

WELCOME

Small Group Five

Not What You Expected?

Connect

Carry the Cross Relay:

Make a 'cross beam' from fridge-box cardboard, roughly 1 metre long and 10cm wide. If you can, double or triple layer it, by gluing it together to make it a bit stronger.

Form two teams and run a relay, in which the runners in turn must carry the cross on their shoulders up to a marker and back, passing the cross beam to the next person.

The focus of this activity is experience just a little of the discomfort of carrying the cross beam, and being able to imagine if it was wood, how tired and sore your back and arms and neck would become.

Content

Story Stations:

Give each person a 'Jesus Journal' containing the whole text of the story today, spread in sections with spaces for adding items.

Move to different 'stations' around your site; at each station read the part of the story you are up to, and do the activity set there. You might want to co-ordinate with other groups to set up a common set of stations, and then stagger the group starting times, using as few or as many of the games in the Connect/Context section before and after the Station section to keep the flow.

Station 1: Matthew 26: 47 - 56

Give each person a small smear of green lip zinc, using a pop stick to scrape some on to each person's finger.

Do not actually apply the stick directly to people's mouths.

Help each person apply the zinc to their lips. Then demonstrate how to 'kiss' the blank space in the journal. Provide face wipes for those who don't want to continue wearing the Zinc (though if you keep wearing it, most kids will be happy to).

Station 2: Matthew 26: 57 - 68

Provide black crayons, and invite the group to completely fill in a picture frame with black crayon, while you read the passage.

This whole arrest and trial took place in the middle of the night, which was unlawful and unfair.

Once the square is filled with black, show the group how to scratch a picture of Jesus into the crayon using a tooth pick.

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Station 3: Matthew 26: 69 - 75

Divide the lines of the Bible reading between the people in your group. Ask them to practice reading their line using a funny accent of their own choosing. (You might like to demonstrate a few).

As they are practising, go round and check that everyone is coping with the reading.

Read the passage, with each person taking turns with their accent.

Discuss why the servant girl and other people thought Peter was a friend of Jesus. What made Peter try to deny it?

Add bright red/orange rooster feather to the Jesus Journal.

Station 4: Matthew 27: 1 - 2 and 11 - 26

As you read, invite the group to mime the mouth shapes for people who speak – some people speak, some accuse, some lie, some yell, but Jesus keeps his mouth shut.

In your “Jesus Journals”:

- Use a small piece of red plasticine to make a pair of lips (roll a ‘snake’ about 8 cm long, double this over and shape into lips).
- Over the top of this place two thin bits of gaffa tape in an X shape.
- Point out to the group how many times questions were asked to trick Jesus or accusations were made of him, but each time he didn’t answer back.

STATION 5: Matthew 27: 27 - 32

To your Jesus Journal add: (from **Appendix 5.1**)

- A strip of scarlet fabric
- A stick
- A crown of thorns, made by twisting short lengths of green/brown pipe cleaners together into a ring.
- Globes of clear craft glue ‘spit’

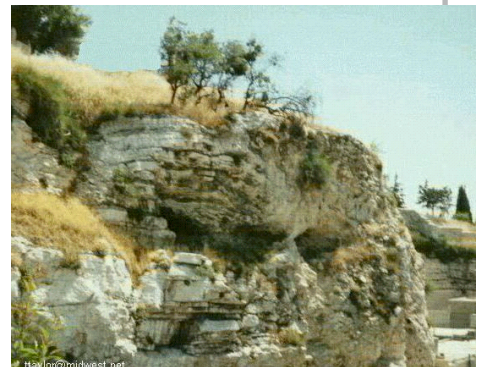
Station 6: Matthew 27: 33 - 51

Give each person a fist sized piece of uncoloured salt dough.

As you read the passage, stop and invite the group to shape the dough and add various objects from the passage.

Form the dough into a flat skull shape.

Stick in a cross made from rough sticks, bound together with wire. If you are working with younger



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children, pre-make these (one per person); older children can make their own.

- Stick a nail or two into it
- Stick a small piece of sponge into it
- Add two or three small pieces of (rough) rock. Gravel is ideal.

