



THE EIGHTH STATION: JESUS COMFORTS THE WOMEN

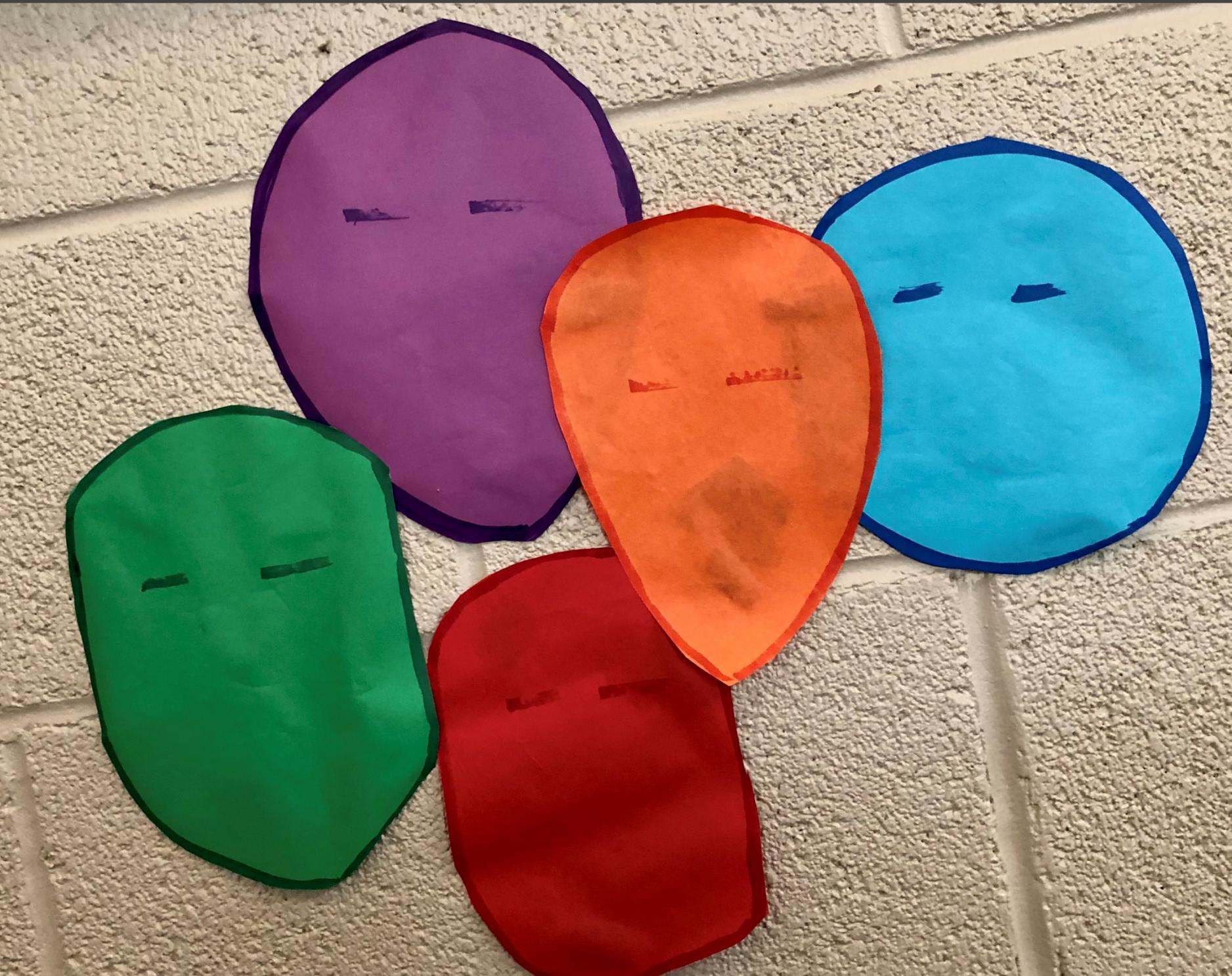
Jesus turned to the women who followed him with tears and lament as he carried his cross through the city and said, “do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and your children.” He directed the focus of their mourning to themselves and others who would continue living after his gruesome death. It was them who would be challenged to find hope in the midst of despair while living in a world that too easily chooses violence over compassion.

