

## **Good Friday Ideas - Reluctant Joy**

1. 7 Last Words of Jesus  
Luke 23:33-34  
  
Luke 23:39-43  
John 19:25-27  
Matthew 27:45-46  
John 19:28-29  
John 19:30  
Luke 23:44-49
  - a. \*options to make your own
    - i. Extinguish a candle after every reading
    - ii. Meditation after reading
    - iii. Send to families and encourage them to read at home
    - iv. Possibly select people in the congregation to write reflections on the 7 last words, one word per person. Perhaps have those people make a down-and-dirty video (with subterranean production values) of them speaking their reflections and knit these reflections together into a GF resource for the congregation. Could also simply make the text-only version available to all, of course.
    - v. Post your reflections (photos and videos) using #ReluctantJoy and tag @SDSynod on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The synod will share these throughout the three days.
2. A friend who is a Presbyterian pastor in Virginia is hosting a congregation-wide Zoom meeting to discuss Advanced Care Directives (<https://theconversationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/ConversationProject-ConvoStarterKit-English.pdf>) Given that old Uncle Marty (Luther) had the notion that a proper theology of the cross called a thing what it is, this could be an exercise (somehow) tied to GF. This is a moment to be straightforward with each other: before all this is over and done, families in the synod will have to manage end-of-life complications with family members who decline very quickly and have no existing Directive that could guide their family and medical team.
3. Cross with burlap draped over it. Putting nails in the burlap.
  - a. Way of symbolizing of leaving our sins, brokenness, pain, worries, anxieties at the cross



- 4.
5. Lots of people are using the “Six Word Snapshot” model to tell each other their joys, sorrows, fears, and frustrations. Maybe make that a congregation-based activity, strip names (probably) and make a video loop (Prezi is good for this) that could function as a kind of “prayers of the faithful” either during online worship (with music over it) or just online to be accessed whenever.
6. There are so many fine resources being shared all over. You all have seen them. So have the pastors, and congregation members, in the synod. In such a resource-rich environment, our task might be to create a synod “bulletin board,” a place where EVERYBODY could tack up the good ideas they have run across. This would probably have to be curated somehow (there are also a lot a fairly dopey ideas out there), but creating such a resource clearinghouse would save us from imagining that we were somehow invented the wheel.
7. A resource developed by my friend in Virginia, who is wonderfully creative, and is a gifted storyteller: <http://www.storydivine.com/?p=372>
8. Perhaps do something in the way of an exploration of the Stations of the Cross, only using bits that were gathered from a synod-wide Six Word Snapshot project. For instance:

**The First  
Station**

*Jesus is  
Condemned  
to Die.*

**The Second  
Station:**

*Jesus Carries  
His Cross.*

**The Third  
Station:**

*Jesus Falls  
the First  
Time.*

**The Fourth  
Station:**

*Jesus Meets  
His Mother.*

**The Fifth  
Station:**

*Simon Helps  
Jesus Carry  
His Cross.*

**The Sixth  
Station:**

*Veronica  
Wipes Jesus'  
Face.*

**The Seventh  
Station:**

*Jesus Falls  
the Second  
Time.*

**The Eighth  
Station:**

*Jesus Meets the  
Women of  
Jerusalem.*

**The Ninth  
Station:**

*Jesus Falls the  
Third Time.*

**The Tenth  
Station:**

*Jesus is Stripped.*

**The Eleventh  
Station:**

*Jesus is Nailed to  
the Cross.*

**The Twelfth  
Station:**

*Jesus Dies on the  
Cross.*

**The Thirteenth  
Station:**

*Jesus is Taken  
Down from the  
Cross.*

**The Fourteenth  
Station:**

*Jesus is Laid in  
the Tomb.*

- a. What might be connected with each of these? Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem: maybe something submitted by a nurse, an elementary teacher, or someone else in a woman-majority profession? Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face: maybe something from someone involved in Church On The Street or other ministry with people who are housing-insecure. This idea is ill-formed, but aims to connect the narrative of GF with the stories EVERYBODY is telling on facebook and everywhere.
9. Though it's not part of GF, the same sort of thing could be done with the texts that form the backbone of the Easter Vigil. The fact that this nasty virus originated in nature (not in some conspiracy-theory-imagined laboratory) means that, for instance, this might be a year to reflect on the first text in the Easter vigil, the Genesis 1 Origin Story. If this is a good idea, perhaps we could gather a group who could write a paragraph or three on each of these texts.
10. Or, what about creating a kind of Tenebrae service? I "borrowed" this basic structure from one I found online:

**The Service of Shadows**

**The Shadow of Betrayal**

Reading Matthew 26:20-25

Response *Ah, Holy Jesus*

**The Shadow of the Agony of Spirit and Arrest**

Reading Matthew 26:36-50

Response *Go to Dark Gethsemane*

**The Shadow of Denial**

Reading Matthew 26:69-75

Response "Judas, Peter" Poem by Luci Shaw

**The Shadow of Accusation**

Reading Matthew 27:11-14, 20-29

Response *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*

**The Shadow of Crucifixion and Humiliation**

Reading Matthew 27:31-43

Instrumental Response (*see notes below*)

**The Shadow of Death**

Reading Matthew 27:45-54

Response *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* (verses 1-3)

The Christ Candle is Removed

**The Shadow of Burial**

Reading Matthew 27:57-60

Solo Response *Were You There?*

Silent Meditation

- a. Perhaps remove the music?
  - b. Perhaps substitute a Six Word Snapshot that somehow echoes the reading for each step. Since the flow of Tenebrae is from illumination to darkness, perhaps create a video at night in a worship space lit only by candles.
  - c. Could also be done in each congregation. The congregation I served now so long ago in rural Wisconsin has a deep love for its sanctuary, a space they now do not enter. Seeing it move from light to dim darkness would be powerful. I see pastors posting videos from inside their empty sanctuaries and I realize that they are like me in loving the space in which we worship. This might be powerful to do.
11. This isn't strictly a GF idea, but there has been some semi-vigorous discussion about "delaying" the celebration of Easter until we can again gather together. There has also been a fair amount of scolding from people who are sure God has told them that this is theologically foolishness and must never be done. Fascinating. I tend to think better in both-and structures and find either-or structures to generate fist-fights that some people seem to enjoy a whole lot. Since EVERY Sunday is a celebration of Easter, I see no reason not to do both. Thank you for listening to my TED Talk.