Also at this station: practice saying, "Eli Eli, lema, sabachthani".

Once the kids have got the words right, remind them of the emotion of the moment – the desperation and pain and let them practice it once more with feeling.

(Optional)

Station X: Matthew 27: 3 - 9

Provide enough (real) coins and crayons for the group to all be able to do a coin rubbing while you read the passage.

If some finish earlier than others, they can swap coins and do a different one.

Coins from other countries are a good idea for this activity – ask for the spare change from friends who have travelled overseas. The monetary value of an American dime is negligible as a donation to the mission, but will be fascinating for children.

Small Group Six

Better Than You Expected

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Session Six: Better than you expected

Theme	Bible Byte	Image of the Kingdom	Family Function
God with us changes everything	God gives each of us chance after chance to be saved from death and brought into the light that gives life. Job 33:29	A place of life and hope	Family roles and change

Matthew 28:1-20

¹The Sabbath was over, and it was almost daybreak on Sunday when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²Suddenly a strong earthquake struck, and the Lord's angel came down from heaven. He rolled away the stone and sat on it. ³The angel looked as bright as lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴The guards shook from fear and fell down, as though they were dead.

⁵The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to a cross. ⁶He isn't here! God has raised him to life, just as Jesus said he would. Come, see the place where his body was lying.

⁷Now hurry! Tell his disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to Galilee. Go there, and you will see him. That is what I came to tell you."

⁸The women were frightened and yet very happy, as they hurried from the tomb and ran to tell his disciples.

⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and greeted them. They went near him, held on to his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said, "Don't be afraid! Tell my followers to go to Galilee. They will see me there."

¹¹While the women were on their way, some soldiers who had been guarding the tomb went into the city. They told the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹²So the chief priests met with the leaders and decided to bribe the soldiers with a lot of money. ¹³They said to the soldiers, "Tell everyone that Jesus' disciples came during the night and stole his body while you were asleep. ¹⁴If the governor hears about this, we will talk to him. You won't have anything to worry about." ¹⁵The soldiers took the money and did what they were told. The Jewish people still tell each other this story.

¹⁶Jesus' eleven disciples went to a mountain in Galilee, where Jesus had told them to meet him. ¹⁷They saw him and worshiped him, but some of them doubted.

An extra bit...

Matthew 27:3-9

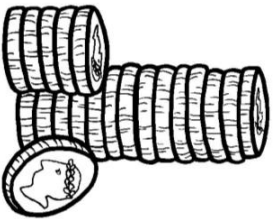
Judas had betrayed Jesus, but when he learned that Jesus had been sentenced to death, he was sorry for what he had done. He returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and leaders⁴ and said, "I have sinned by betraying a man who has never done anything wrong."

"So what? That's your problem," they replied. ⁵Judas threw the money into the temple and then went out and hanged himself.

⁶The chief priests picked up the money and said, "This money was paid to have a man killed. We can't put it in the temple treasury." ⁷Then they had a meeting and decided to buy a field that belonged to someone who made clay pots. They wanted to use it as a graveyard for foreigners. ⁸That's why people still call that place "Field of Blood." ⁹So the words of the prophet Jeremiah came true,

"They took
the thirty silver coins,
the price of a person
among the people of Israel.

¹⁰They paid it
for a potter's field, ¹¹as the Lord
had commanded me."



Jesus

Journal

The Final days...

Station 1 Matthew 26:47-56

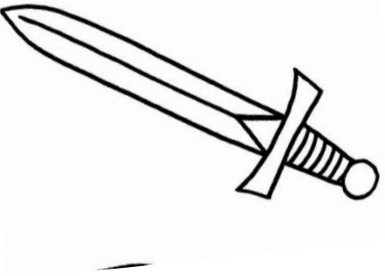
⁴⁷Jesus was still speaking, when Judas the betrayer came up. He was one of the twelve disciples, and a large mob armed with swords and clubs was with him. They had been sent by the chief priests and the nation's leaders. ⁴⁸Judas had told them ahead of time, "Arrest the man I greet with a kiss." ⁴⁹Judas walked right up to Jesus and said, "Hello, teacher." Then Judas kissed him.

