

April 12 2020

Hello Families from St. Thomas.

Happy Easter. Even in the midst of troubled times we, and especially our children, need to hear the message of Easter.

Here are this week's suggestions for activities for this coming Sunday.

Since we are not meeting for our God's Garden classes, I will be sending you some ideas for the lesson of the week, including the Children's Talk, which you can do at home. Perhaps you can choose one activity per day or more than one if you have the energy and time. You don't need to do them all, just choose the activities that intrigue you and adapt them to suit your circumstances.

I encourage you to read these verses John 20:1-18, then tell the following Children's Talk before you engage in the activities.

Above all enjoy your children and their responses and have fun with Jesus.

Blessings to all.

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Children's Talk

I've Just Seen Jesus



Theme: The Resurrection of Jesus

Object: Graphic shown above (There are 4 tiny dots in the center of this picture. Stare at them for 20-30 seconds then gently close your eyes until an image appears. Who do you see?)

Scripture: John 20:18 (NIV)

Stare at the four dots in the center of this picture for about thirty seconds. Then, gently close your eyes and wait for an image to appear. What did you see? Did you see an image of Jesus? Some people see the

image of Jesus and some don't. It is just like it is in real life. Some people don't see Jesus because they are looking for Him in the wrong places.

That is what happened in our Bible story today. Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where Jesus had been buried. She found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. She ran and found Simon Peter and another disciple, whose name was John. She told them, "They have taken the Lord's body out of the tomb, and I don't know where they have put him!"

Peter and John started out for the tomb. They were both running, but John outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn't go in. Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings, while the cloth that had covered Jesus' head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed -- for until then they still hadn't understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. Then they went home.

Mary stayed behind and stood outside the tomb weeping. As she knelt down and looked inside, she saw two angels dressed in white. They asked her why she was crying. She told them that someone had taken her master and she didn't know where they had taken him. Then, Mary turned and saw a man standing behind her. It was Jesus, but Mary did not recognize Him. She thought he was the gardener. Then Jesus called her by name and, when she heard his voice, she recognized Him. He told her to go and tell the others. After she saw that it was Jesus, Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!"

She said to them, "I've just seen Jesus! He is alive!"

Some people, like Mary, Peter, and John can't see Jesus where they

expect to see Him, in a grave or on a cross. He isn't there! He is risen and is seated at the right hand of His Father, and our Father, in heaven. If you want to see Jesus, read His Words, the bible, and He will reveal Himself to you, just as He did to Mary!

Dear God, we thank you that Jesus, our Savior, is not in a grave. He is alive! We serve a risen Savior! Hallelujah! Amen.

An Easter Surprise

Theme: The Resurrection of Christ

Object: Easter Surprise Cookies (See recipe below sermon)

Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

As I am sure all of you know, today we are celebrating a very special day. Who can tell me what day it is? That's right! It's Easter! I have a surprise for you. It's called Easter Surprise Cookies. Pass these around; there are enough for each of you to have one. Don't eat your cookie until everyone has one. (Wait until each one has a cookie, then continue.)

Now that everyone has one, you may eat your cookie. (You may wish to join the children in eating a cookie.) Yum, Yum! That was good, wasn't it? Who can guess why they're called Easter Surprise Cookies? (Let them guess.) That's right! They had a surprise in the middle, didn't they? There was a jelly bean baked into the middle of the cookie for a nice surprise.

The title of today's Bible lesson is "An Easter Surprise." But the Easter Surprise in our lesson isn't about finding something that wasn't expected. It's about NOT finding what was expected. Jesus was NOT in the tomb. He had risen! He has risen indeed!!

Easter Surprise Cookies

INGREDIENTS

Cookie

- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup Butter, softened
- 1 large Egg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 48 jelly beans

Glaze

- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 5 to 6 teaspoons milk
- 1 1/3 cups sweetened flaked coconut
- Food coloring, if desired

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Combine all cookie ingredients except flour and jelly beans in bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until well mixed. Stir in flour until well mixed.
3. Shape rounded teaspoons of dough into 1-inch balls. Place 1 jelly bean in center of each ball making sure candy is covered with dough. Place cookies 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 15-18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool completely.
4. Combine powdered sugar and enough milk for desired glazing consistency in bowl; stir until smooth. Tint coconut with food color, if desired. Dip tops of cookies in glaze; sprinkle with coconut.