Given the intersectionality of oppression, women are often burdened disproportionately under the injustices of our systems, as they struggle with the impact of sexism intensified by other inequities such as race, religion, or class. The experience of all women throughout the ages – cisgender, transgender, and genderfluid – testifies to the need to end poverty, violence and other forms of oppression. It calls us to a new heaven and a new earth – to a new way of being in relationship with one another.

For this is what the Lord says...“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 66:13

New International Version



THE EIGHTH STATION: JESUS COMFORTS THE WOMEN



THE NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Jesus and his teachings deeply threatened the dominant culture of his day – the buying and selling of goods, class and cultural distinctions, and the distribution of power. His commitment to God's love and justice brought him in direct conflict with those whose comfort and security relied upon the status quo. It was this commitment that led to his death on the cross.

The culture Jesus died critiquing is in some ways not so different from our own culture of materialism. Consider the Central American garment workers whose sweatshop labor enables our cheaply priced clothing or the Chinese workers laboring under illegal and abusive conditions to produce the newest iPhone. Consider also the unequal distribution of wealth in the United States where the top 1% owns more wealth than the bottom 90% combined. For example, in 2019 Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos made \$8,961,187 **per hour**. That's roughly 315 times what the median Amazon worker earns **per year**. Every time the world worships things before people, power before justice, and consumption before the spirit, we lose what it means to be human and alive.

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers."

Matthew 21:12-13
New Revised Standard Version



THE NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME



THE TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Upon arriving at the place of execution, Jesus endured the humiliation of having his clothing stripped from his body to stand naked in the process of crucifixion. Only thorns remain, encircling his bruised and bleeding brow.

Damaging practices of resource extraction, such as mountain top removal mining and fracking, have stripped and bruised the earth in the name of progress and profit. For Indigenous peoples who have lived in relationship with their ancestral lands since time immemorial, these approaches are not just environmentally irresponsible but culturally and spiritually damaging.

There are countless cases throughout history of Indigenous peoples being dislocated, abused, and even killed by resource industries and the governmental policies that support them. These communities have paid the major share of the cost of civilization's insatiable appetite for land and resources with little profit or benefit in return.

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Isaiah 58: 6-8
New Revised Standard Version



THE TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS





THE ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

No matter how much we might want to look away from the excruciatingly painful experience Jesus was forced to endure, we cannot. His life was lost in a world where individuals and institutions turn to violence to gain and maintain power or to “solve” conflict or shame.

The summer of 2020 saw the United States' biggest protests for racial justice and civil rights in a generation, emerging in response to the murder of George Floyd, a Black man in Minneapolis. Smartphone video captured the last minutes of Floyd's life - showing him gasping for air and calling for his mother as a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes. His dying words, "I can't breathe!" were chanted in protests around the country.

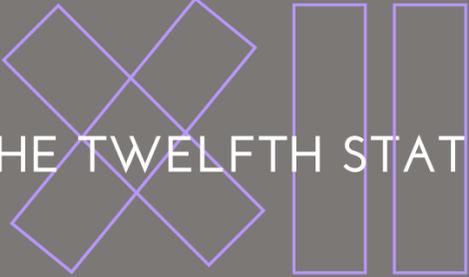
Floyd's death was emblematic of the violence that results from, as well as reinforces, systemic racism and white supremacy. Social science data demonstrates that whites in particular are unreasonably suspicious of African Americans. This factor was very likely at play in the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery who was pursued and fatally shot while jogging in Georgia and Breonna Taylor who was shot by police when they forcibly entered her home as part of a drug dealing investigation, as well as countless others.

The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.

*Elie Wiesel
Author, Activist and Holocaust Survivor*



THE ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS



THE TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Nailed to the cross he was forced to carry to a rocky hill, Jesus was hoisted above the heads of Roman soldiers to hang bruised and broken. Accompanied by his mother and a few other women, Jesus was left exposed to the elements and agonizing pain for the last few hours of his life.

Jesus' naked and broken body was battered even further by the hot sun of the day and the coldness of night. For those living on the streets of our communities, such exposure to the elements, along with the physical and psychological stress resulting from the absence of a home base or support network, contributes to poor health and chronic illness.

The death rate for people experiencing homelessness is about four times greater than the rate for the general population. The risks are even higher during a pandemic when self-quarantine, social isolation, and stay-at-home orders are difficult, if not impossible, to follow when you do not have a home. Preliminary analysis from New York City indicates that the COVID-19 mortality rate for homeless people in shelters is 61% higher than for the general population.

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'

Matthew 22: 37-40
New Revised Standard Version



  THE TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS