



Experiencing
Good Friday:
An Interactive Event

By Mickie O'Donnell, DDiv

EXPERIENCING GOOD FRIDAY

This *Good Friday Family Experience* can be modified to fit your Church's families. There are seven table or station experiences that require reading Scripture, manipulating or touching something, doing an activity, reflecting on what happened to Jesus, and thinking about what Jesus' sacrifice means for each of person individually.

Parents MUST accompany their child(ren) at each of these stations. It is meant as a parent and child shared learning experience.

Breakfast first allows for fellowship and creating an atmosphere of expectation. The Leader should explain to everyone that they can start at any table or station they would like and can rotate to the various tables in any order they wish. At a designated time the morning table experiences will be "closed" and everyone should gather at a central worship area for the closing worship time.

Since the experiences at the table might be noisy, it is still imperative that the Leader explains that everyone should be quiet and walk quietly to and from the tables.

Do not let parents stand off in the corners and talk to each other. Nudge them to stay with their children at all times. Be sure they **DO** the activities with the children.

Feel free to add other activities. For example you may want to have a "Last Supper" Table with pita bread and grapes with a picture of the Last Supper or a picture of the Passover from Exodus with an explanation of Jesus as the Lamb of God as proclaimed by John the Baptist. You could add a table with a mirror on it for people to look into and then write down how they are made in the "image of God."

What is suggested here is a starter kit! You know your church family. Get creative.

Pages 2-3 are Supply Lists, and the remaining pages are instructions for each table for set up. May God bless you richly this Good Friday as your families discover Jesus.

*In God's Service with you,
Mickie O'Donnell*

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BASIC SET UP: Find several tables and place them around the outer walls of a large room or use a long hallway with tables along the walls on both sides, or create single activities each in their own room.

Drape each table area with a Purple tablecloth

Place a Bible on each table.

Gather the following **Supplies listed below** and place them in their specific table area/room as per instructions below and set up the tables accordingly. The Table Numbers are not intended to be chronological. They can be experienced in ANY order .

SUPPLIES:

Breakfast food Buffet to start

WORSHIP AREA: One 3' Wooden Cross wrapped in Chicken Wire .
See Closing Worship Instructions and Table 7 for how this will be used.



Table 1: One large piece of wood. A rough hewn 4" thick piece is best or ½ of a log – preferably at least 36" long



Two-Three Large Nails – railspikes work well

Several carpenter nails for people to use

Hammers

Small pieces of paper (sticky note size)

Pencils

Bible open to John 19:12-18

Table 2: One large purple cloth, preferably a Biblical costume/robe.

Crown of thorns (as authentic as possible) You can find two authentic Thorn Crowns (adult size) from Amazon.com – just type in “Crown of Thorns”

A Bible open to Mark 15:16-19

Sticky Note pads and pencils

Instruction Sheet

Table 3: Several small cups of red wine vinegar

Small pieces of sponge (take regular small cleaning sponges and cut into 6 or more pieces) so there is enough for one piece per person

A Bible open to Mark 15: 20-24

Sticky note pads and pencils

Instruction page

Table 4: A Scroll saying “THE KING OF THE JEWS”.

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Large pieces of paper
Crayons/Markers
Bible open to Mark 15:25-32
Instruction Page

Table 5: Several sets of dice

One long cloth
Various colors of fabric pens / or permanent markers
Several Bibles/Translations open to John 19:23-24
Instructions Page

Table 6: Poster easel

A large BLACK piece of foam core that has been painted with just one blotch of Red paint that drips down. (see picture)
Open Bible to Luke 23:44-45 or Matthew 27:45-55, or Mark 15
Instruction Page



Table 7:

Supplies: one small (about 3ft high) cross wrapped in chicken wire

Pipe Cleaners
Small squares of card stock hole punched in one corner and pencils
Colored Tissue paper cut into 3" squares
Instruction page

The above is just the list of SUPPLIES. The next pages you will find details (including supplies) for each table.

