

## Holy Week House Party 2026

### Instructions to Parents/Guardians

We hope this resource will provide activities that will bless your entire family during this Holy Week and Easter season. This year, families will be invited to gather with their church families to celebrate an Easter egg hunt or observe Holy Week activities. The following is designed to provide families with a continuation of conversations around the events that lead to Easter morning. We applaud families who take the opportunity to share the stories of Holy Week and Easter, stories we can also share with our church family.

The Holy Week activities may be used in a variety of ways. They are designed to be used throughout Holy Week but could be used in their entirety on Easter Sunday. We recognize that, for some, the Holy Week activities might take place entirely indoors due to weather conditions. Families are encouraged to join with neighboring families. Church leaders may want to use this resource for the entire church family. This resource is designed with flexibility in mind. We encourage families to find creative ways to celebrate this Easter season.

It is recommended that you use this resource in conjunction with Discipleship Ministries' worship resource for this Lenten Season, "[Journey's End/ A New Start](#)," which includes resourcing for Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday. The Children's Messages for the Lenten series also reinforce the Holy Week activities.

If you do not have plastic eggs to fill and hide, other options are available. For example, children could hunt for objects around the house instead of hunting eggs. Some activities do not need eggs at all. We recommend that you customize this resource for your situation.

Whether these activities are done throughout Holy Week or on Easter Sunday, we recommend dedicating a specific place in your house. This might involve setting up a designated area in a room to place each egg or object in a small box. You could set up a worship station or an altar area in this space.

Be creative in how you use this resource. Find ways to share your Holy Week and Easter activities. For example, you might place the objects on a windowsill, write scripture verses, or draw the objects in sidewalk chalk on your driveway. Whether you are using hard-boiled eggs with artwork on them or plastic eggs with contents inside, place them in an egg carton throughout the week. Then, on Saturday, reflect on what each "art" egg represents, and the events depicted that occurred during Holy Week. Create a new family tradition that celebrates the Risen Christ. It will remain a significant part of your family's Holy Week and Easter Sunday traditions.

["J. E. L. L. O. \(Jesus Even Loves Little Ones\)" rearview mirror hanger is available to download.](#) Download, print, cut, and place the hanger in the vehicle that is used most often in your family. Use the questions each time you are in the vehicle together to continue (and deepen) the faith formation conversation that the Holy Week activities sparked within your family.

## Materials needed (all things found around the house)

- Holy Week Mirror Hanger ([Click here to download](#) and place it on the rearview mirror of the car for family discussion questions throughout Holy Week.)
- Box with a lid (shoebox)
- Eggs (plastic Easter eggs or hard-boiled eggs)
- Coat/cloak template (Download PDF here: [template](#).)
- Paper and crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Scissors
- Foaming hand soap
- Hand towel or washcloth
- Basin or bowl
- Paper towels
- Flashlight
- Tealight or Christmas tree bulb
- Play-Doh or modeling clay (if available)
- Nail (careful!)
- [Nail template](#)
- Popsicle sticks/toothpicks/twigs from the yard/pipe cleaners
- Dark cloth
- Wristwatch/stopwatch
- Drum (or something to bang, such as pots and pans)

## Daily Egg Art Instructions

This Holy Week resource offers a daily egg art activity. Include the eggs you create during this week in your traditional Easter egg hunt on Sunday morning. After all the eggs have been collected, have the children talk about the true meaning of Easter. As eggs are opened, the children share the story using the art (on them or in them) as a guide. There are two different options regarding egg art. One is to fill a plastic egg; the other is to use hardboiled eggs and crayons.

You may incorporate these eggs into your church's egg hunt as well. If you do, spend time allowing multiple children to discuss and describe the significance of each egg and their understanding of how the egg is applied to the Easter message.

### **Palm Sunday: Welcoming Jesus**

#### **Scripture: Matthew 21:1–11 NIRV**

*(Read the scripture together or summarize it for younger children.)*

As Jesus and his friends approached Jerusalem, he asked two disciples to bring him a donkey and her colt. This wasn't an accident. Long ago, God promised that the king would come gently, riding on a donkey.