⁵⁰Jesus replied, "My friend, why are you here?" ⁵¹The men grabbed Jesus and arrested him. ⁵²One of Jesus' followers pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.

⁵³But Jesus told him, "Put your sword away. Anyone who lives by fighting will die by fighting. ⁵⁴Don't you know that I could ask my Father, and right away he would send me more than twelve armies of angels?" ⁵⁵But then, how could the words of the Scriptures come true, which say that this must happen?"

⁵⁶Jesus said to the mob, "Why do you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a criminal? Day after day I sat and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. ⁵⁷But all this happened, so that what the prophets wrote would come true."

All of Jesus' disciples left him and ran away.



Station 6 Matthew 27:33-51

³³They came to a place named Golgotha, which means "Place of a Skull." ³⁴There they gave Jesus some wine mixed with a drug to ease the pain. But when Jesus tasted what it was, he refused to drink it. ³⁵The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross and gambled to see who would get his clothes. ³⁶Then they sat down to guard him. ³⁷Above his head they put a sign that told why he was nailed there. It read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." ³⁸The soldiers also nailed two criminals on crosses, one to the right of Jesus and the other to his left.

³⁹People who passed by said terrible things about Jesus. They shook their heads and ⁴⁰shouted, "So you're the one who claimed you could tear down the temple and build it again in three days! If you are God's Son, save yourself and come down from the cross!"

⁴¹The chief priests, the leaders, and the teachers of the Law of Moses also made fun of Jesus. They said, ⁴²"He saved others, but he can't save himself. If he is the King of Israel, he should come down from the cross! Then we will believe him. ⁴³He trusted God, so let God save him, if he wants to. He even said he was God's Son." ⁴⁴The two criminals also said cruel things to Jesus.

⁴⁵At noon the sky turned dark and stayed that way until three o'clock. ⁴⁶Then about that time Jesus shouted, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" ⁴⁷which means, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" ⁴⁸Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said, "He's calling for Elijah." ⁴⁹One of them at once ran and grabbed a sponge. He soaked it in wine, then put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus. ⁵⁰Others said, "Wait! Let's see if Elijah will come" and save him." ⁵¹Once again Jesus shouted, and then he died. ⁵²At once the curtain in the temple ⁵³was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, and rocks split apart.



"Eli, Eli, lema
sabachthani?"

Appendix 5.1

Station 5

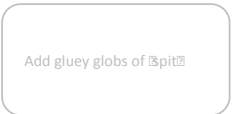
Matthew 26:27-32



Glue red cloak here



Add a stick here



Add gluey globs of spit



Add a twist of thorns



²⁷The governor's soldiers led Jesus into the fortress ²⁸and brought together the rest of the troops. ²⁹They stripped off Jesus' clothes and put a scarlet robe ³⁰on him. ³¹They made a crown out of thorn branches and placed it on his head, and they put a stick in his right hand. The soldiers knelt down and pretended to worship him. They made fun of him and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" ³²Then they spit on him. They took the stick from him and beat him on the head with it.

³¹When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus, they took off the robe. They put his own clothes back on him and led him off to be nailed to a cross. ³²On the way they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross.

Station 2 Matthew 26:57-68

⁵⁷After Jesus had been arrested, he was led off to the house of Caiaphas the high priest. The nation's leaders and the teachers of the Law of Moses were meeting there. ⁵⁸But Peter followed along at a distance and came to the courtyard of the high priest's palace. He went in and sat down with the guards to see what was going to happen.

