

Journey to the Cross



JOURNEY TO THE CROSS SUPPLIES

One of our favorite parts of Journey to the Cross is seeing everyone's creative responses. Would you consider sharing those with us? Post your drawings, writings, etc. to Facebook or Instagram with the hashtag #AntiochJourney and tag Antioch Church in the Countryside YMCA

Worship music to play throughout Journey to the Cross.

- Use a spotify playlist or favorite mix or worship songs
- If you need a suggestion, try this youtube playlist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPwTTvroFVA>

Bible or device with Bible app

STATION 1

TV/Device able to play distracting noise LOUDLY. Either play a news channel or here is a link: <https://youtu.be/IKB3Qiglyro>

STATION 2

Pair of sandals

Paper, markers/crayons/colored pencils

STATION 3

Perfume or Cologne

STATION 4

Several coins

STATION 5

Paper and Pen/marker

STATION 6

Grape Juice

Cups

*These can be picked up at the Antioch church office

STATION 7

Rope – if you do not have rope you can use twine, yarn, string

STATION 8

Paper, pen/marker/crayons/colored pencils

STATION 9

Small piece of paper, pen

STATION 10

Piece of wood, hammer, nails – if you do not have these supplies an alternative suggestion is to wad up the paper with your sin and throw it away

STATION 11

White tablecloth, sheet, or towel

STATION 12

Paper, pen/markers/crayons/colored pencils

NEXT STEPS

Matzo crackers or bread, grape juice

OPENING GUIDELINES

Start some soft worship music.

Today is a time to slow down,
to leave the busyness of your life, to focus on Jesus.

You will experience 12 stations.
Take your time. You don't need to rush.
Take time to experience and let the words of reflection sink in.
Take time to talk to God in prayer.

Spend as long as you want at each station.
In the pages that follow you will find a "script" to guide you through the 12 stations.
If you are on this journey as an individual then just read and follow along.
If you are with a group, take turns reading the Bible verses and the reflections .

At some stations, you will be given instructions to write or draw on paper.
These times are meant to give you an opportunity to respond to God.
You can write a word, write a prayer, draw a picture...whatever you feel led to do.

This Journey to the Cross is not about an agenda or meeting anyone's expectations.
It's simply a time and a place for you to draw close to Jesus.

Any words written in PURPLE are instructions specific to the experience at that station.

Any words written in GREEN are additional guidance for adults leading children through the Journey. The goal is that people of all ages would find this experience meaningful.

Don't forget to share your Journey to the Cross Experience on Facebook and Instagram
#AntiochJourney and tag Antioch Church in the Countryside YMCA

STATION 1

OUTER NOISE

Turn on your TV/device on full volume with a news channel or use the following link:

<https://youtu.be/IKB3Qiglyro>

This represents the noise and distractions of our lives.

Normally, our busyness might be work, school, or sports & activities that provide the noisy distraction.

Over the past month, the coronavirus has captured our attention, bringing fear, unknown, financial stress, and overall changed the way we live our daily lives.

We can get so caught up in these distractions that we tune out God.

Turn off the TV/device.

Today, you are invited to slow down and focus on Jesus, His Journey to the Cross, and what that means for you.

Read PSALM 46:10.

Before beginning this Journey to the Cross, take a few moments to be still, to quiet yourself, and pray.

Ask God to help you focus on Him and hear His voice through this journey as you do the following activity.

PARENTS: Guide your family through the following activity.

Slow your breathing, inhaling long, deep breaths & slowly releasing them while meditating on the following:

INHALE: Breathe in the peace of Christ
EXHALE: Breathe out the anxiety of the day
INHALE: Breathe in the gentleness of Christ
EXHALE: Breathe out mental clutter and distraction
INHALE: Breathe in the joy of Christ
EXHALE: Breathe out discouragement
INHALE: Breathe in the love of Christ
EXHALE: Breathe out selfishness and personal agendas

Continue doing this until you feel ready to meet God according to His plan.

STATION 2

GOD IN THE FLESH

Place a pair of sandals in the center of your space.

Read MATTHEW 1:21-23.

In front of you is a pair of sandals, the kind that any ordinary person might wear.

Have you ever thought about the eternal God, creator of the world,
becoming a man – a human – just like us?
Wearing a pair of sandals like we might wear?
That's who Jesus is: IMMANUEL which means "God With Us."
Jesus came to earth in an ordinary human body
knowing from the beginning that He was on a Journey to the Cross.

