Good Enough

Visual and Media Arts Ideas

from the Worship Design Studio
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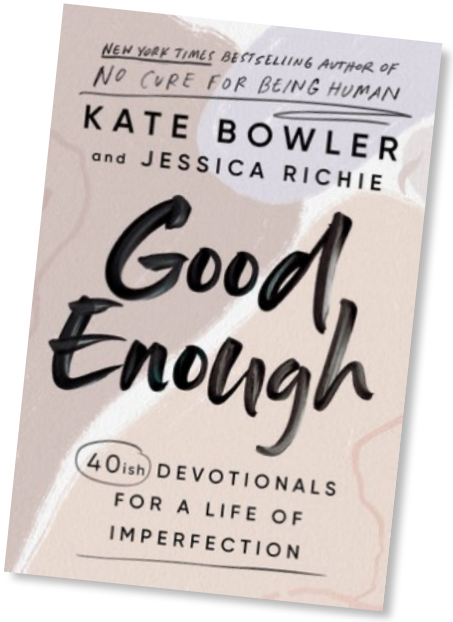
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About the Series

We live in a culture bent on definitions of a good life as continuous upward mobility–climbing ladders of prosperity with increasingly fabulous experiences that we can post to ever-more-likable social media accounts. We may comb the shelves of the self-help section in search of just the right formula to gain success. Perhaps we even gravitate towards spiritual leaders who promise great rewards if we only do "the right thing." But life happens, right? Most times we are not moving upward but trying to repair the rung we've just slipped from. So what if we stopped climbing and started fertilizing, watering, and blooming right where we find ourselves? Welcome to a Lent of affirming a faith in which we are blessed, regardless, and where we can lean into embracing our "good enough" lives.

This worship series is based on Kate Bowler's new devotional book, *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*, written with Jessica Richie. Order copies for your sermon preparation and small group discussions at https://katebowler.com/books/good-enough/.





Anchor Image: Ladders and Plants

That image of climbing endless rungs through life is such a visceral metaphor for the incompleteness we can sometimes feel, especially when we look around to the “rungs” that we perceive others are standing on. The idea of “blooming where you’re planted” means that we cease striving for some unattainable ideal and instead choose to embrace our current state, even if it’s a little grubby, exposed, or uncomfortable.

Consider setting up a stationary ladder that remains in your sanctuary throughout the series as a visual touchstone. You could add a new plant each week to symbolize continuous growth and rootedness, spell out “GOOD” in wooden letters like the photo here, or anything else that you think would be meaningful for your community to see created over time! Check out our Pinterest board for the series to get LOTS of ideas for ladder gardens!



Here are some images from our photo shoot for the series. Dr. Marcia recommends taking photos of the ladder by itself first so you have some “before” images to start with.







To create the “Enough” sign, Marcia printed out the individual letters on 8.5 x 11 paper, cut them, and glued them onto a wooden board. Here is the link to the Canva template for the letters if you’d like to do the same thing!



These wooden letters can be ordered on Amazon. Marcia used little nails on the top and bottom to attach them to the ladder.





Our vision is for you to leave this installation in your worship space for the duration of the series. You could also reproduce the setting outside if you have an outdoor garden area or green space on your church grounds for a photo shoot of your own! There are many variations on this theme on our Pinterest board for the series. This could also be a wonderful way to garner some attention to the wider community *outside* of your church. Maybe you could have a sign with "#goodenough" that invites folks to take photos and share on social media. And of course, display your church website so people can learn more and join you on your Lenten journey.



Children's Time: Processing Plants

In the Children's Time document, you'll see that we suggest having the children process various things such as plants and watering cans into the worship space each week during the threshold moment–the opening sequence of worship. Alternatively, you could skip this processional and simply add the plants each week before worship.

Planting Sprouts for Ash Wednesday

In the worship script for Ash Wednesday, you will see that we suggest the following direction during the Ritual of Ashes and Turning Our Ladders into Gardens:

> *Leader:* Our ritual of receiving ashes will be accompanied this year by placing the small treasures of sprouts and shoots of plants that were planted by the children on a transformed and repurposed ladder-garden. This image will remind us each week to spend time tending the things that are beautiful and growing already in our midst rather than constantly climbing and reaching for more–for those things we think we are "supposed" to achieve or have in our lives.

