

Cross of Hope Making Faith Connections Small Group Ministry

April 13 and 20, 2025

The Journey to Hope

Loss, Service, Wonder, Gift

15 Minutes **Gathering, Hospitality, Check-in with Each Other... *share a time of transformation.***

Prayer O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (ELW p29)

45 Minutes **Introduction:** Today we follow Christ from triumphal entry to the cross, each waypoint of the journey marked by Jesus' compassion for those who would betray, mock, accuse, or do violence to him. Though persecuted and beaten, Jesus the Son of God is not disgraced; instead, he asks forgiveness for those who put him to death. We have walked the Lenten pathway these forty days, each of us invited through baptism to "let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." We enter this holy week accompanying Jesus to the cross with both grief and thanksgiving in our hearts, trusting in God's redeeming love. (from Sundays and Seasons)

Discussion Questions:

Read again Luke 19: 28-40

What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?

What are the ways Jesus embodies the 'king of peace' in this story?

Why do you suppose the Pharisees wanted Jesus to quiet the disciples?

How does creation shout God's praise?

Why is creation's praise of God important to our faith?

Read again Luke 23: 1-49

(or a planned shorter portion for group reflection as time constraints)

What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?

Why is it an important detail that Jesus' friends watched from a distance?

How does the passion story influence our witness to suffering and loss?

How do you come to know hope through loss?

Why is your witness to loss and suffering then a voice of hope?

Read again Luke 24: 1-12

What do you notice about this story as you read/hear it this time?

How is the good news of the resurrection a gift?

Why were the women who were watching Jesus' death at a distance now going to the tomb?

How did God take what was and teach a new way through this story?

How do you get past the perplexing reality of the mystery of God, to tell others about the good news of Easter?

20 Minutes **Prayer Requests and Prayer**

10 Minutes **Wrap Up and Get Ready to Leave Session**