



HOLY WEEK IN A BOX

For such a time as this

Dear Ministry Leaders,

As we approach the one-year anniversary of disruption, upheaval, loss, and illness, we mourn together. Death is real, grief is painful, and our isolation feels never-ending. We remain collectively in Good Friday, experiencing terror and death over and over; and even Holy Saturday, hopelessly wondering if this is how it will be forever. Our Christian hope, however, informs us that while death and pain are bitter enemies, Easter Sunday is coming. There *is* triumph and life on the other side!

We believe this resource can serve as an aid and ritual for folks to dive deeper into the week that changed the course of history, offering us hope amid immense loss. The concept of Holy Week in a Box was originally created by Linda LeBron and posted [online](#) in 2013 by her daughter, Camille LeBron Powell. It was then adapted by Rev. Mary Hawes, who has created a Facebook page, [The Holy Week Box](#). This version is adapted by Rev. Kathy Pittenger and designed by Rev. Melissa Collier Gepford.

This Holy Week resource is for you, Ministry Leaders. The next page offers three ways you might utilize this resource, and you may adapt as you see fit for your ministry context. After that page, you will find a short and very simple daily devotion guide adaptable for individuals and families of all ages. Each day, participants will read scripture, affirm a truth, embody a tangible ritual, wonder about the story, and pray. These acts can be done over a meal, as a morning daily ritual, or the final ritual before going to bed each day during Holy Week. Blessings in your ministry!

-Rev. Kathy Pittenger

Children's Initiatives Coordinator
Michigan UMC Conference

-Rev. Melissa Collier Gepford

Intergenerational Discipleship Coordinator
Great Plains UMC Conference



Option A: Digital Format

Email a digital version of the Devotion to your email list. Share on social media.

Option B: Printed Format

Print off the Devotion and mail to your mailing list. Leave copies in communal spaces like coffee shops, libraries, and other places that allow.

Option C: Lent in a Box

Assemble boxes that include the Devotion and all items for the activities. Either deliver to households or invite them to pick up a box at the church. Each box should contain (links are for bulk items, but we encourage you to purchase local when possible):

- Small Box (To cut costs, invite households to use the box that holds all items)
- Wood Peg Figure or something to represent Jesus (for an additional activity, you might encourage households to paint the figure)
- 1 Color and Cut Handout printed on thick cardstock OR
 - 1 Coin
 - 1 Heart
 - 1 Praying Hands picture printed on thick cardstock
- Black Marker
- 1 Chenille Stem
- 1 Small piece of cloth
- 1 Small candle

Assembly:

Aesthetics matter! Assemble this box as if you're wrapping a Christmas gift. Unboxing should be exciting! Consider adding a bow on the outside or some nice crinkle paper inside to place the items on. Place the Devotion and a personalized letter from you on top so that it's the first thing they see when they unbox.

Holy Week in a Box

Read, Say, Do, Wonder, Pray

Palm Sunday

Object: Palm Branch

Read: Mark 11:1-10

Say: "The crowd welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem by waving palm branches."

Do: Put the palm branch next to the box with Jesus.

Wonder: I wonder how we can welcome Jesus into our lives and homes?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for opportunities to celebrate! Show us how to welcome Jesus into our lives and homes. Amen.*

Monday

Object: Coin

Read: Mark 12:41-44

Say: "Jesus watched as people gave their money at the temple. Some people gave a lot of money! One woman didn't."

Do: Put a coin on the box.

Wonder: I wonder how you can be generous with what you have?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for big gifts and small gifts. Help us to be generous with all we have. Amen.*

Tuesday

Object: Heart

Read: Mark 12:28-31

Say: "The greatest commandments are to love God with all your heart, being, mind, and strength, and to love your neighbor. Jesus showed his love by how he taught, cared for people, and shared."

Do: Put the heart on the box.

Wonder: I wonder how you feel God's love and how you love God and other people?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for teaching us important lessons, like love. Help us to love you and our neighbors even more. Amen.*

Wednesday

Object: Praying Hands

Read: Matthew 6:9-14

Say: "Jesus took time to pray - by himself and with others. He taught his disciples a special prayer called the Lord's Prayer."

Do: Put the praying hands on the box.

Wonder: I wonder what your favorite way to pray is?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for the prayer Jesus taught his disciples. Thank you that there are so many different ways to pray. Help us remember we can always talk to you. Amen. Or you can pray the Lord's Prayer: Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done - on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

Thursday

Object: Marker

Read: Mark 14:12-25

Say: "Today we remember the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples. The Passover meal is a special meal to remember God's faithfulness."

Do: Use the box as a table. Draw a loaf of bread and a cup on your box

Wonder: I wonder if there is a special meal that you celebrate with your family?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for special meals. Jesus' last supper with his disciples was special for them, and it is still special for us today. Help us remember your love for us when we read this story and share special meals. Amen.*

Friday

Objects: Pipe Cleaner and Piece of Cloth

Read: Mark 15:22-27, 37, 40-47

Say: "The religious leaders did not like Jesus, so they told lies about him and had him arrested. It was a very sad day, because Jesus died on a cross."

Do: Twist the pipe cleaner into the shape of a cross. Place it with Jesus in front of the box.

Wonder: I wonder how Jesus' friends felt?

Say: "After Jesus died, his friends wrapped him in linen cloth. They placed his body in a tomb cut out of rock.

Do: Wrap Jesus in the cloth and put him in the box like the tomb.

Wonder: I wonder how this part of Jesus' story makes you feel?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for being with us during times that make us feel sad. Help us remember you love us and are always near. Amen.*

Saturday

Object: Candle

Say: "Today is a day of waiting."

Do: Place a candle by the box to show that you are waiting.

Wonder: I wonder when you had to wait for something?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for times of waiting, even though it might be hard. Help us to be patient today. Amen.*

Easter Sunday

Object: Wooden Figure

Read: Mark 16:1-8

Say: "Early on Sunday morning, the women went to the tomb and found an amazing surprise!"

Do: Open the box, and take Jesus out of the tomb. Celebrate that he is alive!

Wonder: I wonder what the women felt when they saw that Jesus was alive?

Pray: *Dear God, thank you for the women who found the empty tomb and shared the good news that Jesus is Alive! Help us to share the good news too! Amen.*



Color and Cut

