb where the women whom Jesus healed and taught at his feet. They stood with Mary as midwives of his death before they follow his body to the tomb, where they will serve as the midwives of his resurrection. They faithfully attended his body, bore witness to his new covenant, announced his resurrection, and proclaimed the good news.

### THE LAMENTATION

*Icon by Emmanuel Lambardos the Younger, 1640  
(after the prototype in Crete)*

This icon-scene contains 10 figures in addition to the Body of Christ. Mary, the "Theotokos" (The One who bore God) cradles the head of the dead Christ. Behind her, Mary Magdalene with arms outstretched. The other women are professional mourners or "Wailing Women" who tear their clothes and loosen their hair in grief.

The men include John the Evangelist, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus who peers through rungs of the ladder that he used to lower Christ down from the Cross. The basket holds the tools he used and the nails he took from Christ's hands and feet. The vessel contains ointment used to embalm the Sacred Body.

### ART REFLECTION

- What do Mary's outstretched arms suggest to you?
- Why depict these people? Where are the disciples?

### Luke 23:50-56

Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

### MEDITATION 1

Imagine you are Joseph of Arimathea. What do you feel as you stand before Pilate requesting Jesus' body? How willing are you to dissent from those in power when you see injustice?

### MEDITATION 2

According to Jewish custom, touching a dead body rendered someone unclean and unable to participate in the Passover celebration. Little did Joseph know that by giving up the old Passover lamb this act of worship made a way for us to celebrate the true Passover lamb.

Jesus took Joseph's sins upon his body to make him clean. Now Joseph was taking the "uncleanness" of Jesus' dead body on himself as an intimate act of worship and adoration. He was willing to give up his status, security, convenience, and position for another.

What does this stir in you? What are you willing to take up or lay down on behalf of others because of your love for Jesus?

### MEDITATION 3

The women who had followed Jesus throughout his ministry also followed him to his death and beyond. He ministered to them and they ministered to him. They received and responded. The way they followed Jesus was marked by a reciprocity of love.

What does following Jesus look like for you?



# 9TH ODE OF THE CANON WEEP NOT FOR ME

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## ORTHODOX HYMN FOR HOLY SATURDAY

"Weep not for me, O Mother, beholding in the sepulcher the Son whom thou hast conceived without seed in thy womb. For I shall rise and shall be glorified, and as God I shall exalt in everlasting glory those who magnify thee with faith and love."

"O Son without beginning, in ways surpassing nature was I blessed at Thy strange birth, for I was spared all travail. But now beholding Thee, my God, a lifeless corpse, I am pierced by the sword of bitter sorrow. But arise, that I may be magnified."

"By mine own will the earth covers me, O Mother, but the gatekeepers of hell tremble as they see me, clothed in the bloodstained garment of vengeance: for on the Cross as God have I struck down mine enemies, and I shall rise again and magnify thee."

"Let the creation rejoice exceedingly, let all those born on earth be glad: for hell, the enemy, has been despoiled. Ye women, come to meet me with sweet spices: for I am delivering Adam and Eve with all their offspring, and on the third day I shall rise again."



Attending, Embodying, and Extending  
the Life of Christ in Columbus.

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Beauty, Belonging, Becoming & Blessing

## **PATHS OF BELONGING**

### **EVENING PRAYER**

Wednesdays 7:30 PM

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Family-friendly liturgy with candle lighting, contemplation and lectio divina meditation of Scripture. All are welcome!

### **MORNING PRAYER**

Tuesdays 7:30 AM

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Start the day with companions in prayer! We meet each Tuesday morning on zoom for 30 minutes of prayer using the Anglican Church in North America's morning liturgy.

## **LOOSELY BOUND BOOK GROUP**

Every other Monday at 8 PM

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If you are drawn to the historic, liturgical or sacramental visions of the Church in contemporary context, come and join this "Loosely Bound" book group!



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