

The Story of Easter

Jesus is Alive!



Easter Reading Plan and Activity Book

“Jesus is not here! He has risen!
Remember how he told you he
would rise. It was while he was
still with you in Galilee. He said,
‘The Son of Man must be handed
over to sinful people. He must be
nailed to a cross. On the third day
he will rise from the dead.’”

Luke 24:6-7 NIV

USING THE BOOKLET

The booklet includes 8 days of a Bible reading and prompts for your family to actively engage in the story of Easter.

SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED

An Easter Story Egg

Pre-filled eggs are available at Blackhawk Church or you can make your own (see back page).

A Bible

Any Bible will do. Along with standard Bible verses, we reference the Jesus Storybook Bible. This Scripture-based narrative can be engaging for kids.

DAILY READING AND EGG

- Start on Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter.
- Before reading the Bible passage each day, remove all objects from the egg except the day's object and hide it. Let kids find it!
- When the egg is found, open it and use the object inside to help tell that day's part of the Easter story.
- Before each new day, consider using the items from previous days to review the parts of the story you have read through so far. Repetition is good.

JESUS IS KING

PALM SUNDAY | DAY 1

Read Matthew 21:1-11

*This story is not in the *Jesus Storybook Bible*.



People in the city of Jerusalem were excited. They heard that Jesus was coming so they waited and watched for Jesus. They hoped Jesus would soon be their new king. When they saw Him, they shouted with joy! He was riding a donkey and the people stopped what they were doing and let Jesus ride by—just like a parade. They cut palm branches from trees and laid them down like a special carpet for Jesus. They waved more branches to show their joy. They cheered for Jesus and shouted, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, for our King!” Jesus loved all of the people.

Not everyone was happy to see Jesus, though. Some Jewish leaders were angry. They knew the people were listening to Jesus and not to them. The leaders didn’t want Jesus to be their king. They wanted to get rid of Jesus.

ASK IT

- Why were the people so happy to see Jesus?
- Who do you say Jesus is?
- What would you do if you saw Jesus coming down your street?
- What can you do to celebrate Jesus today?

PRAY IT

Thank God for Jesus. Ask God to teach you more about Jesus. Tell God the names of others who you want to know Jesus.

TRY IT

Cut palm branches from green paper and act out waving and cheering for Jesus.

JUDAS PLANS TO HURT JESUS

MONDAY | DAY 2

Read Matthew 26:14-25

Jesus Storybook Bible (page 291)



One of Jesus' disciples was named Judas. Judas had a problem. He loved money more than he loved Jesus. He knew that the angry leaders wanted to find Jesus, and Judas wanted more money. So, he made a bad plan. Judas went to the leaders and said he would help them catch Jesus if they paid him some money. The leaders were glad that Judas would help them find Jesus and they paid Judas 30 silver coins.

Judas waited until Jesus and his friends were having a special supper together. Judas decided this was the night to show the angry leaders where Jesus was. Jesus knew about Judas' bad plan. It must have made Him sad that Judas was doing this. Jesus told Judas, "Go now." So Judas left the supper and went to the angry leaders.

ASK IT

- How do some of the leaders and Judas feel about Jesus?
- How does Jesus feel about them?
- Did Jesus stop loving Judas after he made a bad plan? (Hint: Read John 3:16)
- How does Jesus feel about you even though you make wrong choices that hurt others?

PRAY IT

Ask God to help you to be kind and thank Him for always loving you even when you make wrong choices.

TRY IT

Count out 30 coins.

Can you use those coins to do something nice for somebody?

A MEAL TO HELP US REMEMBER

TUESDAY | DAY 3

Read Matthew 26:20-30

Jesus Storybook Bible (page292)



Jesus and the disciples were having a special supper together. Jesus thanked God and shared bread with his friends. Then He took a cup of red wine. He thanked God again, and shared the cup of wine, too. Jesus told His friends to remember that the bread was like His body and the red wine was like His blood. Jesus said He was giving His body and blood for them and everyone in the whole world. This was hard for them to understand.

