

The Stations of Creation - Walking the Way of the Cross.

1. Condemned

Focus - a tree.

Jesus was condemned to die for something he had not done and the person who could have stopped it washed his hands in front of the crowd to say it was nothing to do with him.

The way people treat the earth means that parts of it are dying because of pollution, cutting down trees, and destruction of good land. Many of the people who could stop it happening do nothing.

Action - Pretend to wash your hands and talk or think about what you would do if someone wanted to cut down this tree.

Prayer - Creator God, help everyone to do what they can to protect the Earth. Amen

2. Carrying the cross

Focus - *make a cross shape with two twigs and a long piece of grass.*

Jesus had to carry the cross. It was very big, and very heavy, and too much for him to carry on his own. The Earth is trying to carry too much too. We are trying to make the Earth give us too much, and it is struggling.

Action - look at your small cross and imagine what it might be like to carry one that was as big as you. (Keep your small cross with you as you move on.)

Prayer - Creator God, help us to truly care for the Earth. Amen

3. Falling

Focus - *find a leaf that has fallen off a tree.*

As Jesus carried the cross through Jerusalem, he fell because it was too heavy and he was not allowed to rest.

The leaf that you are holding has fallen from the tree; this is part of the natural cycle of the tree that allows it to rest. All of creation needs to rest sometimes difficult to carry on being strong and beautiful.

Action - hold your leaf up against the light and look at the patterns in it, then simply let it fall to the ground again to carry on being part of the natural cycle.

Prayer - Creator God, show us how to let your creation has the rest it needs. Amen

4. A Helper

Focus - *another person.*

Because Jesus could not carry the cross alone, a man called Simon was called from the crowd to help him. Creation needs our help now. Protecting it and caring for it is something that we can all do.

Action - Think of something your other person does for you and say thank you. If you are alone – perhaps you could call someone when you get home.

Prayer - Creator God, show each one of us what is ours to do to help the Earth carry its burdens.

5. Everything taken away

Focus - *any patch of natural ground.*

When Jesus got to the place where they would put him on the cross, everything he had was taken away from him, even his clothes. Around the world people are taking trees away from oxygen-giving forests, polluting fresh water, and over using the soil that we need to grow food.

Action - look down at the place where you are standing and see what sort of plants or even animals you can see.

Prayer - Creator God, help us to notice what is around us and to appreciate even the simplest parts of your natural world. Amen

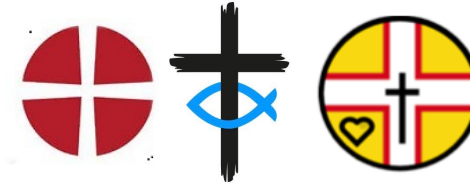
6. Death

Focus - *the cross you made for station 2.*

Jesus was put on the cross and left there until he died. Then he was taken down by his friends, wrapped in clothes and laid in a tomb. His friends were very sad. The bad things that some people are doing to the Earth make us very sad too.

Action - find a place that you would like to leave your cross and put it down.

Prayer - Creator God, help asked to be brave enough to say no to people when we see them hurting your creation. Amen



Final 3pm prayer

Gracious God,
thank you for being with us in this wondering moment
where we stand poised between life and death,
filled to the brim with sorrow,
filled with thoughts of what has been
and what lies before us.
Thank you for the gift of life.
Thank you for our friend Jesus
who was a gift to the world,
a gift in each of our lives.
Be our friend in this time of sorrow,
and sustain us in the days to come.
Let us close our devotions with The Grace.
The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with us now this Good Friday and always. Amen.

Beyond Good Friday – looking ahead to Resurrection Day

Focus - find a sign of the new life of Spring; a flower, or buds, or tiny new leaves on a tree.

Jesus did not stay dead. God brought him back to life, and he is still alive with God today; a sign of hope for us all.

We see signs today not only of the new life around us, but signs of hope for the whole Earth in those people who are prepared to act to protect it.

Prayer - Creator God, thank you for the beauty of your creation. Help us to do whatever we can to protect the Earth, and to value it as you do. Amen

Dorset South & West Methodist Circuit

Introduction by Rev'd Peter Clark

This is a Good Friday resource shared with the Circuit by our friends in the Anglican Bridport Team Ministry, based loosely on the Stations of the Cross, a traditional Lenten discipline following Jesus on his journey on the road to Golgotha. It has been reimagined as a journey utilising the natural world to enable to focus, meditate and pray. It is an opportunity in a year when we cannot gather en masse together to journey alone or in pairs, aware that all across the Circuit others are doing so too?

All journeys have resting places, moments when we make sense of the road we travel. On Good Friday we remember Jesus' journey to the cross – and we can walk with him. You can take this booklet with you on an actual walk, or perhaps with a little preparation of the items for focus, do it virtually at home?

Use markers to make your journey – perhaps local churches, local landmarks or even your natural surroundings in your garden? Or you can even make the journey in your imagination.

Each station has a **Focus** – words which could be read out loud; an **Action**, and a **Prayer**. Use these to help you make this Good Friday journey.

You walk with others in this community today – and you walk with Christ.

Some of the story is sad and is about death, but at the end it is about life. Take your time, and remember that even in the sad moments, this is a story of hope.