Many refer to Jesus' final days as His "passion."
It is a fitting description, for passion means unfailing devotion.
Jesus' journey to the cross was the culmination of His life's unfailing devotion
to pay any price for your sins.

Jesus loves you that much!
He chose to leave heaven to pursue YOU with unfailing devotion!
He came to earth as a man...to walk in sandals like you would walk in...
To experience all of the joys and troubles that you experience, yet live a perfect life...
To ultimately die on the cross to take the punishment for your sins.

1 John 4:9-10 says,
"This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His One and Only Son
into the world that we might live through Him.
This is love: not that we love God, but that He loved us
and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

On a piece of paper, worship the Lord for His unfailing devotion and love for you!
You can write a prayer of thanksgiving. You can write words that praise Jesus.
You can personalize the Bible verse from 1 John 4:9-10.
You can worship through art, drawing a picture that shares Jesus' great love for you -
whether it be His birth, life here on earth, death and resurrection, or a scene from heaven.
Just take time to reflect and worship Jesus as He moves you.

STATION 3

MARY ANOINTS JESUS

Place the perfume or cologne in the center of your space.

Read JOHN 12:1-8.

Mary poured out expensive perfume onto Jesus' feet as an act of worship.

Smell the fragrance of your perfume or cologne.

Mary loved Jesus and her pouring out of her expensive perfume was an act of worship that was pure, passionate, real, & expensive.

And it touched the heart of Jesus.

EPHESIANS 5:2 says -

“Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us,
a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Is the sweet fragrance of Jesus, His love and unfailing devotion,
seen in your words and actions?

In other words, when people are around you, do they see the love of Jesus in you?
What does this look like?

PARENTS: Ask your kids how others might see the love of Jesus in them?
Answers could be things like being kind, sharing, forgiving others, showing mercy,
respecting their parents/teachers/authorities, not grumbling or complaining

STATION 4

JUDAS AGREES TO BETRAY JESUS

Place several coins in the center of your space.

Read MATTHEW 26:14-16.

Judas was one of Jesus' closest friends, one of the twelve disciples,
who had been with him for three years.

He agreed to betray Jesus, to hand Jesus over to His enemies,
for just thirty silver coins.

Take several coins and hold them in your hand.

How could Judas betray Jesus, his friend, for money?
How do you think Judas felt when he looked at the coins in his hand
and realized what he had traded for them?

ADULTS: Is your own heart tempted to betray Jesus over material things?
During this time of social distancing, has the Lord revealed anything to you
that you would betray Him for?

Is there anything in your life that takes priority over Jesus?

Take this time to talk with Him about it.

Ask Jesus to help you see the things in your life that you choose over Him.

PARENTS AND KIDS: Are you tempted to betray Jesus over material things?
Are things like toys, clothes, popularity, or video games more important to you than Jesus?

Do any of these "things" cause you to fight or quarrel with your brothers or sisters?

Do you find yourself complaining about not having enough "things" to your parents?

Ask Jesus to help you see the things that can be more important to you than Him.

Take a few moments to ask Jesus to help you choose Him first.

STATION 5

THE LAST SUPPER

Jesus celebrated a last meal with His disciples before His death on the cross.

Jesus knew what was about to happen.
He knew that he would be killed on a cross,
and He knew that his body would be beaten and broken.
His disciples didn't understand this yet
and Jesus knew it would be confusing for them when it did happen.
He knew they would be scared and anxious.

Read [LUKE 22:19](#).

Jesus wanted to help His disciples remember.
He didn't want them to ever forget how much He loved them
and that He was giving Himself up for them.

Jesus also wants YOU to remember that He loves YOU and gives himself up for YOU!

Jesus understands how easy it is for you to forget His truth and His faithfulness
and to instead be confused, scared and anxious just like the disciples.

ADULTS: Choose one of the following Bible verses to personalize and pray
claiming its truth in times of fear, worry, and anxiety.

Write out your verse and place it somewhere in your home as a visual reminder of God's truth.

PARENTS: Talk with you children about times they have fear.
Choose one of the Bible verses to pray over them.
Help them write out their verse and place it somewhere in your home
as a visual reminder of God's truth.

Lamentations 3:22-23

Isaiah 41:10

Philippians 4:6-7

Psalm 27:1

STATION 6

GETHSEMANE

Place grape juice and cups in the center of your space.

