



Opening Introduction

Holy Week brings us to the heart of the Gospel Story. This is the week where we glimpse all of the love, sorrow, tension, and loss that Jesus faces. After weeks of slowing down, letting go, listening, facing ourselves, walking with Jesus, and learning to remain with Him, we now follow Jesus into the darkest stretch of the journey.

Rather than rushing toward the celebration of Easter, this week invites us, just as Jesus did with the disciples, to stay, watch, and wait. It is in Holy Week that we remain present with Jesus as the story moves through betrayal, abandonment, injustice, suffering, death, and burial. Holy Week reminds us that the slow work of God does not bypass pain or hurry past grief.

Reflection

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus is overwhelmed with sorrow. He prays with honesty, asking if there might be another way, while still entrusting Himself fully to the Father. The disciples, unable to stay awake, fail to remain present with Him. Jesus enters this moment alone.

Holy Week does not soften these scenes. It allows us to see Jesus betrayed by a friend, abandoned by His followers, falsely accused, mocked, beaten, and crucified. The one who healed, forgave, and welcomed the outcast is met with violence and rejection. Scripture does not rush past this suffering, and neither should we.

Psalm 22 gives voice to the experience of abandonment and despair, while still daring to pray. Isaiah 53 speaks of a suffering servant who carries the weight of human brokenness. Together, these texts remind us that God does not stand at a distance from pain. In Jesus, God enters fully into the suffering of the world.

Holy Week invites us to remain with Jesus in these moments that we, too, might sit with the grief, silence, and loss. This is a week to acknowledge the places in our own lives where things remain unresolved, where prayers feel unanswered, and where waiting is painful. Staying present in the darkness is difficult, even as we remember that even here, the slow work of God continues in silence, in sorrow, and even in the grave.

Consider

1. Where do you find it hardest to stay present with suffering or uncertainty?
2. What emotions surface for you during Holy Week—grief, anger, confusion, weariness, numbness?
3. Where might God be inviting you to remain rather than escape?
4. What does it look like to trust God when resolution has not yet come?

Prayer Prompts

Use these prompts to guide your prayer during Holy Week:

- **Sit with Jesus in the garden.**
Read Matthew 26:36–46 slowly. Imagine remaining nearby with Jesus as He prays. Notice His honesty, sorrow, and trust. Resist the urge to explain or fix the moment. Simply stay attentive and awake with Him.
- **Pray Psalm 22 honestly.**
Read the psalm aloud, allowing its words of lament, confusion, and longing to become your own. Speak freely before God, trusting that prayer does not require clarity or confidence—only honesty.
- **Practice silence.**
Set aside time to sit quietly without words. Do not try to fill the space with thoughts or requests. Let the silence hold grief, questions, and weariness. Trust that God is present even when nothing feels resolved.
- **Name the darkness.**
Read Isaiah 53:1-6 reflecting on what Jesus faced on Friday. Bring before God the places of suffering, loss, injustice, or waiting in your own life and in the life of the world. Name them plainly. Do not rush toward hope or explanation. Let naming itself be an act of faith.

Intercede

Pray that Underground TN would become a people who do not turn away from suffering, either in our own lives or in our city. Ask God to form us as a community that knows how to remain present in grief, injustice, and pain. Pray for those among us who are walking through loss, betrayal, illness, or exhaustion. Ask that we would learn to carry one another with compassion and hope, trusting God even in the dark.

FYI... Adapted from KC Underground with permission

Bonus... Worship – Living Hope

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f2FXxDVO6w&t=42s>