

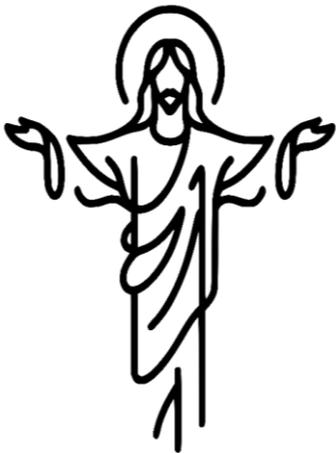
## Lent cross – Easter Day

### In Matthew chapter 28 we read:

The day after the Sabbath day was the first day of the week. At dawn on the first day, Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary went to look at the tomb.

At that time there was a strong earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven, went to the tomb, and rolled the stone away from the entrance. Then he sat on the stone. He was shining as bright as lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The soldiers guarding the tomb shook with fear because of the angel, and they became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified. He is not here. He has risen from the dead as he said he would. Come and see the place where his body was, and go quickly and tell his followers, ‘Jesus has risen from the dead. He is going into Galilee ahead of you, and you will see him there.’”



*Lord Jesus,  
Our hearts are full of wonder  
at the news that you are risen,  
that death could not hold you,  
that you have opened the gates of  
your kingdom to us,  
and that you go ahead of us.  
As we hear the message of the  
angels, may we too look forward to  
the day when we will see you face  
to face, and be with you in your  
new eternal kingdom. Amen*

## The Lent Cross 2026



Through Lent, we are encouraged to reflect on Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem and the significant events in the last days of Jesus’ life.

A bare cross is placed in the church on Ash Wednesday.

The Lent Cross is very simple and rough, made from a Christmas Tree from a previous year, linking the culmination of the Lenten liturgy - the Triumph of Easter - to the start of our redemption - the Incarnation.

Each Sunday, at the start of our service, objects representing the key events in the last days of Jesus’ life are placed on or by the cross. If you are still unable to join us for worship, maybe you could find objects at home, to represent these same events and display them as part of your Lenten journey this year.

## Lent cross - week one: The bowl and towel

### In the Gospel of John, we read:

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father who had put all things under his power... Then, he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place.

"Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.

"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.... Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

*Lord Jesus,  
You shared our humanity – our joys  
and our struggles. You know the  
needs of all your children. Help us  
to serve those around us with  
humility and faithfulness, caring for  
their needs in practical ways as we  
serve you, our Servant King. Amen.*



- Prayer focus
- People in caring and service roles, paid or unpaid.
  - Volunteers who support the needy in the community
  - Media reporters who alert us to the needs of others.
  - Ourselves, to grow as servants, learning to love and serve others through our words and deeds.

## Lent cross - week six: Palm Sunday

### In Matthew chapter 21 we read:

As Jesus and his followers were coming closer to Jerusalem, they stopped at Bethphage at the hill called the Mount of Olives. From there Jesus sent two of his followers and said to them, "Go to the town you can see there. When you enter it, you will quickly find a donkey tied there with its colt. Untie them and bring them to me.

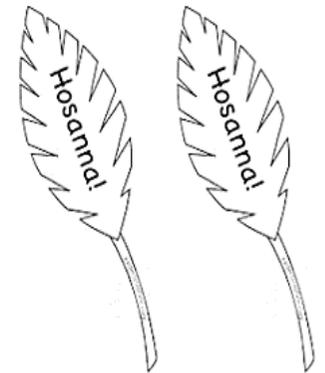
They brought the donkey and the colt to Jesus and laid their coats on them, and Jesus sat on them. Many people spread their coats on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The people were walking ahead of Jesus and behind him, shouting,

"Praise to the Son of David!

God bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

Praise to God in heaven!"

*Lord Jesus,  
We praise You, and love You  
as our King; we come to You as your  
children by Your grace. Help us always  
to be faithful to what we know is true,  
and strengthen us to live in a way which  
glorifies You. May we faithfully and  
joyfully proclaim Your Kingdom to all  
the people we meet or influence. Amen.*



- Prayer focus
- As we celebrate Jesus, who comes to save us, we pray for those who work for our emergency services.
  - Shelterbox, and all who work beside them.
  - New Christians, especially those preparing for baptism this Easter.
  - Ourselves, that we may remain faithful to You, as our victorious King, whatever the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

## Lent cross - week five: The nails of Crucifixion

### In Matthew chapter 27 we read:

When the soldiers had crucified him, they threw lots to decide who would get his clothes. The soldiers sat there and continued watching him. They put a sign above Jesus' head with a charge against him. It said: this is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

About three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Some of the people standing there who heard this said, "He is calling Elijah."