Then Jesus told them some sad news. He said He was going to die soon and go back to His Father in heaven. But Jesus told them not to be afraid. He loved them very much, and He wanted them to love each other after He was gone. Then they all sang a song and went out to a garden with Jesus.

ASK IT

- How do you think Jesus' friends felt at this supper?
- At church we use bread and juice to remember Jesus' last meal. We call this communion. What are other things that remind you of Jesus?
- Jesus and the disciples sang a song together. What is a song you like to sing about God?

PRAY IT

Songs help us remember Jesus, too. Listen to a worship song that has words you want to say to Jesus. Did you know that you can pray and talk to God using music?

TRY IT

Draw a picture of a table and draw (or write the names of) specific people you would want to join you at that table for a special meal.

JESUS PRAYS

WEDNESDAY | DAY 4

Read Matthew 26:36-40

Jesus Storybook Bible (pages 294-297)



After supper, it was dark outside. Jesus and His friends walked to a garden to pray. Jesus wanted to talk to God, His Father. He wanted His friends to pray, too. But they were tired, and they fell asleep under the trees.

As Jesus prayed, He cried because He knew it was time for Him to die. He felt alone, afraid, and very sad. He told God, His Father, all about it. This was God's plan from the beginning. God loves us so much, He sent His son, Jesus. Jesus would die to take the punishment for all the wrong things anybody had done or will ever do. So, even though he was scared, Jesus would follow God's plan. It was the only way for us to be close to God.

Jesus prayed, Father, if it is your will, I am ready to give my life so that all people who trust in me will be saved from their sins.

ASK IT

- Why was Jesus sad and scared? Who did he talk to about this?
- What do you do when you feel sad or scared?
- Jesus asked God (His Father) if there was any way for Him to not have to suffer and die. Jesus also said that He would do what the Father wanted Him to do. What does this tell you about Jesus?

PRAY IT

Tell God about how you are feeling right now. Thank God for listening to you whenever you want to talk to Him. Ask Him to help you trust His plans like Jesus did.

TRY IT

Make a list of things you can pray to God about.

Take a walk and talk to God, thanking Him for everything you see.

SOLDIERS TAKE JESUS AWAY

THURSDAY | DAY 5

Read **Matthew 26:47-56**

Jesus Storybook Bible (pages 299-301)



helmet

Jesus and His friends heard voices in the dark garden. They saw soldiers with swords coming toward them. Judas (one of Jesus' disciples) was leading the soldiers and angry leaders right to Jesus.

When they got to Jesus, the leaders told the soldiers to arrest Jesus. Even though Jesus had never ever done anything wrong, the leaders told lies and said He did some very wrong things and deserved to die. The leaders didn't believe that Jesus was the Son of God.

Jesus' friends were upset, and they wanted to fight the soldiers and protect Jesus, but Jesus said, "No, this is God's plan. I will let them arrest me." The soldiers took Jesus away.

ASK IT

- Why would Jesus let the soldiers arrest Him?
- What did Jesus do wrong that he was being arrested?
- Could Jesus have stopped the soldiers if he wanted to?
- How do you think Jesus' friends felt when the soldiers took Him away?

PRAY IT

Jesus made a way for us to be close to God all the time. Ask God to help you remember that even when we can't see Him, we can believe that He is with us every minute of the day.

TRY IT

Even though Jesus being arrested was unfair and sad, we know God is going to make something very good happen next. He had a plan for Jesus. Plan out three acts of kindness you could do for someone else this week.

JESUS DIES

FRIDAY | DAY 6

Read Matthew 27:27-31, 45-50*

Jesus Storybook Bible (page 291)

***Parts of today's Bible reading contain details that can be challenging. Consider previewing the text before choosing what to read with your child.**

Jesus went with the soldiers out of the garden. The angry leaders wanted to get rid of Jesus because they thought He was lying and saying wrong things about God. The leaders didn't understand that Jesus really was God's Son. Jesus wanted to be the leader of their lives, helping people to make kind, loving choices.

