



## **Stations of the Cross and the Pilgrimage of Hope FUMC Congregational Art Installation 2018**

Walking the Stations of the Cross, or “praying” them, is a traditional spiritual practice among Christians. It is a practice that has evolved so people anywhere could symbolically go on “pilgrimage” to the Holy Land and tap into the power of the location and the events that happened there. Walking the Stations of the Cross is a public spiritual practice that includes prayer, reflection and meditation. It calls us to remember Jesus, and the hopeless journey he made to the cross, only to finish it in the joy of resurrection. We consider as well how that joy of resurrection is our gift from God, and our privilege to incorporate into our lives and our interactions with the world. By entering the story of Jesus’ last day through art, we reflect on the Passion with our senses, our experiences, and our emotions.

Pilgrimages can be made for many reasons – people make pilgrimages to Graceland to find Elvis, they travel to Mecca to find Allah, they travel to complete a task, as Frodo does in *Lord of the Rings*. To decide to make a pilgrimage presumes intentionality – you decide to make the journey because you have the desire to be renewed. In the past year, there has been little renewal in our lives – turmoil in our government, violence in multiple mass shootings, racism and sexism abounding, and turbulent weather systems that have created homelessness and the massive task of rebuilding. Where do we find hope? Can we enact hope? This Lent, you are invited to join FUMC on a voyage to find renewed hope and courage to enact it, in a time when we seem to have little hope politically, socially, and naturally.

The Stations represent a pilgrimage that begins in hopelessness, but ends in hope realized by the resurrection. The message of love and grace shown in Jesus emerges from a place of violence and suffering. We will create our stations of hope out of this same story, using the Scripture connected with each station as a launch point for ideas. Think about times in your life, or in our collective experience, when hope appeared out of hopelessness – how do these times connect with the Passion story? How can you express that in a work of art? Join your church family in this pilgrimage for Lent -- it may be the most meaningful Lent you will have experienced!

Debbie Houghton  
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734-662-4536

## General Information

There are 14 Stations of the Cross. Read through the scriptures and descriptions of each of the stations and choose the three stations that speak most to you. Fill out the Station application at the end of this packet and turn it into Debbie Houghton by **February 1<sup>st</sup>** – stations assignments will be returned to you by **February 4<sup>th</sup>**.

**\*\*\*Please know that creating the station is a *spiritual practice*, and therefore does not require professional artistic skill! This is open to all within our church who wish to make the pilgrimage of hope.**

**\*\*\*Also, please know that I will do my best to assign the station you desire – however, you may need to be a little flexible as I would love to have all stations covered.**

## *Engaging the Scripture: A Self-Inventory for Bible Readers*

Before reading scripture, it is important to recognize that we are subjects that read not only with our eyes, but also with our whole beings. Our race, class, gender, sexuality, economic status, nationality, and experiences all affect how we read and understand texts, including Scripture. Similarly, we all have different experiences with hopelessness and hope, and different understandings of what those experiences mean to us. Before you examine the scripture, take time to reflect on who you are as a reader and what experiences you bring to the text. Some questions to consider:

- How do you identify in regards to ethnicity/race, gender, sex, economic status, nationality, etc.? How do these identity markers influence how you read and understand scripture?
- What are the values, priorities, and needs of your community?
- What is your relationship to scripture and how do you approach scripture (i.e. literally, metaphorically, authoritatively)?
- What are your experiences with hope and hopelessness?
- What stories speak to you about hope and hopelessness?
- What stories do you decide not to share about hope and hopelessness?

## *A Possible Brainstorming Process for you (or, Lecto Divina)*

**1. To begin, read the title of your station (on the scripture sheet) and the accompanying scripture, listening for words, images and sounds that speak to you.**

Read through the text at least three times, each time taking time at the end of the reading to reflect and write down what you are hearing, seeing, and experiencing. If you are in a group, consider having different readers read the scripture aloud so you can hear the other voices. Questions to ask of the text include:

- What images are in the text?
- Who are the characters mentioned in the text? Who is not mentioned?
- What surprises me about this text? What confuses me about this text?
- What do you consider most important in this text?
- What is the main point this text is trying to communicate?
- How can this text be applied to contemporary situations?