Read MATTHEW 26:36-39.

This scene reveals the overwhelming sorrow in Jesus' heart that night.

Jesus knows the humiliation, pain, and torture to come.

He falls to the ground praying, pleading with His Father saying,
"May this cup be taken from me."

Imagine Father God holding out a bitter cup to His Son.

The contents would be disgusting and filthy even to those who have tasted sin.

But to Jesus, whose heart is pure and without sin, the dark liquid is nauseating.

Perhaps Jesus envisions taking the cup and drinking the poison of sin
until it infects His whole body.

And yet, Jesus summons the strength to pray the hardest prayer:

"Yet not as I will, but as You will."

Jesus chose to drink the cup, even though he knew the pain and heartache to come.

Pour a cup of grape juice and drink it.

As you do, remember that Jesus chose to bear the agony of the cross -
to drink the cup - to save you.

ADULTS: Is there a cup that the Father is asking you to drink?

Is there something difficult that God is asking you to do?

Are you willing to trust God and pray the prayer of Gethsemane:

"Yet not as I will, but as you will."

PARENTS: Talk to your children about things that God may be asking them to do that are difficult.

Maybe it's choosing to do the right thing when everyone
around them seems to be doing the wrong thing.

Maybe it's enduring this time without friends and doing school work at home without complaining.

Pray with them the prayer of Gethsemane: "Yet not as I will, but as You will."

STATION 7

JESUS' ARREST

Place the rope in the center of your space.

Read JOHN 18:1-11.

Judas guides a crowd of people to find Jesus in the garden. Roman soldiers, Jewish high priests, and temple guards carry torches and weapons expecting resistance at Jesus' arrest.

Jesus meets them and asks, "Who is it you want?"

The reply: "Jesus of Nazareth."

And Jesus' simple answer of "I am HE" causes the entire crowd to fall helplessly to the ground!

It could have all ended there. Jesus merely speaks and the guards are overpowered. But instead, Jesus allows himself be bound and led away.

Pick up the rope and hold it in your hands.

Remember that Jesus was bound with a rope like this one. He chose to submit to the difficult way of the cross with every step that he took.

Think about Jesus willingly being arrested and led away by the guards.

These were not circumstances outside Jesus' control.

Jesus CHOSE to follow God's plan because He loved you so much.

Pray and thank Jesus for loving you so much that He was willing suffer and die on the cross for you.

PARENTS: You may choose to pray together as a family or have your kids pray alone and then close everyone in prayer.

STATION 8

JESUS' TRIAL

Read MATTHEW 26:57-60 and 27:27-31.

Imagine yourself in Peter's shoes.
You are looking out over the courtyard where Jesus is being questioned and mocked. You know that none of these men are being fair to Him.

As you stand there, you listen to men telling lies about Him.
You watch Him being beaten and spit on and the soldiers are making fun of Him.

Here is the man you have followed for three years,
the man you had put all your hope in, being sentenced to death on a cross.
In your heart you have believed He is God,
the promised Messiah,
the Savior of the world.

Your whole world is crashing around you,
and worst of all, you have denied that you even know Him.



Look at the purple robe and crown of thorns used by angry soldiers to hurt and humiliate Jesus.

What do you want to tell Jesus right now?

Use a piece of paper to write a prayer response or draw a picture
of what you are thinking and feeling.

STATION 9

THE CRUCIFIXION

Read MATTHEW 27:32-44



In the picture, Jesus is bruised and beaten, carrying the heavy wooden beam of His cross. He is walking towards Golgotha, where He will have His hands and feet nailed to the cross. It is there that He will face His final moments of torture.

Imagine yourself at the scene.

Jesus is walking by you and gazes deeply into your eyes. Despite His pain and agony, Jesus' gaze is full of love for you.

Hear Him whispering,
"For YOU, I choose to die."

The sin of all human beings made Jesus go to the cross, NOT the religious leaders or Roman soldiers who arrested and beat Him.

It was Jesus' love for sinful human beings that held Him there. He could have answered the taunts by calling down the angels of heaven to bring Him down, but He didn't. He CHOSE to stay for you.

Use a small piece of paper and pen.

Think of a sin in your life to write down on a piece of paper. Sin can be any thought, word, action, or attitude that is wrong.

No one else will read it, but you can write in code if you want to. This is between you and God.

Once you have finished writing, fold your paper in half so no one else can see it.