Jesus cried out again in a loud voice and died.

Then the curtain in the Temple was torn into two pieces, from the top to the bottom. Also, the earth shook and rocks broke apart. When the army officer and the soldiers guarding Jesus saw this earthquake and everything else that happened, they were very frightened and said, "He really was the Son of God!"

*Lord Jesus, as we look again in wonder at your cross and the life you gave for us – we cannot grasp that we could be loved so much.*

*May I never lose the wonder,  
the wonder of the cross;  
May I see it like the first time,  
standing as a sinner lost,  
undone by mercy and left speechless,  
watching wide-eyed at the cost.  
May I never lose the wonder,  
the wonder of the cross. Amen.*



- Prayer focus
- The persecuted Church, and those who provide support.
  - Those who give sacrificially to provide a better life for others, denying their own wants and needs to do this.
  - Ourselves, that we may truly appreciate the cost of our forgiveness, and so be ready to forgive others, even when it is very costly

## Lent cross - week two: The money bag

### In Matthew chapter 26 we read:

Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon, who had a skin disease. While Jesus was there, a woman approached him with an alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. She poured this perfume on Jesus' head while he was eating.

His followers were upset when they saw the woman do this. They asked, "Why waste that perfume? It could have been sold for a great deal of money and the money given to the poor."

Then one of the twelve apostles, Judas Iscariot, went to talk to the leading priests. He said, "What will you pay me for giving Jesus to you?" And they gave him thirty silver coins. After that, Judas watched for the best time to turn Jesus in.

*Lord Jesus, as we remember your betrayal by Judas, we are reminded that we too betray you.*

*Forgive us we pray and confirm in us the knowledge that you will never betray us. Teach us, like you, to be a defender of those who are let down, marginalized, or betrayed in our society; and a befriender and comforter to all who are still waiting for their vindication. Amen*



- Prayer focus
- People who have been betrayed or let down by family or friends or those they should be able to trust.
  - The world's poorest communities, betrayed by rich nations in climate, debt and trade legislation time and time again.
  - Ourselves, that we would guard our actions and words to ensure that they protect, rather than tear down.

## Lent cross - week three: Bread and wine

### In Matthew chapter 26 we read:

In the evening, (of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) Jesus was sitting at the table with his twelve followers. As they were eating, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will turn against me."

Then, while they were eating, Jesus took some bread and thanked God for it and broke it. Then he gave it to his followers and said, "Take this bread and eat it; this is my body."

Then Jesus took a cup and thanked God for it and gave it to the followers. He said, "Every one of you drink this. This is my blood which is the new agreement that God makes with his people. This blood is poured out for many to forgive their sins. I tell you this: I will not drink of this fruit of the vine again until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

*Lord Jesus,  
as we look in wonder at your  
sacrifice, help us to fully see  
and appreciate  
how much we are loved,  
and that your love was poured out  
not just for us, but for all people.  
In our remembering, empower us  
to love, prize and treasure others  
as those for whom you laid down your life. Amen.*



- Prayer focus
- Those we love and those who love us.
  - The lonely and those who feel unloved; those we don't love as well as we should.
  - Ourselves, as we are challenged to step out from our places of safety and be ready to share our experience of Christ and his love, with the people around us.

## Lent cross - week four: A king's robe and crown

### In Matthew chapter 27 we read:

Jesus stood before Pilate the governor, and Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Those are your words."

The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's palace, and they all gathered around him. They took off his clothes and put a red robe on him. Using thorny branches, they made a crown, put it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand. Then the soldiers bowed before Jesus and made fun of him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on Jesus. Then they took his stick and began to beat him on the head.

After they finished, the soldiers took off the robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

*Lord Jesus,  
remind us that You are our King,  
and that You lead us with  
humility and majesty.  
Involve us in building Your  
kingdom by your Spirit,  
rather than by human might  
or power. Help us to be channels  
for more love, joy, peace,  
patience, kindness, goodness,  
faithfulness, gentleness and  
self-control in our world. Amen.*



- Prayer focus
- Those in positions of leadership today
  - The church and all who acknowledge Jesus as King.
  - All who are falsely accused or imprisoned.
  - Ourselves, that we may truly worship you as our King and make you Lord of everything we are, and own.