Table numbering is NOT INTENDED to be chronological just for identification purposes. People should start at any point and rotate through as many experiences as time permits.

Begin your morning with the Buffet Breakfast using the middle of the room for seating. While people are eating, explain the process and give them a time frame for when you will be gathering at the end for the Closing Worship Experience. Parents MUST go with their children to each location and share the experience with them.

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Table 1: The Rough Cross

One large piece of wood. A rough hewn 4" thick piece is best or ½ of a log – preferably at least 36" long

Two-Three Large Nails – railspikes work well

Several carpenter nails for people to use

Hammers

Small pieces of paper (sticky note size)

Pencils

Bible open to John 19:12-18

Instruction page as follows:



Instructions:

READ: *Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders kept shouting, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar."¹³ When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). ¹⁴It was the day of Preparation of the Passover; it was about noon.*

"Here is your king," Pilate said to the Jews. ¹⁵But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered.

¹⁶Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. ¹⁷Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). ¹⁸There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

ACTIVITY: Feel the wood. Imagine how this rough wood would feel against your skin. Take one of the pieces of paper and write your name. Jesus died on the cross for YOU. He took the pain of death for you, to forgive you for your sins. Nail the piece of paper with your name on it to the piece of wood, remembering that Jesus was nailed to the Cross.

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Table 2: Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

One large purple cloth, preferably a Biblical costume/robe.

Crown of thorns (as authentic as possible) You can find two authentic Thorn

Crowns (adult size) from Amazon.com – just type in “Crown of Thorns”

A Bible open to Mark 15:16-19

Sticky Note pads and pencils

Instruction page as follows:

Instructions:

Read: Mark 15:16-19

¹⁶The soldiers led Jesus inside the courtyard of the fortress and called together the rest of the troops. ¹⁷They put a purple robe on him, and on his head they placed a crown that they had made out of thorn branches. ¹⁸They made fun of Jesus and shouted, “Hey, you king of the Jews!” ¹⁹Then they beat him on the head with a stick. They spit on him and knelt down and pretended to worship him.

Activity: Feel the cloth of the robe. Touch the crown of thorns. Try to put it on. Think about how much this must have hurt. Imagine how Jesus would have been bleeding underneath the robe. Think about what happens when someone is bleeding. What happens after a while? Would this robe look like a nice robe after Jesus had been wearing it?

Now imagine people making fun of Jesus, laughing, spitting, hitting, and calling him names. Think about how Jesus felt being bullied and beaten. Write down what you would want to say to Jesus instead and leave your note on the table.

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Table 3: Jesus Wanted to Feel the Pain

Several small cups of red wine vinegar

Small pieces of sponge (take regular small cleaning sponges and cut into 6 or more pieces) so there is enough for one piece per person

A Bible open to Mark 15: 20-24

Sticky note pads and pencils

Instruction page as follows:

Instructions:

Read Mark 15: 20-24: *When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus, they took off the purple robe. They put his own clothes back on him and led him off to be nailed to a cross. Simon from Cyrene happened to be coming in from a farm, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross. Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.*

The soldiers took Jesus to Golgotha, which means "Place of a Skull." There they gave him some wine mixed with a drug to ease the pain, but he refused to drink it.

Activity: Think about how Simon must have felt when he carried the cross for Jesus. Then take a piece of sponge and dip it into a cup of the "wine." Smell it and taste it. When the soldiers offered Jesus this wine mixed with myrrh, it was actually like a medicine to make him not feel the pain. Why do you think Jesus didn't want to take this medicine? Write a note to Jesus, thanking him for what he did for you.

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Table 4: Who do you think Jesus is?

A Scroll saying "THE KING OF THE JEWS".