The idea behind this is that if you give yourself some lead time, you can do a special activity for your children's ministry where you have the children plant seeds about a month before Ash Wednesday so that they can turn into sprouts in time for the beginning of Lent. Alternatively, you could have them "plant" small seedlings from a plant nursery in milk cartons, for example. Then fast-forward to Ash Wednesday, you could have these sprouts prepared for people to take to their seats for the service and then bring up at the appropriate time when they come forward for ashes. If you can't do this, just remove or adapt that line from the scripts.

Note: When having participants come forward with their sprouts, invite them to place the seedlings at the base or to either side of the ladder, or even on a separate table so you don't have to worry about crowing the plants on the ladder steps, or about a traffic jam in the front of the worship space.

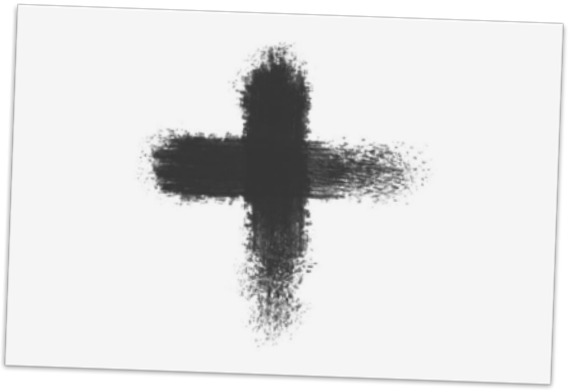
There are some wonderful video clips of children watering and caring for plants on Pexels (royalty-free). We have saved several to our video clips album for this series! These would make good bookends for media clips if you are filming videos for children's worship ahead of time.

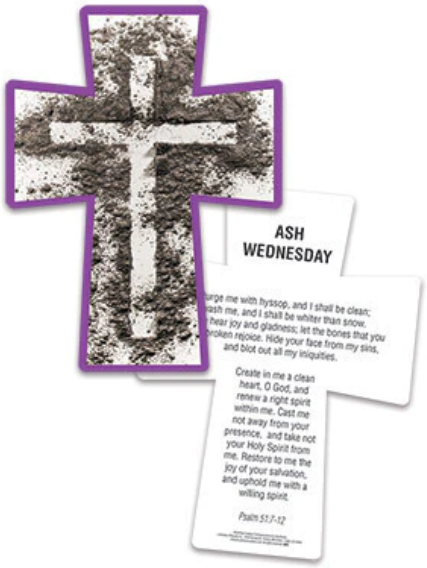


More Visual and Media Ideas for Ash Wednesday

There are lots of creative ways for observing a ritual of the imposition of the ashes. If your church offers a physical imposition of the ashes, make sure you consider ways to include homebound members of your community or those who may be worshiping online. Whatever you do, it is wise not to encourage participants to try mixing their own ashes at home: improperly mixing ashes with water (instead of oil) will create lye, which burns the skin. So here are some different ideas for variations on the imposition of ashes:

Make temporary tattoos! Use a graphic that you like (such as the cross pictured here) with a service like Custom Tattoo Now to create temporary tattoos that you can then send out to your participants through the mail. You could do the same thing with static clings that will attach to your car or house windows. Anja Helmon made this very creative video demonstration for a virtual imposition of the ashes.