Jesus was about to die. Jesus never lied, hurt anyone, or did anything wrong. He loved people. Jesus was willing to die because He loves us and wants to rescue us from all the wrong things we've done. Jesus gave His life to rescue the world.

This is so sad, and hard to understand, but it happened. The soldiers hurt Jesus badly and put him on a cross.



But Jesus still loved the soldiers and asked God to forgive them.

When Jesus died the sky turned dark like night and the earth shook. His friends felt very sad, but God had the most amazing surprise in store for them.

ASK IT

- Do you have any questions about this story?
- Why did Jesus die on the cross?
- How does it make you feel to know that Jesus died to rescue you?

PRAY IT

Thank God for sending Jesus to rescue you. Ask God to help you love and be kind to other people even when they're unkind to you. Listen to the song "This is Amazing Grace."

TRY IT

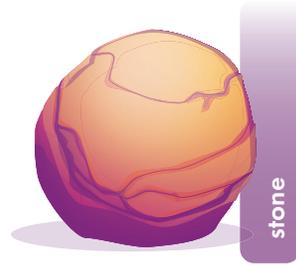
Paint or color a picture with dark, sad colors, like the sky when Jesus died.

JESUS' BODY IS PUT IN A TOMB

SATURDAY | DAY 7

Read **Matthew 27:57-66**

Jesus Storybook Bible (page 308)



In the evening after Jesus died, a friend named Joseph asked to take care of Jesus' body. He carefully wrapped Jesus' body in a long, clean cloth. Then Joseph put the body in a tomb—it was a hole cut into a hillside, like a cave.

Then some soldiers rolled a huge, heavy stone in front of the hole, like a door, to close the tomb. The leaders thought Jesus' friends might try to take His body, so they had guards stand by the huge stone to make sure nobody moved the stone and got into the tomb.

Everyone thought that was the end of Jesus, but they forgot something important Jesus said. Jesus had told the disciples that He would see them again soon.

ASK IT

- Jesus told His friends and His followers that He would come back to life, but they forgot. How do you think they felt knowing their friend was gone?
- Why did the leaders want soldiers to guard Jesus' tomb?
- What do you think is going to happen next?

PRAY IT

Jesus made a way for us to be close to God all the time. Ask God to help you remember that even when we can't see Him, we can believe that He is with us every minute of the day.

TRY IT

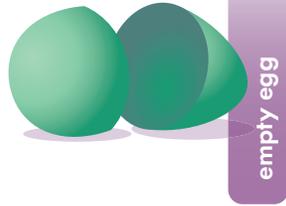
Plan a surprise for someone for tomorrow.

JESUS IS ALIVE

EASTER SUNDAY | DAY 8

Read **Matthew 28:1-10**

Jesus Storybook Bible (pages 310-317)



Jesus' body was in the tomb for two days. There was a HUGE stone and some soldiers blocking the doorway. On the morning of the third day, a shining, bright angel appeared at the tomb. The soldiers were so afraid that they fell down on the ground. The angel rolled the big stone away from the tomb and sat on it.

That same morning some women who loved Jesus came to the tomb. They were sad and thought Jesus was dead. But when they got to the tomb, they were so surprised! The huge stone was rolled away—the tomb was open and EMPTY! (Just like your egg.) Jesus' body was gone. This was God's big surprise!

The shining angel told them Jesus wasn't there, he had risen and Jesus was alive! It seemed too wonderful to believe. Later, the women and many others saw and talked to Jesus. They shared the good news that Jesus is alive with many people.

Jesus died to rescue us from our wrong choices, but He came back to life and wants to be your friend forever. This is why we celebrate Easter. It is God's amazing plan. He loves us so much he made a way for us to be close to him now and forever.