When Jesus rode into the city, people filled the streets. They spread their coats on the road and waved branches. They shouted with joy: "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The city buzzed with excitement. People asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds answered, "This is Jesus!"

### **Experience: Welcoming Jesus with a Parade**

**Objects:** Paper coat or cloak template, or real coats, blankets, and towels.

**Explain:** "On Palm Sunday, people didn't have fancy decorations. They used what they had, coats, branches, and loud voices, to welcome Jesus. Today, we'll do the same."

#### **Activity: Coat Parade**

1. Cut out a paper coat or use a real coat or blanket.
2. Place it on the floor to make a "parade road."
3. Take turns walking along the road while everyone shouts together:
  - "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"
  - "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
4. Open your Bible and read **Psalm 118:26** together to connect praise to scripture.
5. If space allows, make the celebration bigger:
  - Lay coats or blankets down a hallway, driveway, or church space.

- With adult supervision, children can stand at the door or edge of the space and shout their praises as people walk by.

6. Ask and wonder together:

- *How loudly can you shout “Hosanna”?*
- *How quietly can you whisper it?*

### **Another Activity Idea: Branches of Praise**

If you don't have palm branches, no problem!

- Cut out paper branches or leaves.
- On each one, write or draw something you're thankful for or a way you want to welcome Jesus this week (kindness, sharing, helping).
- Wave them together and shout: “**Hosanna!**”

### **Another Activity Idea: The Welcome Mat**

- Draw a paper “welcome mat.”
- Write or draw ways your family can welcome Jesus this week (praying together, forgiving, helping a neighbor).
- Place the mat near your front door as a reminder.

### **Creative Activity: Egg Art**

Choose one option:

- Draw a coat or cloak on a small piece of paper and place it inside a plastic egg, or
- Draw a coat outline directly on a hard-boiled egg.

**Explain:** “Just as the egg holds something hidden inside, Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus is more than people expected. God’s love was inside this gentle king.”

### **Expectation:**

Palm Sunday invites us to notice how Jesus comes to us, not with power or force, but with gentleness and peace. As we welcome Jesus with joy, we are reminded that following him means opening our hearts and homes to his way of love, which makes space for God’s love to be seen and felt in our everyday lives.

## Wonder Together

Invite curiosity rather than correct answers:

- Have you ever been to a parade?
  - Was it easy or hard to see?
  - Did you ever need to sit on someone's shoulders?
- Imagine being a child in that crowd.
  - How do you think it felt trying to see Jesus?
- The people welcomed Jesus with joy.
  - How does your family make guests feel welcome?
  - What would it look like to welcome Jesus into your home this week?
  - What is one small way you can show Jesus' welcome to someone else?

## Prayer

### Hosanna!

God, thank you for sending Jesus to us. Help us welcome him with joy, not just with our voices, but with our lives. Show us how to be a blessing to others, so there may be peace and glory in the highest heaven.

Amen.

## Monday: Walking in the Light

### Scripture: John 12:35–36 (NIRV)

*(You may read directly from scripture or tell the story in your own words.)*

Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light...While you have the light, believe in the light. Then you will become children of light.”

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## Storytelling Summary

Jesus knew that hard days were coming. He told his friends that his light would not always be with them in the same way. He invited them to **walk in the light while they could** and to **believe in the light**. Jesus wanted them to remember that his light would guide them, even when things felt dark or confusing.

Jesus is the Light who helps us know where to go.

### **Experience: Walking in the Light**

#### **Activity: Light and Darkness**

1. Choose a safe space about ten to fifteen feet long.
2. Walk from point A to point B with the lights on.
  - Talk together:  
*How does it feel to walk when you can see clearly?*
3. Return to point A and turn off the lights.
  - **Do not walk.**
  - Ask: “How does the darkness make you feel?”
4. Turn on a flashlight and walk again.
  - Ask:
    - How does the light help you?
    - Does the light make the path feel safer?
    - Does the fear feel smaller?

**Say together:** “Jesus helps us know where to go.”

#### **Another Activity: Follow the Light**

- One person slowly moves a flashlight along the floor or wall.
- Others follow the light carefully.
- Pause and switch leaders.

Say together each time you begin: “Jesus is our light.”

**Explain:** “Following Jesus’ light doesn’t mean everything is easy. It means we trust him to guide us one step at a time.”

### **Another Activity: Searching with Light**

- Hide Easter eggs in a safe indoor or outdoor space.
- Pause and imagine trying to find them without light.
- Then search using a flashlight.
- Compare the experiences together.

Ask: “What changes when we have light to help us see?”

### **Creative Response: Egg Art**

Choose one or more:

- Place a **battery tealight or a small bulb** inside a plastic egg to remember Jesus is the Light.
- Draw a **candle, flashlight, or sun** on a hard-boiled egg.
- Draw rays of light coming out of the egg to show hope breaking through darkness.

### **Expectation:**

Jesus does not promise that there will never be darkness.

Jesus promises that **his light will guide us through the darkness.**

When we believe in Jesus, we learn how to walk as children of light.

### **Wonder Together**

Invite curiosity and reflection:

- I wonder what kinds of things feel dark or scary sometimes.
- I wonder how light helps us feel brave.
- I wonder what it means to “walk in the light.”
- I wonder how trusting Jesus helps us know what to do next.
- I wonder where we might need Jesus’ light today.

### **Prayer**

God of light, thank you for Jesus, who shows us the way when we feel unsure or afraid. Help us trust your light, walk in your ways, and believe that you are always near.

Amen.

## Tuesday: Serving with Love

### Scripture: John 13:1–17 (NIRV)

*(Read directly from scripture or tell the story while holding the bowl and towel.)*

It was almost time for Passover. Jesus knew big things were coming. He knew he would soon leave his friends. Because he loved them so deeply, Jesus chose to show that love in a surprising way.

While everyone was eating, Jesus stood up. He took off his outer clothes. He wrapped a towel around his waist. He poured water into a bowl—and then he did something no one expected.

Jesus knelt down and began to wash his friends' feet.

When Jesus came to Peter, Peter was confused. "Lord, are you really going to wash *my* feet?"

Peter didn't think Jesus should do something so low, so humble. But Jesus said, "You don't understand now—but you will."

When Jesus finished, he asked, "Do you understand what I have done for you? I am your Teacher and Lord, and I have served you. I have given you an example."

Jesus showed them that love isn't just something we feel or say. Love is something we *do*.

### Experience: Serving with Love

#### Objects:

- Bowl
- Warm water
- Sweet-smelling soap
- Washcloth
- Towel

**Explain:** "Jesus didn't just talk about love; he showed it through his actions."

### Activity: Washing with Care

1. Fill the bowl with warm water.
2. Take turns gently washing one another's hands or feet.
3. Dry carefully with the towel.
4. As you serve, sing together:  
*Jesus loves me, this I know...*

### **Pause and notice:**

- How does it feel to serve someone else?
- How does it feel to be served?

### **New Practice: The Towel Moment**

Place the towel in the center of the room.

**Explain:** This towel reminds us that we can choose to serve today.

Ask together:

- Who might need help today?
- What is one small way we can serve with love?

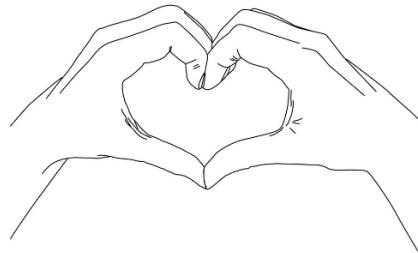
### **Living It Out: Loving with Our Hands**

**Objects:** Paper hearts or hands shaped into a heart.

**Explain:** “Jesus’ love didn’t stay in his heart; it moved through his hands.”

Practice together:

- Shape your hands into a heart when you pray. (*See image.*)



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- Then spend time daily praying for the people that you witnessed offering love to one another that day. This will provide an opportunity to pay attention and look for acts of love in daily life. Remember, love is an action. The positioning of your hands into the shape of a heart suggests that you are the “hands and feet” of Jesus!
- Watch for loving actions during the day.
- Pray quietly for the people you notice serving others.

