

## **Ways to prepare yourself for Easter:**

One of the biggest issues facing us right now as a church family, is the struggle of what to do for Easter. Even though this is a moveable Holy day, as it is tracked by the lunar calendar and not the solar one, each one of us has our own traditions that help us mark the sacrifices of Jesus on the cross so long ago, the promise and hope that we have been given with the good news of the empty tomb. But this year many of our own Easter rituals are not available to us due to the ongoing Covid 19 Virus, and so you might be struggling about how to celebrate the risen Lord. If your feeling a little worried or out of place this Holy Week because things are not going according to your plans, don't. No one expected this to happen, and just because you're not able to do what you usually do to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection it does not change the Easter story. Jesus will still rise on Sunday, and our sins have been forgiven by God on Good Friday. This will never change, all that needs to change this year is how we chose to celebrate this wonderful life-giving event. And here are few idea's about how we can prepare our hearts during this holy week celebration.

1. Create for yourself a special space to worship in. If you have children allow them to help you create a space that will bring you closer to God. Some ways of doing this: light a candle, decorate a table with things that remind you of God's love and grace, perhaps a bible, or fresh flowers, or even seeds as these have the ability to remind us that God is hard at work even when were not able to see it. Pick some music that can act as a transition piece between ordinary time and holy time, this will allow you to leave behind the list of things that still need to be done and just focus on the Lord.
2. Once you have created this special space for you and your family, set aside some time together, in prayer, in reading of scripture, such as the passion story, I would also suggest that you keep a note book beside you and write down anything that pop's out at you from what your reading, be it questions that you have, or new idea's that spring forth in this time of worship. If you have younger people with you, ask them what they think about the story, or how they think that people would feel in the scripture passages, these are also great questions to ask yourself if there are no young people around.
3. End this time of worship with a short prayer, it does not need to be elaborate, it just needs to come from the heart, give thanks to the Lord for what good you have in your life, give thanks for the gift of Jesus, and the promise of the empty tomb, and then add your prayer for the people close to your heart, and those in our world who you think need God's help. This is all that prayer is, a conversation between you and God, but make sure to leave space for God to answer, as prayer is a conversation not a monolog.
4. Take this time to create new Easter rituals, or bring back ones that you may have forgotten or out grown, as Easter is a season of new life, a time for laughter, love and celebration, so take the time to do things that bring you joy, dye eggs, walk around your garden and see the new life starting to sprout, take out your sidewalk chalk and write on your drive way that Christ is risen. Celebrate this good news in what ever way your able to, call a friend to let them know that Christ is risen, watch an Easter Sunday services online, or on the television, belt out your favourite hymn so that the world may know that Christ is risen.
5. Lastly remind yourself that God was able to do great things in an empty tomb, and so he will not allow his good news to be stopped by an empty church. For come Sunday Christ will rise again in glory, and we will rise with him to new life. Thanks be to God, Amen.