



theParentLink

Children's Ministry Edition

April 2010
La Verne Heights
Presbyterian Church
Children's Ministry
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Celebrate Jesus' Resurrection

Each spring, we see reminders of new life and rebirth. Trees bud, flowers bloom, and butterflies emerge from their cocoons. For Christians, the most important celebration of new life is Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter. Children may associate this holiday mainly with bunnies, baskets, and candy. So it's important to share with them the real reason we rejoice: the empty tomb.

Use these creative ideas to share the Easter message with children of all ages. Let them know that Jesus, our loving Savior, died and rose again so we can go to heaven and be with him forever.

Palm Sunday—Make "praise shakers" to celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Decorate the bottoms of paper plates, fill them with beads or unpopped popcorn, and then staple together the edges. Add streamers and then have a parade. Shout out praises to Jesus and make noise to celebrate that he is our King.



Good Friday—Buy a small vine wreath at a craft store and insert toothpicks to resemble the crown of thorns Jesus wore. Whenever a family member makes a sacrifice for someone else, they should remove one thorn. On the night before Easter, after your children are asleep, remove the remaining thorns and decorate the crown with white ribbons and bright flowers.

Easter Sunday—Using a stamp pad and colored pencils, make thumbprint pictures that tell the Easter story. For example, draw a tomb with a rolled-away thumbprint rock and a butterfly with thumbprint wings.



Thank you to a host of Eggcellent Easter volunteers! We won't name names alas someone will be forgotten. Since you know who you are - Muchas Gracias for helping make this Easter a memorable one for our children. From craft making, Easter Eggs, Easter plush toys for our infants, bubble bottles for our elementary age children, Easter duckies for our toddler to sharing in fellowship— all made possible by your love in Christ!



PowerSource

Ask God:

1. To bless your Easter celebrations and keep your focus on his resurrection.
2. To help your children know that Easter is for them.
3. To keep the joy of Easter in your hearts all year long.

Parenting Insights

These age-level insights from *Children's Ministry Magazine* will help you share the Easter message with kids of all ages.

Ages 2 to 5

Tell young children that people who hated Jesus nailed him to a cross and left him there until he died. Explain how sad and afraid Jesus' friends were but emphasize their joy when Jesus returned to life three days later.

Ages 6 to 9

Fairness is a big deal at this age, so explain in simple language that Christ willingly died in our place because he loves us. Kids may be fascinated by crucifixion details. Avoid euphemisms for death such as sleeping.

Ages 10 to 12

Kids who are familiar with the details of the Easter story are ready for the "why." Explain why it was necessary for Christ to die, referring to the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament.

OpenTheBook

**"Don't be afraid!" [the angel] said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen."
Matthew 28:5-6**

By dying in our place and rising from the dead, Jesus gives his followers eternal life in heaven. That's worth celebrating at Easter—and every day!

Teachable Moments

1. Jelly Bean Joy—Use the candy in children's Easter baskets to remind them of God's love. In this poem, each color represents part of the Easter story:

- ?? Orange is for sins we've done.
- ?? Red is for the blood of God's only Son.
- ?? White is for the grace he gives.
- ?? Green is for new life in him.
- ?? Yellow is for your place in heaven.
- ?? Invite Jesus into your life and be truly forgiven.



2. New Life—Go on a walk to collect lots of twigs (or use toothpicks instead). Use a low-temperature hot glue gun to attach the twigs to a clean, empty soup can. Then fill the "vase" with fresh flowers as you talk about how the twigs are like our lives before Jesus (dead and broken) and how the flowers represent our lives with Jesus (new and alive).

A word of Appreciation and Thanks!

Maggie W., our dear colleague in Children's Ministry for countless years, will be moving to Oregon as of April 26th. Maggie has been a long time volunteer with our 4's & 5's class during Children's Worship. She will be greatly missed! Please make sure that you make known your appreciation by giving Maggie a huge hug when you see her. Tell her how much you've appreciated her ministry. How about having your family make her a homemade card that she can take with her?
We know Maggie will cherish it.



Birthday Blessings!
A.J. A. April 3
David N. April 19
Jonathan N. April 25

April Acolyte Schedule

April 4 - Justin B./Allie P.
April 11 - Megan J./Lucy B.
April 18 - Angelo M.
April 25 - Shannon P./Claire W.

Children's Worship Leaders

April 4 - Lynn H.
April 11- Joanne S.
April 18 - Lynn O.
April 25 - Don J.

Vacation Bible School: July 12-16 Volunteer Signups Starting Now!

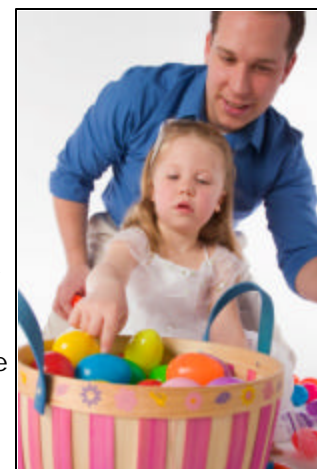
Find the VBS table on the Patio every Sunday until June.

Family Experience: Easter Is for Me!

Get closer to one another and to God during Easter by using these simple activities that will have a lasting impact.

?? **Prayer Eggs**—During Easter week, use a basket of eggs to encourage your family to spend time together talking to God. Place slips of paper with prayer topics inside plastic eggs. Make enough eggs for each family member to open one per day during the week leading up to Easter. Include praises and gratitude, as well as prayer requests for family members, your church, and the community. Open the prayer eggs at meals or bedtime and pray together for the opened requests.

?? **Resurrection Buns**—Make edible "empty tombs" with just a few ingredients. Wrap a packaged crescent-roll triangle around a large marshmallow. Dip the roll in melted butter, then cinnamon and sugar. Cook the rolls according to the instructions on the roll package. The marshmallows "disappear" and leave an empty, sweet surprise.



Read aloud Luke 24:1-12. Then give each family member a roll and have them take one bite. Ask: "What do you see inside your roll? How do you think the women felt when they found the tomb empty?" Say: "Remember that even as these rolls are empty, Jesus' tomb was empty, too, because he rose from the dead."