## Creative Response: Egg Art

Choose one or more:

- Place a small square of paper towel inside a plastic egg to remember Jesus' towel.
- Draw a towel or bowl on a hard-boiled egg.
- Place a folded paper heart inside an egg or draw a heart on the shell.

## Expectation:

Jesus shows us that loving others means serving them humbly. Jesus' way of love is different from selfishness and fear.

## Wonder Together

Invite reflection:

- I wonder how it feels to serve someone else.
- I wonder why Jesus chose to kneel instead of being served.
- I wonder how loving actions show others who Jesus is.
- I wonder how light helps us feel brave.
- I wonder how we can live as children of the light today.

## Prayer

God of love and light, thank you for Jesus, who shows us that love is something we do. Help us serve others with humility and show your love through our hands and actions. Amen.

## Wednesday: Love and Remembering Jesus

### Focus:

Jesus invites us to remember him through love. When we love one another the way Jesus loves us, people can see who Jesus is.

### Scripture: John 13:21–35; Matthew 26:26–30 (NIRV)

*(Read the scripture or tell the story while holding the bread and cup.)*

Jesus and his friends were sitting together at the table. They were sharing a meal, just as families and friends do. But Jesus knew this night was different. He knew hard things were coming.

Jesus looked at his friends and said something surprising and sad: “One of you is going to hand me over.”

The disciples looked at one another. They were confused and worried. They didn’t know who Jesus meant.

Jesus took a piece of bread, dipped it in juice, and handed it to Judas. Judas took the bread, and then he left. Scripture says, “*And it was night.*”

After Judas left, Jesus spoke gently to his friends: “My children,” he said, “I will only be with you a little longer.”

Then Jesus told them something important to remember, not just words, but a way to live.

“I give you a new command. Love one another.

Just as I have loved you, you must love one another.

If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples.”

Later that same night, Jesus took the bread. He thanked God. He broke it and shared it.

“This is my body,” he said.

Then he took a cup. “This is my promise of forgiveness and love.”

Jesus wanted his friends and us to remember him, not just with our minds, but with our lives.

### **Experience: Remembering with Bread and Cup**

#### **Objects:**

- Bread
- Cup (empty or with juice/water)

Hold up the bread and cup and say:

Jesus shared this meal with people he loved, even when things were hard.

Ask:

- How does sharing food help us feel close to one another?
- Why do you think Jesus chose a meal to help people remember him?

### **Activity: Creating a Last Supper Table**

#### **Objects:**

- Lid of a box (as a table)
- Paper, crayons, or Play-Doh/modeling clay

1. Use the box lid as a table.

2. Draw bread and a cup on it or shape them with clay.

3. Place them on the table and talk together:

- Who was at the table with Jesus?

- Why do you think Jesus wanted his friends close?

Explain gently: “This meal wasn’t just the *last* supper. It was a promise that Jesus’ love would always stay with us.”

## **Living Love with Our Hands**

**Object:** Heart (paper heart or hands shaped into a heart)

**Explain:** Jesus didn’t just *say* “I love you.” He showed love through his actions, serving, forgiving, and sharing.

### **Activity: Praying with Heart Hands**

- Shape your hands into a heart when you pray.
- Each day, notice acts of love you see—big or small.
- Pray for people by name.

Say together: *Love is something we do.*

### **New Practice: The Love List**

On a piece of paper, make a list together:

- Ways we can help others.
- Ways we can show kindness.
- Ways we can love when someone feels sad or left out.

Place the list near your table or prayer space as a reminder.

### **Creative Response: Egg Art**

Choose one or more:

- Draw a heart on a hard-boiled egg.