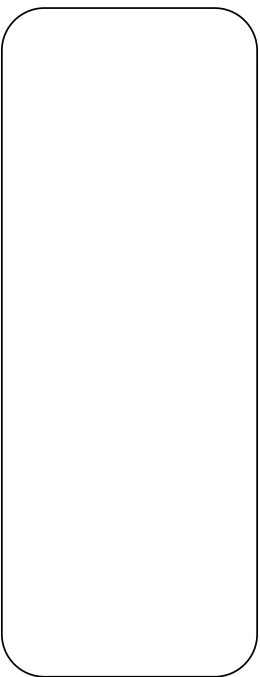
⁵⁹The chief priests and the whole council wanted to put Jesus to death. So they tried to find some people who would tell lies about him in court. ⁶⁰But they could not find any, even though many did come and tell lies. At last, two men came forward ⁶¹and said, "This man claimed that he would tear down God's temple and build it again in three days." ⁶²The high priest stood up and asked Jesus, "Why don't you say something in your own defense? Don't you hear the charges they are making against you?" ⁶³But Jesus did not answer. So the high priest said, "With the living God looking on, you must tell the truth. Tell us, are you the Messiah, the Son of God?" ⁶⁴"That is what you say!" Jesus answered. "But I tell all of you, Soon you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of God All-Powerful and coming on the clouds of heaven." "



⁶⁵The high priest then tore his robe and said, "This man claims to be God! We don't need any more witnesses! You have heard what he said. ⁶⁶What do you think?"

They answered, "He is guilty and deserves to die!" ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and hit him with their fists. Others slapped him ⁶⁸and said, "You think you are the Messiah! So tell us who hit you!"

Colour in this box completely black.



Station 3:

Matthew 26:69-75

⁶⁹While Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, a servant girl came up to him and said, "You were with Jesus from Galilee."

⁷⁰But in front of everyone Peter said, "That isn't so! I don't know what you are talking about!"

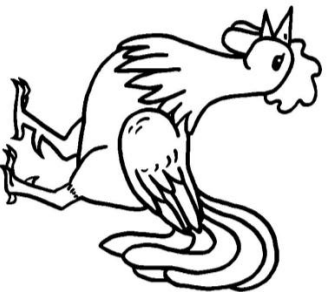
⁷¹When Peter had gone out to the gate, another servant girl saw him and said to some people there, "This man was with Jesus from Nazareth."

⁷²Again Peter denied it, and this time he swore, "I don't even know that man!"

⁷³A little while later some people standing there walked over to Peter and said, "We know that you are one of them. We can tell it because you talk like someone from Galilee."

⁷⁴Peter began to curse and swear, "I don't know that man!"

Right then a rooster crowed, ⁷⁵and Peter remembered that Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will say three times that you don't know me." Then Peter went out and cried hard.



Rooster feather here .

Station 4 Matthew 27:1-2, 11-26

¹Early the next morning all the chief priests and the nation's leaders met and decided that Jesus should be put to death. ²They tied him up and led him away to Pilate the governor.



¹¹Jesus was brought before Pilate the governor, who asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Those are your words!" Jesus answered. ¹²And when the chief priests and leaders brought their charges against him, he did not say a thing.

¹³Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear what crimes they say you have done?"

¹⁴But Jesus did not say anything, and the governor was greatly amazed.

¹⁵During Passover the governor always freed a prisoner chosen by the people. ¹⁶At that time a well-known terrorist named Jesus Barabbas ¹⁷was in jail. "So me to set free? Do you want Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸Pilate knew that the leaders had brought Jesus to him because they were jealous. ¹⁹While Pilate was judging the case, his wife sent him a message. It said, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man. I have had nightmares because of him."

²⁰But the chief priests and the leaders convinced the crowds to ask for Barabbas to be set free and for Jesus to be killed. ²¹Pilate asked the crowd again, "Which of these two men do you want me to set free?"

"Barabbas!" they replied.

²²Pilate asked them, "What am I to do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?" They all yelled, "Nail him to a cross!"

²³Pilate answered, "But what crime has he done?" "Nail him to a cross!" they yelled even louder.

²⁴Pilate saw that there was nothing he could do and that the people were starting to riot. So he took some water and washed his hands ²⁵in front of them and said, "I won't have anything to do with killing this man. You are the ones doing it!" ²⁶Everyone answered, "We and our own families will take the blame for his death!"

²⁸Pilate set Barabbas free. Then he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and nail him to a cross.

Make Jesus' mouth here: Tape his lips shut.