Series Logo

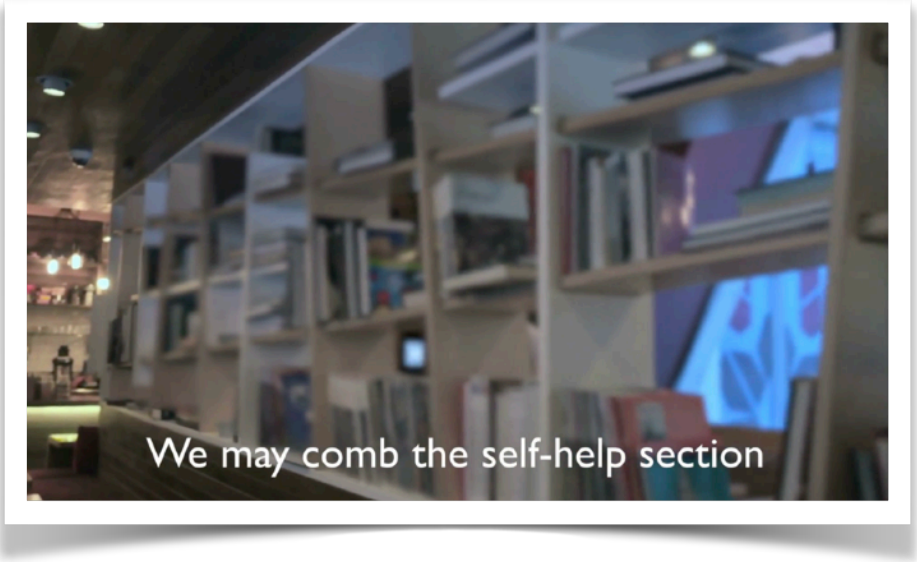
Our series logo was created in Canva, an online image editing program that is easy to use and free for non-profit organizations like churches. Click HERE to go to the series logo and use our template to create your own adaptation. We have included two versions: one with the Worship Design Studio logo and URL for the series, and one without that branding so that you can add your church's information. The font that was used for the "Good Enough" title is called Kaushan Script, and the font used for the rest of the text in the logo is Open Sans. Both can be downloaded for free from Google Fonts HERE and HERE.

New to Canva? Watch this five-minute video with Dr. Marcia demonstrating how to use Canva to create your own images.

We have also included some images depicting the titles of each frame in the series. These may be helpful to incorporate into the Worship Guide (bulletin) or slides you will develop according to your usual practices. We created these slides on Canva, and you'll find them included at the same link as the logos.



Series Trailer



A series trailer is a short video that gives people an idea of what your worship series is going to be about, just like a trailer for a movie! We have created a long trailer and a short trailer that can both be used as-is and adapted to include your church's information at the end. Download the trailers HERE. We have included some blank space at the end of each one where you can insert your church's information (name, location, service times, etc.). And yes, you may share them on social media, your church website, anywhere folks may be interested in learning about your Lent series!

The longer trailer features slower, more meditative music with stock footage complementing the themes of the series. The shorter trailer includes slightly more upbeat music, set to before-and-after shots from our ladder photo shoot. If you wanted to recreate the short trailer featuring photos from your own church property, that could be a wonderful way to spark recognition and excitement for the folks in your community! (We used a simple pan effect over a still shot in a video editing program to add the motion effect.) HERE is an example of the short trailer with the ladder garden inside a sanctuary.

Additional Photography Resources

Download the photos from our series photo shoot HERE! You are welcome to use these in your slide backgrounds, projection media, on your church website, etc.

There are numerous great sources for finding high-quality, royalty-free stock photos to use for projection, publicity, and inspiration as you work on and share this series. Here is a photo album on Unsplash that we created just for “Good Enough.”

Here are our favorite photography websites to peruse for general stock photos: Unsplash, Pexels, and Pixabay.

Video Clip Resources

Looking for stock video footage? Visit the Pexels Videos library and the Pixabay video library for clips that you can use in your own video production. View our collection of clips of gardening/watering plants on Pexels HERE.

Of course, you can also take and make your own photos and video clips!

References

Below are photo sources found from resources not referenced in this document:

Cover and Series Threads
- (p. 1) Photo by Karen Ristine.

About the Series
- (p. 3) Photos from https://katebowler.com/books/good-enough.

Anchor Image: Ladders and Plants
- (pp. 4-7) All images by Marcia McFee and Karen Ristine.

Children's Time: Processing Plants
- (p. 8) https://unsplash.com/photos/ffJ8Qa0VQU0