- Place a small drawing or clay model of bread and a cup inside a plastic egg.
- Draw bread and a cup on the outside of an egg.

### **Expectation**

Jesus teaches us that love is the way people recognize his followers. The bread and the cup help us remember Jesus' love and forgiveness. When we love one another, we show the world who Jesus is.

### **Wonder Together**

Invite gentle reflection:

- I wonder how the disciples felt when Jesus said one of them would betray him.
- I wonder how Jesus kept loving, even when he felt sad or afraid.
- I wonder how sharing meals helps people feel connected.
- I wonder how loving others helps us remember Jesus.

### **Prayer**

God of love, thank you for Jesus, who shows us that love is an action. Help us remember him when we share meals, care for one another, and choose love even when it feels hard. Teach us to live as his disciples every day.  
Amen.

## **Thursday (Maundy Thursday): Jesus Prays for Us**

### **Focus:**

Jesus prays for his friends and for us.

When we feel worried, unsure, or not in control, God meets us through prayer.

### **Scripture: John 17:20–26 (NIRV)**

*(Read aloud or tell the story while children hold paper and pencil.)*

On the night before Jesus was arrested, he knew something hard was coming.

He had eaten with his friends.

He had washed their feet.

Now he did something important.

Jesus prayed.

But Jesus didn't pray only for himself.

And he didn't pray only for the disciples sitting near him.

Jesus prayed for people who would believe later.  
He prayed for people he would never meet face to face.  
He prayed for us.

Jesus prayed that everyone would be one, that they would belong to God and to one another, just as Jesus belongs to God.

Jesus prayed that love would live inside people, even when things felt scary or out of control.

### **Talk Together**

Ask gently:

- Have you ever prayed when you felt worried or upset?
- What do you think Jesus felt as he prayed that night?

**Explain:** “Jesus knew he couldn’t control what would happen next, but he trusted God, so he prayed.”

### **Experience: Praying Hands**

**Object:** Paper and pencils.

Say: “Prayer helps us remember that we are not alone.”

### **Activity: Tracing Our Prayers**

1. Trace your hand on a piece of paper.
2. On each finger and thumb, write the name of one person you can pray for.
3. Talk together about why you chose those names.

**Explain:** “Just as Jesus prayed for his friends and for us, we can pray for others, too.”

Place the hand tracing somewhere special, such as near a bed or a prayer space.

### **New Practice: Bedtime Prayer Rhythm**

Each night this week:

- Touch one finger at a time.
- Say a person’s name.
- Say quietly, “God, hold them in your love.”

This helps prayer become part of everyday life.

### **Creative Response: Egg Art**

Choose one:

- Draw a small version of your praying hand and place it inside a plastic egg.
- Draw praying hands on the outside of a hard-boiled egg.

**Explain:** The egg reminds us that prayer holds hope, even when things feel uncertain.

## Expectation

Jesus prayed for his disciples and for us.

When Jesus felt anxious and knew hard things were coming, he trusted God and prayed. God invites us to pray, too, especially when we feel afraid or not in control.

## Wonder Together

Invite quiet wondering:

- I wonder what it feels like to trust God when we are not in control.
- I wonder who needs our prayers right now.
- I wonder how praying helps us feel God's love.
- I wonder how knowing Jesus prayed for us changes how we feel.

## Prayer

God of love, thank you that Jesus prayed for us. When we feel worried, unsure, or afraid, help us trust you. Teach us to pray for others and to rest in your love.

Amen.

## Friday (Good Friday)

**Focus:** Jesus' Love on the Cross

**Objects:** Nail and Cross

## Prepare the Space

Before you begin, place a small cross and a nail where everyone can see them. You may wish to dim the lights or light a candle to mark that this day is different and holy.

## Read Scripture: John 19:16–30 (NIRV)

*(Read slowly. You may pause after each section or paraphrase for younger children.)*

<sup>16</sup> Finally, Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be nailed to a cross.

## **Jesus Is Nailed to a Cross**

<sup>17</sup> So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. He had to carry his own cross. He went out to a place called the Skull. In the Aramaic language it was called Golgotha.

<sup>18</sup> There they nailed Jesus to the cross. Two other men were crucified with him. One was on each side of him. Jesus was in the middle.

<sup>19</sup> Pilate had a notice prepared. It was fastened to the cross. It read, *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.*

<sup>20</sup> Many people read the sign because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The sign was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek.

<sup>21</sup> The chief priests argued with Pilate. They said, “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews.’ Write that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.”

<sup>22</sup> Pilate answered, “I have written what I have written.”

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts. Each soldier got one part. The robe was made from one piece of cloth with no seams.

<sup>24</sup> “Let’s not tear it,” they said. “Let’s cast lots to see who will get it.”

This happened so Scripture would come true:

*“They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my clothing.”* (Psalm 22:18)

<sup>25</sup> Jesus’ mother stood near the cross. So did her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

<sup>26</sup> Jesus saw his mother there. He also saw the disciple he loved. He said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son.”

<sup>27</sup> And to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, the disciple took her into his home.

## **Jesus Dies**

<sup>28</sup> Jesus knew everything had now been finished. He said, “I am thirsty.”

<sup>29</sup> A sponge was soaked in wine vinegar and lifted to his lips.

<sup>30</sup> After Jesus drank, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and died.

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## **Reflection**

Good Friday is a quiet and heavy day. It reminds us that love can hurt and that choosing love does not always mean choosing what is easy. Jesus did not run away. He stayed. He endured pain, sadness, and loneliness so that nothing could ever separate us from God’s love.

The cross shows us how serious love can be. It tells us that God did not give up on the world, even when the world was at its worst.

### **Activity: Holding the Nail**

- With an adult, find a nail in your home, maybe one holding a picture frame or shelf.
- Hold it quietly for about thirty seconds.
- Notice how small it is. Notice how hard it feels.
- Talk together about how something so small can remind us of something so big.

**Say together:** “Jesus’ love cost something. He chose love even when it was hard.”

### **Activity: Create a Cross**

- Make a cross using pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks, toothpicks, or paper.
- As you work, you may want to talk about what love looks like when it shows up for others.
- Place the cross in your family prayer space as a reminder of Jesus’ love.

### **Egg Art**

- Draw or cut out a nail and place it inside a plastic egg.  
**OR**
- Draw a nail and a cross on the outside of a hard-boiled egg.

**Explain:** “Today’s egg reminds us of the sadness of Good Friday, but the egg also reminds us that something new is coming.”

### **Expectation**

The story of the cross can feel sad or scary, especially for younger children. That’s okay. Good Friday helps us name hard feelings like grief, pain, and loss. It reminds us that God understands suffering and stays close to us when things feel heavy.

The cross is not the end of the story, but today, we pause here to remember how far love is willing to go.

### **Wonder Together**

The American Sign Language **sign for the name “Jesus”** points to the palm of each hand, reminding us of the nails that were placed there.

- I wonder why a nail is used to help people remember Jesus’ name.

- I wonder what the nails tell us about love that stays, even when it hurts.
- Where have you seen crosses in your life, in a church, on jewelry, by the road?
- Why do you think the cross is such an important symbol for Christians?
- If you could ask Jesus one question about this day, what would it be?

*(There are no right or wrong answers. Let silence be okay.)*

## Prayer

God, thank you for Jesus' love shown on the cross. When we see a nail or a cross, it helps us remember how deeply we are loved. Stay close to us when the story feels sad and hold us in your care.

Amen.

## Saturday (Holy Saturday)

**Focus:** Waiting and Hope

**Object:** Dark cloth

### Read Scripture: Matthew 27:57–66 (NIRV)

*(Read slowly. You may summarize for younger children.)*

## Jesus Is Buried

<sup>57</sup> As evening approached, a rich man came from the town of Arimathea. His name was Joseph. He had become a follower of Jesus. <sup>58</sup> He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate ordered that it be given to him. <sup>59</sup> Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. <sup>60</sup> He placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. Then he went away. <sup>61</sup> Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there across from the tomb.

