

And that is the end of our Good Friday story. It seems like all hope is gone. It seems like God's great Rescuer is dead. It seems like sadness has won.

But those of us who know this story know that it doesn't end there.



There's more to come. And to remind ourselves of what comes next in this story, we're going to plant some **seed**.

7. Scatter the **grass seed** and the **daisy seed** across your garden.

And now, the hard part, we **wait**. We wait like Jesus' first friends waited. We wait for good news to spring up out of the darkness and silence and sadness. We wait for the flowers in our garden to grow. I wonder how Jesus' friends felt as they waited? I wonder if they knew what was coming next? I wonder if they remembered the promises he'd spoken to them about what would happen after his death? I wonder if they dared to believe that death was not the end? *I wonder...*



8. The very last thing we need to do is to water our garden. Why do we need to water it? We need water to help these tiny seeds to grow. As we water our gardens, I'm going to pray for us – that the seeds sown by today's story would take root in our hearts, that God would water them and that they would grow, that our faith in Jesus would grow, as we look forward to Easter Sunday.

*Father God, we thank you for the story of Good Friday. We thank you that Jesus died on the cross for us. That he took our place even though he had done nothing wrong. We pray that the seeds you have sown today would grow in our hearts. And we pray that the seeds we have sown in our gardens would grow too, and would remind us of the hope and new life that is found in Jesus at Easter Time. Amen*



## Good Friday Easter Garden – Make your own

To make an Easter Garden you will need to collect: a container, some soil, a plant pot, sticks, string, pebbles, a large stone, some seeds and water.

As we make our gardens, we are going to walk through the story of what happened on Good Friday. For some of you, this will be a very familiar story; for others, you might be hearing it for the first time.

As we go through the story, I invite you to stop and join me in *wondering* about what happened that first Easter and what it means for us today.

1. The first thing we need is our **container**.



We're going to use plant pot saucers as the foundation of our garden. I wonder what the foundation of your Easter is? I wonder what you think about each spring as you celebrate? Is it chocolate? Or Easter Eggs? Or the Easter Bunny? Or is the thing that the Easter Story is built upon something much greater than that. *I wonder...*

2.The next thing we need is our **soil**.

You need to line your container with soil. Feel the soil between your hands. What is it like? Is it full of rocks and stones? Is it smooth or wet or lumpy and dry? Jesus once told a story about soil to some of his friends. He told them that our hearts are like soil – and that our soil needs to be ready for the seeds of his word to be planted in it. What does your heart feel like today? Is it angry? Or sad? Or happy? Or scared? Is there room in your heart to think about Jesus or is it too full of other things? *I wonder...*

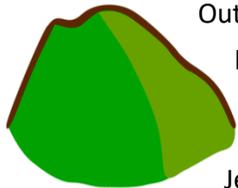


3.Next, we're going to make our **crosses**.



You'll need the sticks and twine or string. Work together to make 3 crosses tied together using the twine. On that first Good Friday, Jesus was given a cross to carry. I wonder what that cross would have felt like? Would it have been hard or smooth? Light or heavy? How would Jesus has felt as the cross was put upon his shoulders. *I wonder...*

4.Next, we're going to make a **hill**



Outside the city of Jerusalem was a hill called Golgotha or The place of the Skull. This is where Jesus was crucified. Take your little plastic plant pot and use it to form a hill. Add soil on top of the pot to shape your landscape. What do you think Jesus thinking? Were they shouting at him? Were they sad or angry? Why? *I wonder...*

Take your three crosses and fix them to the top of your hill. The bible tells us that Jesus was not crucified on his own that day. There were 2 others with him. I wonder what they were thinking. Were they frightened? These men were criminals, robbers. They were being killed for the mistakes they had made. One of the criminals hanging beside Jesus joined in with the others in the crowd below. He shouted abuse at Jesus. "Aren't you God's Son, his special chosen



one?" He shouted. "You saved others but you can't even save yourself. If you were really God's son, you could just climb down from that cross..."

And, of course, the robber was right. Jesus could have climbed down. He could just have said one word and made it all stop. But he didn't. He stayed there. The robber didn't understand that it wasn't nails that held Jesus to the cross. It was love.

But the other man, the other robber, was different. He trusted Jesus. He knew he was someone special. "Don't your fear God." He said. "We are getting what we deserve for the things we have done wrong, but this man has done nothing wrong." And then he looked at Jesus, "Jesus," he said, "remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

I wonder which one of these robbers we are most like? Do we trust Jesus? Do we take him at his word? *I wonder...*

When Jesus was nailed to the cross, darkness fell across the land for the sun stopped shining. I wonder what the crowd felt then. Were they afraid? Did they believe? Did they doubt? *I wonder...*

And then, as he breathed his last breath, Jesus gave his life back to God and he died.



A few hours later, Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, and placed in the tomb.

5.Lay your **pebbles** across the soil to form a pathway to the tomb. What were Jesus' friends thinking as they carried his body along that path. What emotions were going through their heads? *I wonder...*



6.Take your **large stone** and place it over the tomb. After Jesus' body was placed tomb was sealed with a large rock that the entrance to inside, the was rolled over the entrance to stop anyone from getting in. Or anyone from getting out.