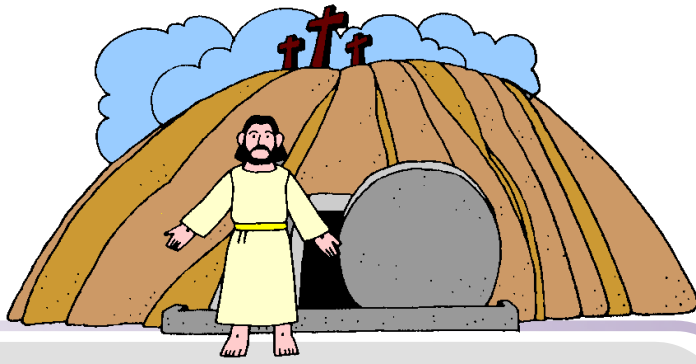




Dear Parents:

This page lets you know what your child learned today at church. Included are suggested discussion questions and possible activities that you may use to reinforce the Bible story at home. Please ask your child to share today's story with you. You may be surprised at how much he or she remembers!

TODAY'S STORY: JESUS ALIVE & ASCENSION

Jesus proves who He is by being raised from the dead. He commissions the citizens of His Kingdom to expand it, and God promises that one day Jesus is coming back to rule! In the meantime, He promises us His Spirit to empower us to live a full life and to rule in our hearts.

Today your child learned about what happened to Jesus after He died and was buried in the tomb. As some women go to the tomb to put spices on Jesus' body, they find the tomb empty. Jesus first appears to Mary, and she realises that He has risen from the dead. Jesus is alive! Over the next 40 days, Jesus appears to many of His followers and teaches them. When it is time for Jesus to leave – to ascend to His Father – He gives a commission and a promise to His followers. Jesus tells them to go and make followers, baptising and teaching them. He also gives them a promise that God's Spirit will be sent ... giving them the power to do all that Jesus has commanded.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:

Mark 16:1-4; John 20:21; Luke 24;
Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:1-11

FOCUS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN:

"Jesus wants me to tell everyone the Good News!"

NEXT WEEK'S STORY: GOD'S SPIRIT

Acts 2

PRAYER:

Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me. Please help me teach other people about your Good News!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What did Mary and some of the other women want to put on Jesus' body?
- What did the women see when they arrived at the tomb? How did they react?
- Whom did Mary think she was talking to? Who was she really talking to?
- What did Jesus say to Mary?
- What did Jesus want His followers to do? (*The Great Commission – what is it?*)
- How can you obey Jesus' command to tell people about Him? Who can you tell?
- What gift did Jesus say God was going to send to His people?
- Why is it important to have God's Spirit (the Holy Spirit) in your life?
- What happened to Jesus after He was finished talking to His followers?
- What did the angels say to the crowd that watched Jesus rise to heaven?
- After Jesus went to heaven, what did Jesus' followers do while they waited for God's Spirit?
- What can you learn from the way Jesus' followers behaved in Acts 2:42-47?

(Help your children discover ways that they can live in community like the first church.)

SUGGESTED PARENT/CHILD ACTIVITIES

If you created the "Playdough Mountain" from last week's take home sheet, use it as a visual when discussing this week's story. After secretly removing Jesus from the tomb, allow your children to tell you the story. When they talk about the women arriving at the tomb, let them roll the stone away and find an empty tomb. Take a moment to discuss why it was so important that the tomb was empty. What effect does that have in your life?



RESURRECTION COOKIES

Bake these simple-to-make cookies (overnight in a warm oven) as you and your children discuss this story. In the morning, the cookies will be ready – and hollow inside ... like the empty tomb.

What you'll need:

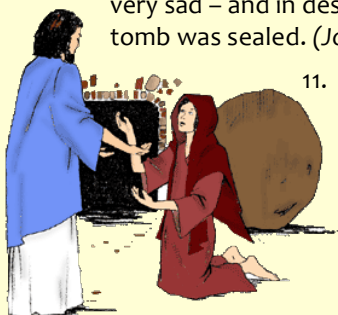
* Preheat the oven to 150°C.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| ~ 3 egg whites | ~ 1 cup whole pecans |
| ~ 1 teaspoon vinegar | ~ ¼ teaspoon salt |
| ~ 1 cup sugar | ~ Zip plastic bag |
| ~ Wooden spoon | ~ Tape (to seal the oven) |
| ~ The Bible | ~ Baking tray & baking paper |



Instructions:

1. Place pecans in the plastic bag and let your children beat them with the wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. Discuss how Jesus was beaten after He was arrested. (John 19:1-3)
2. Put the vinegar into a mixing bowl and let your children smell the strong aroma. Talk about how when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. (John 19:28-30)
3. Add egg whites to the vinegar. The eggs represent life. Discuss how Jesus gave His life to give us life. (John 10:10-11)
4. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers and the bitterness of our own disobedience/sin. (Luke 23:27)
5. Add the sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. (Psalm 34:8 & John 3:16)
6. Beat the ingredients with a mixer on high speed for 12-15 minutes – until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. (Isaiah 1:8 & 1 John 1:9)
7. Gently fold in the broken pecans to the rest of the mixture.
8. Drop cookies by a rounded teaspoon onto a cookie sheet covered with baking paper. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. (Matthew 27:57-60)
9. Put the cookie sheet in the oven and close the door. TURN THE OVEN OFF. Then have your children tape and seal the oven door closed. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. (Matthew 27:65-66)
10. Send your children to bed. They may be sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were also very sad – and in despair – when Jesus died and the tomb was sealed. (John 16:20, 22)



11. In the morning, let your children open the oven and have a cookie. The cookies are hollow! When Jesus' followers returned to the tomb, they found it empty. Jesus was alive! (Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20)



CHILDREN'S SONGS

Jesus Died for You and Me

(Tune: London Bridge)

Jesus died for you and me,
you and me, you and me.
Jesus died for you and me.
He loves you and me!
Jesus rose up from the grave,
from the grave, from the grave.
Jesus rose up from the grave.
He loves you and me!

Jesus Saved Me

(Tune: Jesus Loves Me)

Jesus saved me, this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Nailed to the cross for my own sins,
died and buried and raised again!
Yes, Jesus saved me!
Yes, Jesus saved me!
Yes, Jesus saved me!
He saved me from my sins.

RESURRECTION ROLLS

Use this simple recipe to help illustrate the resurrection (and empty tomb) to your children.

What you'll need:

- ~ Uncooked dough (for croissants or rolls)
~ Big marshmallows ~ Sugar & cinnamon

As you wrap the marshmallow inside the uncooked dough, talk about Jesus being put inside the tomb after He died. Sprinkle sugar and cinnamon on the dough as you talk about the spices the women prepared for Jesus' body. Bake according to the directions for the dough. When you remove them from the oven, the "tomb" is empty!