**2. After reading the text numerous times, reflect/discuss on the images, words, and ideas that the text raised to you.**

Reflect/discuss on what you have read or experienced about hope and hopelessness. Using the lens of hope, what words, images or ideas come to you from the scripture passage?

**3. Compile this list of images, words and ideas and choose three of them that speak to you.**

On one side of a blank piece of paper, list these three choices and then list all of the interpretations or associations (personal, communal, experiential, metaphorical, literal, etc.) that you have with these words.

Sample:

**Station 13 – Darkness/Luke 23:44-46**

<b>Eclipse</b>	Shadow Blotting out light Being outpaced Darkness	<b>Veil</b>	Covering Hiding Muting Transparent
<b>Spirit</b>	Seed of emotion Floating Inner self God's voice		

**4. Now draw lines across your lists, interconnecting words and qualities you hadn't previously associated with one another:**

**Eclipse:** muting, transparent, God's voice

**Spirit:** transparent, shadow, hiding

**Veil:** blotting out light, floating, inner self

**5. From these connected words, create word pairs:**

Eclipse + God's voice

Spirit + Hiding

Veil + Blotting out light

**6. Continue to meditate on the text and utilize these word pairs to determine what images and ideas you would like to include in your station project.**

Also, ask these questions:

- What message is this station trying to communicate?
- How does this scripture relate to my experience of hope/hopelessness now?

*This is just a suggested way to generate ideas on which to focus your artwork. Your choice of media may or may not also influence your focus idea.*

## **Here are other examples using the Stations of the Cross as an art installation.**

There is also a link to a power point presentation of the coloring pages we will be using as opening titles for each station:

- <https://spark.adobe.com/page/ULw7dCJXYnPUy/> -- Link to the First Presbyterian of Ann Arbor 2016 Displaced Jesus installation of congregational art, using the theme of immigration/refugees with the Stations of the Cross
- <http://wpgrace.blogspot.com> -- Link to another congregational art installation using the Stations of the Cross from Wicker Park Grace Church in Chicago
- [Coloring pages](#) – These pages will be colored by congregation members and groups and will serve as the opening title to each station. There are images and words on each page associated with each station's scripture that may be useful for you; these are provided in a PowerPoint format.

If you need help brainstorming for your project, please don't hesitate to call and I can help you outline some ideas. Sometimes it is just helpful to have someone with whom to bounce ideas! There will be two Adult Ed classes to help you as well:

**Sunday, January 28** – exploring the mystery of the Stations of the Cross – what is this spiritual practice, and why don't we observe it in the United Methodist Church? This is also another opportunity to learn more about the Pilgrimage of Hope.

**Sunday, February 4** – Amy Kennedy will lead a session of Lecto Divina in the first Sunday Centering through Faith session – bring your station scriptures to fine tune this spiritual practice!

### ***Other dates to remember:***

- **February 1** – station applications due – please pick 3 stations!
- **February 3** – station assignments handed out
- **February 21 and 28, March 7 and 14** – Vespers and Artist Talks at Green Wood from 6:30-8:00pm – come and worship at a short Lenten vesper service and then listen as participants in the Pilgrimage of Hope tell the story of their own journeys.
- **March 4** – Collaging as a spiritual practice – a great chance to begin a collage for the installation!
- **March 18** – Installation projects due to Debbie Houghton's office
- **March 25-April 4** – Pilgrimage of Hope is on display
- **April 5** – pick up your projects!



## 2018 Pilgrimage of Hope – Station Application

Name (individual or group):

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(If group, primary contact name): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Three preferred stations:

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Art medium planned/used:

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Approximate size/dimension of the art:

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Any additional information you wish to provide:

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Contact Debbie Houghton ([debbie@fumc-a2.org](mailto:debbie@fumc-a2.org)/734-662-4536) with any questions/concerns.