## The Guards at the Tomb

<sup>62</sup> The next day was the day after Preparation Day. The chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. <sup>63</sup> "Sir," they said, "we remember something that liar said while he was still alive. He claimed, 'After three days I will rise again.' <sup>64</sup> So give the order to make the tomb secure until the third day. If you don't, his disciples might come and steal the body. Then they will tell the people that Jesus has been raised from the dead. This last lie will be worse than the first."

<sup>65</sup> “Take some guards with you,” Pilate answered. “Go. Make the tomb as secure as you can.”

<sup>66</sup> So they went and made the tomb secure. They put a royal seal on the stone and placed some guards on duty.

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## Summary

Jesus' friends carefully placed his body in a tomb and rolled a heavy stone in front of it. Guards were posted, and the tomb was sealed. Everything was quiet. Nothing more could be done. All that was left was waiting.

## Reflection

Holy Saturday is the quietest day of Holy Week. Jesus is in the tomb. His friends are sad, confused, and afraid. The promises Jesus made have not yet come true, at least not in a way they can see.

This day teaches us that waiting is part of faith. Even when nothing seems to be happening, God is still at work. Hope can be present, even when it feels hidden.

### Activity: Red Light, Green Light (Waiting in Our Bodies)

Play a game of **Red Light, Green Light** to practice stopping, waiting, and paying attention.

- One person is the caller; others line up across the room or yard.
- When the caller says, “Green Light,” children move forward (walk, crawl, or move slowly indoors).
- When the caller says, “Red Light,” everyone freezes.
- Take turns being the caller.

## Connect:

Waiting is hard. Holy Saturday was a long “red light” moment, a pause before God’s next move.

### Quiet Practice: Sitting in the Stillness

In the evening, cover your prayer space or your egg art with a **dark cloth**.

- Sit together quietly for a few seconds (or a full minute if possible).
- Look at the dark cloth. Notice the stillness.
- Take one slow breath in and out.

Say together: “We wait. God is still with us.”

## **Egg Art**

- Draw a **watch or clock** on a small piece of paper and place it inside a plastic egg.  
**OR**
- Draw a clock on the outside of a hard-boiled egg.

**Explain:** “Waiting takes time, but hope is growing, even when we cannot see it yet.”

## **Other Activities**

### **Stone Pause**

Hold a small stone for a moment.

- Feel its weight.
- Think about the stone in front of Jesus’ tomb.
- Set the stone down and say: “God is at work, even now.”

### **Hope Whisper**

Invite each person to whisper one hope they are holding for themselves, their family, or the world. No discussion is needed.

### **Expectation**

Holy Saturday is a day of waiting. Nothing looks hopeful yet, but God’s promises are still true. This day reminds us that God’s greatest work often happens in silence.

### **Wonder Together**

- I wonder how Jesus’ friends felt while they waited.
- I wonder how it feels to hope when we don’t know what will happen next.
- I wonder where God might be working, even when things feel quiet.

### **Prayer**

God,

Waiting is hard for us. On this quiet day, help us trust you. When things feel still or dark, it reminds us that hope is growing. We place our hope in Jesus and wait for your new day.

Amen.

## **Easter Sunday**

**Focus:** Jesus Is Alive!

**Object:** Empty plastic egg

**Read Scripture: John 20:1–18 (NIRV)**

*(Read slowly or summarize the text for younger children.)*

### **The Tomb Is Empty**

**20** Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. It was still dark. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the entrance. **2** So she ran to Simon Peter and another disciple, the one Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb! We don’t know where they have put him!”