ASK IT

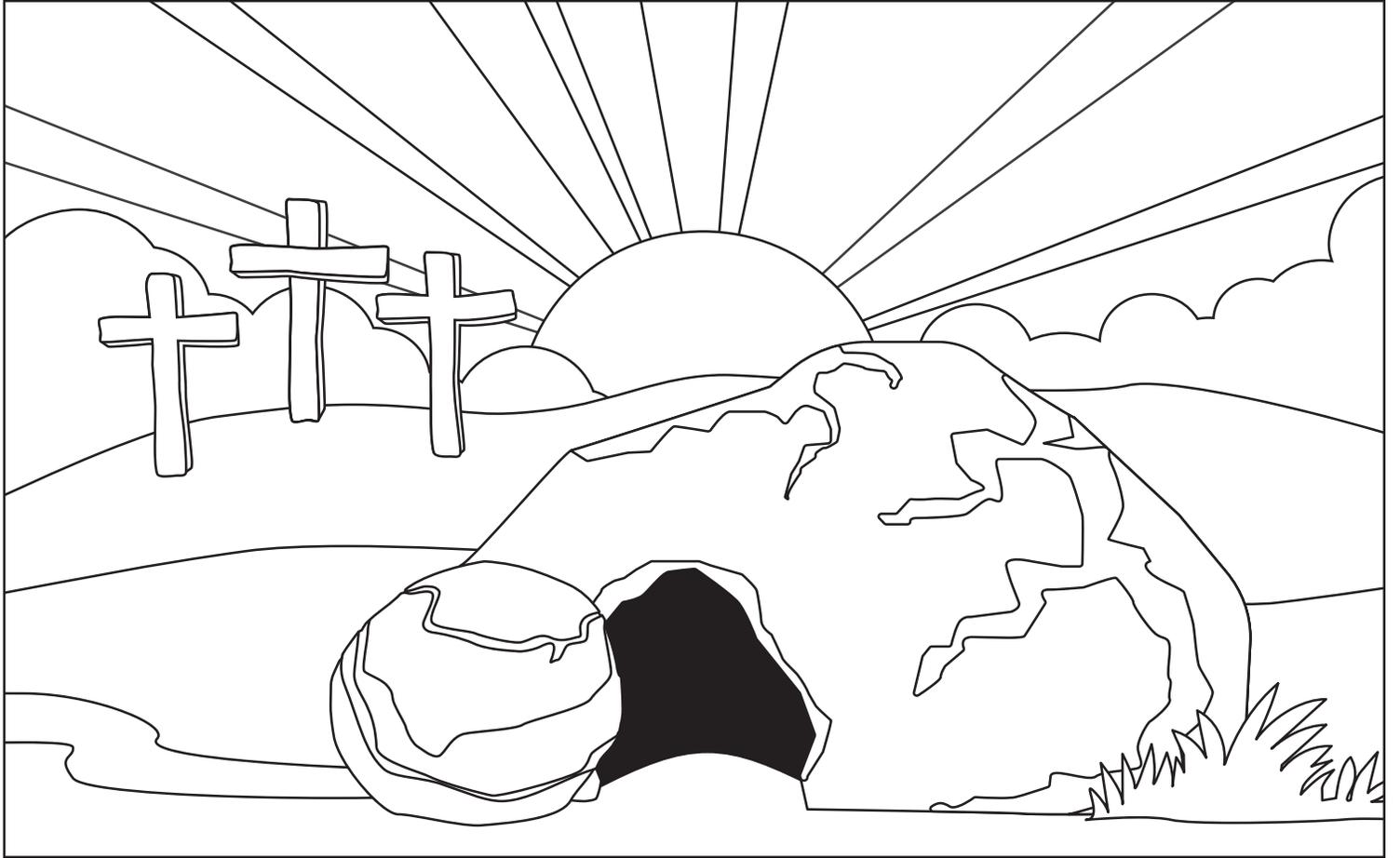
- What surprised the women when they came to the tomb?
- What happened to Jesus?
- How does it make you feel that Jesus died to rescue you so that you can live with Him forever?