Large pieces of paper

Crayons/Markers

Bible open to Mark 15:25-32

Instruction Page as follows

Read: *The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!" In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe."*

Activities: Use the paper and colored markers/crayons and make a new Scroll for the Cross that you think describes Jesus (for example "Son of God" "Savior of the World" or even the names of Christ we mention during Advent – Wonderful Counselor, etc.) On the other side of the paper write down as many ways that Jesus had already shown the people miracles that should have helped them to believe before they crucified them. (E.g. Raised Lazarus from the dead, healed the blind, etc.) Leave these signs on the table.

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Table 5: Soldiers Gamble

Several sets of dice

One long cloth

Various colors of fabric pens/ or permanent markers

Open Bible to John 19:23-24 and several other Bibles unopened

Instruction page as follows:

Read: *After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. “The soldiers said to each other, “Let’s not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it.” This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say, “They divided up my clothes and gambled for my garments.”(Psalm 22:18) The soldiers then did what they had decided.*

Activity: Take turns rolling the dice to see if you can roll the number 7. Once that number is rolled, take the fabric marker and write “Thank you Jesus” on the piece of cloth. **Find Psalm 22:18 in the Bible**

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Table 6: DARKNESS AND BLOOD

Put on an easel a large BLACK piece of foam core that has been painted with just one blotch of Red paint that drips down. (see picture)

Open Bible to Luke 23:44-45 or Matthew 27:45-55, or Mark 15: 33-39



Read: *"From the sixth hour to the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" – which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split."*

Activity. Don't talk at this table. Just read the passage and then look at the picture. Think about how it makes you feel. **WONDER** ~ It is Noon. But it is totally dark outside. Jesus is bleeding on the cross. Look at this picture of black with just a touch of red. What comes to your mind? What does this make you think of?

RESPOND ~ Write a note or draw a picture about what you are feeling or thinking as you look at this darkness

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Table 7: Getting ready to take our sins to the Cross

You could have the ugly chicken wire Cross standing near this area or it can be in another location in the room that is visible enough so that when at this station people can see it.

Supplies:

Pipe Cleaners

Small squares of card stock hole punched in one corner and pencils

Colored Tissue paper cut into 3" squares

Instructions as follows: Make a Tissue paper flower to place into a cross wrapped in chicken wire. The cross looks ugly to begin with but once all the flowers of sorrow are in the chicken wire openings it looks beautiful.

1. Take three squares of tissue paper – any color you want

2. Make a loose fist



3. With your free hand, place three pieces of tissue paper over your fist so the middle of the paper is over the hole in your fist.



4. Open the hole in your fist a little and push the tissue paper slowly and gently into the hole, but not all the way – just enough to have a bottom to wrap the pipe cleaner around.

5. Pinch the bottom of your “flower” and twist it so it will stay in place

6. Write what you want to be forgiven for on a piece of Card stock that has been hole punched:

7. Then place your paper square onto the bottom of your flower:

8. Wrap the pipe cleaner around the bottom and twist.

9. LEAVE ENOUGH PIPE CLEANER “STICKING OUT” OF THE BOTTOM OF YOUR FLOWER SO YOU CAN PUT YOUR FLOWER ON THE CROSS.



10. Carry your flower with you until the closing worship time.

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CLOSING WORSHIP TIME:



At the close of the morning carry the ugly cross to a worship area and then have everyone bring their Tissue Paper flowers with them to this spot.

Read John 3:16

Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for Jesus' dying on the cross for our sins.

Play some quiet music (like "Were you there") and have the worshippers walk up to the cross and place their tissue paper flowers into the chicken wire openings and secure the flowers with the pipe cleaner ends. *This can be tricky, so I would recommend practicing yourself first as some flowers fall off etc. Stand with the children and parents to assist them as they attach their flowers to be sure as many of the openings are covered. The more flowers the more prettier the cross looks in the end. We usually make a bunch of extras to fill in the spots.*

Once the cross is filled with flowers. Close in prayer mentioning how Jesus took our ugliness, and with his death and resurrection gave us the opportunity for a beautiful new life.

Place this cross somewhere on display in the church on Easter Sunday Morning.

