

# STORIES

## ALONG THE WAY

This Lent and Easter Living Hope has a number of things happening to mark it as a special season in the church calendar. We hope that this can be a meaningful and powerful time of journeying to the cross and celebration of the resurrection together!

*Staff and Leadership at Living Hope*

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### 1. LENT LITURGY

#### a. the cards

We have prepared a Lent Liturgy card available in your mailboxes or online at [livinghopecrc.ca/resources](http://livinghopecrc.ca/resources). This liturgy card will be used each Sunday for the first 5 Sundays of Lent. We will be speaking the same words each Sunday, growing in our familiarity to them. In repeating them we will have the time to allow some of the words to form us. Words that struck us as unusual may become more familiar or even invited over time. Perhaps by the 4th or 5th time we will be able to anticipate the words or hear them in new ways.

#### b. the arrows

Alongside each title on the liturgy card is an arrow. This arrow reminds us that worship is dialogue where we hear from God and speak to God. While we have provided arrows for these specific parts of the worship service, we invite you to continue in your consideration of the other aspects of the service like the worship songs (is the song primarily speaking God's word to you or expressing your words to God?) and the sermon. This is not an exercise to make us critical of the services, but invitations to think about how the service is forming us as people who are not centered on ourselves but primarily people who are made to be in relationship with God.

## MID WEEK PODCAST +

### a. podcast: lent prayers

We are providing a mid-week podcast based on the 7 last ‘words’ of Jesus from the cross. This podcast was made in collaboration with Highland Community Church up the street from Living Hope. This is an opportunity to be reading scripture and praying with our brothers and sisters in Christ that belong to other traditions. The fancy word for this is ecumenical: a word that describes movements where churches of different traditions work together to see what we can learn from one another to both expand our understandings of the Christian faith and to sharpen our understanding of our own tradition. It was a blessing to be able to work with them in putting this together.



Week One: **KNOW** | God, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing. (Luke 23:34)

Week Two: **TRUTH** | Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise. (Luke 23:43)

Week Three: **HERE** | Here is your son. Here is your mother. (John 19:26 - 27)

Week Four: **FORSAKEN** | My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (Matthew 27:46)

Week Five: **THIRSTY** | I am thirsty. (John 19:28)

Week Six: **FINISHED** | It is finished. (John 19:30)

Week Seven: **COMMEND** | God, into your hands I commend my spirit. (Luke 23:46)

### b. colouring pages

We are encouraging you to get your art on again! During Christmas it was in making your own creations. This time, you're invited into colouring images that can give you something to do as you listen to our podcast, the sermon, or just to colour throughout the day!

We have colouring pages that go with the theme of each day lent prayer podcast. This has been purchased from [illustratedministry.com](http://illustratedministry.com) and comes in two forms: detailed or simplified colouring pages. We have provided one of each in your mailbox and you may print off more copies at your house from the PDF available through our website at [livinghopeccr.ca/resources](http://livinghopeccr.ca/resources).

If you want to share your drawing through social media, include the hashtag: #livinghopepodcast and we'll make sure it shows up in our Instagram and maybe even our services!

Find the colouring pages included in this booklet. See pages 4–11 for simplified versions and pages 12-19 for more detailed ones.

## 3. SABBATH MEAL

We are inviting households to try out a new practice: a Sabbath Meal. This is a unique way to welcome the sabbath. While this is a practice that can be done on any week, we will be encouraging you to partake in a Sabbath Meal on Saturday, March 13th simply as a time we can be doing this as different households – together.

This is a resource that has been adapted from a form that Pastor Steve used with his college housemates at Regent. We are encouraging it during Lent as a practice that helps to make the season special, and as an opportunity to bless each other. More information can be found in the Sabbath Meal booklet included in this packet.

## 4. THE FLOWERING OF THE CROSS

Last year, instead of the regular flowering of the cross Rosalie painted flowers on the cross during the service. This year we have been thinking of ways to make the much loved tradition of the flowering of the cross live on.

Our current plan is to have a time where you can come into the sanctuary through the front door, place a flower in the cross, and exit on the other side of the front of the sanctuary. We will then raise that cross on Easter morning as part of our Easter celebration.

We will provide more details on how this will be done in the future as we get a better understanding what will be allowed under the current restrictions.

## 5. RESURRECTION EGGS: ALL INVITED!

The Children's Ministry has put together Resurrection Eggs resources for families to have something tactile to go through in the final week before Easter as we move towards the story of the cross. While this is geared towards children it is not limited to children! We have a certain amount of the eggs set aside for families but we do have more for other household who want to participate. Watch the weekly announcements for the sign-up sheet if you want to be a part of this.

## 6. LENT SERIES: STORIES ALONG THE WAY

"Aslan is on the move!" You hear these words spoken by different characters throughout C.S. Lewis' book *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. These are words of encouragement: something is happening! In the gospel of Luke a similar pronouncement is given to signal the second half of the book. In Luke 9:51 he proclaims, "When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem." Everything that happens from here to Luke 19 are set in the context of Jesus' resolute movement towards the cross. Jesus is on the move!

The parables in Luke show up in this context. These are not just 'stories along a way' but 'stories along the way.' These are stories Jesus told as he set his face towards the way of the cross, his death and resurrection, and the ascension. You might expect that with Jesus' recognition that his time before the cross is looming that this is a space of great and urgent preparation. It is time to ensure that his disciples get all their information straight. It is lecture time: gathering the most important and brightest people to copy down his every word and his formulas for how to bring the kingdom. But instead we hear stories of Jesus eating and feasting with outsiders telling short stories about ordinary things: sheep, coins, and lost sons; widows and judges, manure and vineyards.

The placement of these parables in Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is unique in Luke. In Matthew and Mark it takes a mere 2 chapters to get to Jerusalem but in Luke it takes 10. In placing these parables in this part of the gospel story Luke gives these stories extra significance. These stories with every-day, ordinary analogies are given a primary space in the gospel as they teach us much about what the kingdom of God is and who God is. They also have much to tell the followers of Jesus with regards to the question: What does it mean to be people of the way?

This year we will be exploring these parables with pastors Grant Vanderhoek from Mission Hills and Trevor Vanderveen from First CRC as they bring their unique perspectives in what God may be speaking to us through these passages.