PRAY IT

Thank God for loving us so much that He sent Jesus to live, die and rise again for each of us. That means you!

TRY IT

Using all the objects in your Easter Story Egg, tell someone the story of Easter.



Talking about the gospel story with your child.

Talking about Jesus' last week, his death, and his resurrection may lead to some questions. It may also move kids to start thinking about taking steps towards following Jesus. If you have a Bible and talk to God through prayer, you have everything you need to have a conversation with your child about following Jesus.

To give you an extra tool, the rest of this book has some simple language to help you have a conversation about the gospel, the "good news" of Jesus. If your child isn't ready to make this choice, that's okay! Continue to pray with and for your child that, one day, he or she will be ready.

THE GOSPEL STORY

The gospel story can be broken down into four parts.

1. **CREATION:** the way the world OUGHT to be
2. **FALL:** the way the world IS
3. **RESCUE:** the way the world CAN look
4. **NEW CREATION:** the way the world WILL be

1. CREATION

The Bible tells us that God created everything. It was perfect! How the world was in the beginning is exactly how God thought it OUGHT to be.

God created us because He loves us. He never wants to force us to love Him so He gives us a choice if we want to follow Him or not.

THE GOSPEL STORY

2. FALL

Adam and Eve did not make the wise choice and listen to what God said was best for them. Adam and Eve did what they wanted to do instead of what God wanted them to do. When we do what we want instead of what God wants, that is called sin. Adam and Eve were the first to sin which caused the world to be broken.

That is how the world IS now.

We see how the world is broken around us today: people are not nice to the things God created like trees and animals. People are also not nice to each other. If we are honest, we see it inside of us, too. We think, say, and do things that upset God because it hurts others. This is not how God wants the world to be.

Our sin keeps us from being close to God because God is perfect and can't be around sin.

THE GOSPEL STORY

3. RESCUE

BUT because God loves us so much, He made a way for us to be close to Him. Because of sin, we can't be close to God on our own. In the Bible, John 3:16 says, "God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life". That Son is JESUS! Jesus lived a perfect life and died to wipe away our own sins so we could be close to God the way it was meant to be.

Jesus showed us what the world CAN look like if we follow Him.

He died on the cross for us because sin is serious and God has to punish sin. Jesus took the blame so that when we trust Him as our Savior, God doesn't see our sin anymore. God forgives us completely. Jesus rose from the dead so we too can live with Him forever. Jesus invites us to be a part of God's rescue plan for the world by helping us to tell others about what Jesus did for us.

THE GOSPEL STORY

4. NEW CREATION

The world is still broken and there is still sin, but God promises that one day Jesus will come back. God WILL make the world perfect again. God will wipe away all tears, sadness, sickness, and death forever. Do you know what else? We will be with Him forever!

MAKING THE DECISION TO FOLLOW JESUS

At some point, we all have to decide if we will believe in Jesus and choose to follow Him or not.

If your child seems ready to make the decision,
TALK TO GOD AND TALK TO YOUR CHILD

1. Pray! Ask God for help. "God, I need you to speak through me right now..."
2. Follow the Holy Spirit's leading.
3. Talk to your child. Ask questions.
4. Help them take their next step in prayer.

The next page suggests just one example of how to help lead your child in their decision to follow Jesus.

ABC METHOD

ADMIT honestly that you're a sinner and don't always choose to do the things God wants you to do. (Romans 3:23, 6:23; 1 John 1:9)

BELIEVE that Jesus is the Son of God. Believe that He died for your sins so that you can be forgiven. Believe that Jesus rose from the dead so that you, too, can live with Jesus forever. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; John 3:16; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:8)

CHOOSE Jesus and Him alone as your Savior. Pray and tell God you choose Him. Celebrate! (Romans 10:9-10, 13)

We want to celebrate with you!
Contact kids@blackhawkchurch.org
with stories or questions.

MAKE YOUR OWN

If you are not able to get a pre-filled Easter Story Egg, simply cut out the images below and place them into an empty plastic egg or container.







B KIDS