Easter Activities.

Following these activities, you will find a word search for the older kids to help them remember the key words in today's story.

SURPRISE HIDE AND SEEK: Have all the children run and find a good place to hide. When the "seeker" gets near a hiding place, the child will JUMP out and say SURPRISE!!! Continue to let children hunt for others and the hiding children will shout SURPRISE when someone gets close to their hiding spot.

SURPRISE MUSICAL CHAIRS: Play this game like the original musical chairs, except there will be enough chairs for ALL the children. Each chair will have a number on it. As the music plays, the children walk around the chairs until the music stops and each child will stop in front of a chair. The teacher then calls out a chair number. The child in front of that chair will go to the prize table with small prizes that the teacher has numbered to match chair numbers and placed on the table. The game will continue until all the children have won a prize.

SURPRISE ACROSTIC: Let children find a word to explain the SURPRISE and Jesus rising from the grave, for each letter that is on the left side of the poster board for S-U-R-P-R-I-S-E. Encourage children to find words for each letter that will help tell the Easter Story.

CLAY TOMBS: Give the children some clay to mold a tomb and a cross and talk about the Easter story while molding! Toothpicks can be used to write JESUS IS RISEN on the tomb or the clay cross, or to make other decorations on the clay.

HAPPY FACE POSTERS: Give children supplies to write and decorate a poster with the cross and JESUS IS RISEN, THE GRAVE IS EMPTY, JESUS LOVES ME, JESUS IS ALIVE, etc. Give children many HAPPY STICKERS to place on their posters, as well! Colored markers would be great for children to write the various phrases around their posters. **(Covid19 Alternative; Hang the posters in your front window to encourage others**

who are walking by your home.)

CROSS BOOK MARKER: Let the children trace and cut out construction paper to glue onto a stiffer piece of poster board cross that the teacher has prepared ahead of time. After glueing the paper to the cross cut-out, children can decorate it with stickers and colored markers and write JESUS IS ALIVE, JESUS IS RISEN, JESUS LOVES ME, etc on the book marker. Some children may like a RED ribbon to hang from the top of their cross, to remind them of Jesus' shed blood on the cross.

CROSS PAINTING: Let children paint a black/brown CROSS on a large poster board. Write, JESUS DIED FOR ME. Let children use colored markers to go to the Cross painting and write their own names, OR children can paint their name or draw a happy face of themselves on the cross painting. FINGER PAINTING would be great if teacher desires.

CELEBRATION DAY: Bring balloons for the children to blow up and hang on strings. Before blowing up each balloon, the children can use a sharpy marker to write a saying from our lesson today such as JESUS IS RISEN, THE GRAVE IS EMPTY, JESUS LOVES ME VERY MUCH, JESUS IS ALIVE, PRAISE JESUS, etc. After all the balloons have been blown up and several balloon "bouquets" have been put together -- let children run around an open designated area shouting out the words on their balloons and have a CELEBRATION in Jesus' honor! (**Covid19 Alternative; Walk around the block tying a balloon to each of your neighbour's trees or bushes. Return a day or two later and gather them up to avoid litter**)

SING A SONG: HE IS LORD

Song: "He Is Lord"

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The Resurrection Word Search



G W W S O M A G D A L E N E Q
 T O K C P Z D C C F I R S T D
 E M B R O T H E R S I Y D M I
 A A F M A O P Z Y M E K N E S
 C N W Y E M K F I O S K Z U C
 H L D T J B F R N V N I E P I
 E G I D H Z E R G E E G P A P
 R H A K L F C W J D A A H Q L
 W E H R K K Q J O K J J R G E
 D T Q E D U E F A T H E R L S
 F A E M U E Y V E N N X D L Y
 M W R A R X N V B O L R E A O
 Y A A K C D A E T L O G G B N
 J G R D A Y R S R L N V B S D
 F X H Y F V V I R A W Q R W Z



early	Mary	angels	gardener
first	Magdalene	white	teacher
day	tomb	Lord	Father
week	stone	woman	brothers
dark	moved	crying	disciples

Bible Memory Verse

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!"
And she told them that he had said these things to her.

John 20:18 (NIV)