STATION 10

JESUS' DEATH

Place a piece of wood, hammer and nails in the center of your space.

Kneel as you pick up a hammer and nail
the folded piece of paper with your sin into the wood.

(Parents may need to help children)

This piece of wood is to remind you of Jesus' cross.

As you nail your sin to it, think about how your sins were nailed to the cross that day in history.

With each stroke, remember Jesus' words: "It is finished."

Jesus bore the pain of the cross so you could be forgiven and set free!

You are no longer in slavery to your sin.

When everyone is done nailing their piece of paper to the cross,
read MATTHEW 27:45-54.

When Jesus died that day, so many people watching must
have thought that their hopes had died as well.

Darkness came over all the land.

Remember the darkness that the whole world -
and heaven itself - must have felt that day.

Quietly reflect on the sadness and sorrow of Jesus' death.

He died for YOU - for YOUR sins.

STATION 11

JESUS' RESURRECTION

Place the white tablecloth, sheet or towels in the center of your space.

Read MATTHEW 28:1-9.

Imagine the scene.

All of Jesus' followers are mourning His death.
Imagine their confusion and despair, the lonely ache in their hearts.
In the midst of the darkness, some women feel compelled to simply be at Jesus' tomb.

At day break, they set out for the tomb.
Arriving, the huge stone to the tomb is rolled away!
An angel whose appearance is so terrifying that
strong Roman guards become like dead men in his presence,
speaks the astonishing truth that Jesus is not here!
HE IS ALIVE!

The women burst from the empty tomb racing to go tell
the disciples the news when Jesus Himself meets them!

Imagine the shock and overwhelming joy they feel as they encounter Jesus.
IT IS TRUE! JESUS THEIR LORD IS ALIVE!

Pick up the white cloths and wrap it around you.

If you are in a group, feel free to wrap the cloth around your group.

When Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment for your sin
so YOU could be forgiven. That is something to celebrate!
But amazingly, He did more than that -
in His resurrection, He offers you something more.
Jesus offers you His very own righteousness - His perfect life,
so that when God looks at you, He no longer sees the darkness of sin,
but the very righteousness and perfection of His Son, Jesus!
In His resurrection, Jesus offers you these clean white cloths to wear.

STATION 12

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

Read MATTHEW 16:24.

YOU ARE AT A CROSSROADS.

The Journey that took Jesus to the cross was not an accident.

Every step Jesus took was purposeful, deliberate, by plan.

Every moment of pain, betrayal, and agony was borne by Him out of love for YOU.

You were—and still are—a part of His journey.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

You can, in your heart, choose to hold on to your sin,
bear the guilt yourself, and take it with you.

Or you can cling to the extravagant love and forgiveness of Jesus who died for you.

You've already nailed your sin to his cross. You can know that all is forgiven.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

You choose by asking His forgiveness and receiving it.

You have experienced some of the emotions that Jesus,
the Son of God, experienced for you.

You can end this time the same as you began it.

Or you can end having chosen to pursue Jesus Christ,
the God who pursued you all the way to the cross.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

You choose by telling Him that your life is His.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE.

You choose by praying the prayer of Gethsemane: "Yet not as I will, but as you will."

WHAT IS JESUS SAYING TO YOU TODAY?

Write or draw a response to Jesus on a piece of paper.

Take some time to process what Jesus is speaking to your heart as you
continue your journey with Jesus.

YOUR JOURNEY NEXT STEPS

We hope you found the Journey to the Cross a space to reflect, pray, and spend time with Jesus.

Our prayer is that each and every person leaving this time would come face to face with Jesus and have a personal relationship with Him.

If you have any questions, want to speak with someone about having a personal relationship with Jesus, or want prayer, please use the following contact information:

Antioch Pastors and prayer team are available at
info@antiochcountryside.com

YMCA chaplains are available for at
chaplains@YMCAstaff.org

As a closing to your Journey, we invite you to take part in communion by yourself or with your group. We believe communion is for all who are followers of Jesus Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:24-26

Pass a piece of bread or matzo to each person.

“This bread represents the body of Christ broken for you.
Take and eat to remember Christ’s love for us.”

Pass a cup of juice to each person.

“This cup represents the blood of Christ which was shed for you.
Take and drink in remembrance of Him.

Pray.

This Journey to the Cross is adapted from materials by Faith Bosland
www.breakfreeyouthministry.com