**3** So Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. **4** Both of them were running. The other disciple ran faster than Peter. He reached the tomb first. **5** He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there. But he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter came along behind him. He went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there. **7** He also saw the funeral cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place. It was separate from the linen. **8** The disciple who had reached the tomb first also went inside. He saw and believed. **9** They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. **10** Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

### **Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene**

**11** But Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she cried, she bent over to look into the tomb. **12** She saw two angels dressed in white. They were seated where Jesus’ body had been. One of them was where Jesus’ head had been laid. The other sat where his feet had been placed.

**13** They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said. “I don’t know where they have put him.” **14** Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn’t realize that it was Jesus.

**15** He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?”

She thought he was the gardener. So she said, “Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him.”

**16** Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him. Then she cried out in the Aramaic language, “*Rabboni!*” Rabboni means Teacher.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me. I have not yet ascended to the Father. Instead, go to those who believe in me. Tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news. She said, “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them that he had said these things to her.

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## Summary

Early on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb while it was still dark. The stone had been rolled away, and Jesus' body was gone. At first, Mary was confused and sad, until Jesus called her by name. Jesus was alive! Mary ran to tell the others the amazing news: *“I have seen the Lord!”*

## Reflection

Easter is the happiest day of the year. After sadness, waiting, and silence, God did something surprising. Jesus rose from the dead. Love was stronger than death. Hope was alive again.

The tomb was empty, and that emptiness was good news.

## Activity: Playing Easter Joy!

Supplies: Drum, pot, pan.

Provide each child with something that makes noise. Rhythm instruments are great... but so are homemade things like two spoons to hit together and baby rattles to shake.

Say: “I am going to beat my drum, and as I do, I want you to guess what I am feeling.”

*(Play it happily and quickly and smile.)*

Ask: “What feeling did you hear?” *(They will say, “Happy.”)*

*(Play the drum slowly and frown.)*

Ask: “What feeling did you hear?” *(They will say, “Sad.”)*

Say: “You are good at this. I am going to tell you the story of Easter now, and I want you to hear it in the music I make.”

*(Begin to hit the drum happily and continue it while you speak.)*

Say: “Jesus was the light of the world, God’s love walking with people, teaching them, healing them... it was a wonderful time!” *(Keep playing happily.)*

Say: “But then” (*start playing slowly and sadly*), “some people did not love Jesus, and they were afraid of his great love, so they decided to crucify him. They arrested him (*one beat*), and they hurt him (*one beat*), and they made him wear a crown of thorns (*one beat*) and carry his cross (*one beat*); they hung him on the cross (*crucified*).”

(*Silence*).

Say: “Jesus died, and it was the saddest day ever. The people were so sad.” (*Silence*.)

Say: “On the third day, after Jesus had been taken from the cross and laid in the tomb, they went there to take care of his body (*start beating slowly and get faster and faster as you talk*). When they arrived, they discovered the best news ever! (*Beat faster*.) Jesus was alive again... he was raised, and his love was still with them!!! And that was the happiest day ever!!!” (*Beat harder and faster!*)

(*Silence*.)

Say: “You know, that is our happy Easter story... but it just had one problem... I have only one drum, and there is no way I could play the happiness of that first Easter by myself on that one drum. It was happy.” (*Start playing the drum and have others begin to make noise with their “instruments.” The noise will get louder and louder, and the children will laugh. You may have to shout*):

Say: “That is how happiness sounds... Easter is the happiest day ever!!! HAPPY EASTER!”

Adapted with permission from Leanne-Hadley.com.

## **Egg Art**

Leave **one egg empty** today.

Explain: “This egg doesn’t need candy or toys. The empty egg reminds us of the empty tomb, the greatest gift of all.”

## **Expectation**

Everyone thought Jesus’ story was over. But God raised Jesus from the dead and showed the world that nothing, not even death, can stop God’s love.

## **Wonder Together**

- I wonder how Mary felt when Jesus called her name.
- I wonder how it feels to know love is stronger than death.
- I wonder how we can share Easter joy with others.

## **Prayer**

God of Easter, thank you for new life and great joy. Thank you that Jesus is alive and that your love never ends. Help us share this good news with our words, our actions, and our joy. Amen.