

The Easter story

As Told in the King James Bible



A Special Publication by:
The PAMPANEWS



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GOSPEL SING
Second Sunday
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THE STORY THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Easter's story begins long before the events celebrated on Sunday. That beginning could be Palm Sunday – the Sunday before Easter that commemorates Jesus' entry to the city of Jerusalem. It could be Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the solemn season of Lent. It could even be Christmas Day in December, which celebrates the birth of Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem.

The last week of the life of Jesus, often called Holy Week, is filled with significant events. After several years teaching and performing miracles in the Judean countryside, Jesus and his disciples traveled to the cultural and religious capital of Jerusalem. Throughout his jour-

ney, Jesus repeatedly hinted that the political and religious authorities would have him killed, but his disciples did not believe that what he said would actually happen.

By Sunday morning, Jesus had been arrested, condemned and killed, and his followers had mostly scattered. His teachings and ministry seemed like they had all come to nothing. But when three of his disciples went to visit his tomb, what they found would change the course of history.

The following passages, drawn from the four gospels as found in the King James Version of the Bible, tell that story.

CTW FEATURES




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Happy Easter



“But the angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.’” Matt 28 5-6

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Sunday Mornings
9:30 a.m. Classes for all ages
10:45 a.m. Worship

Wednesdays - September thru May
5:30 p.m. WOW - classes for kids
6:30 p.m. Meal for all
7:00 p.m. Choir practice



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Service of Darkness
Friday, April 15 • 7:00 pm

Easter Morning Worship
Sunday, April 17 • 10:30 am

Sunday Morning will be on our Facebook page
[Highland Baptistchurch](https://www.facebook.com/HighlandBaptistchurch)

“He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said....” *Matthew 28:6*

Highland Baptist

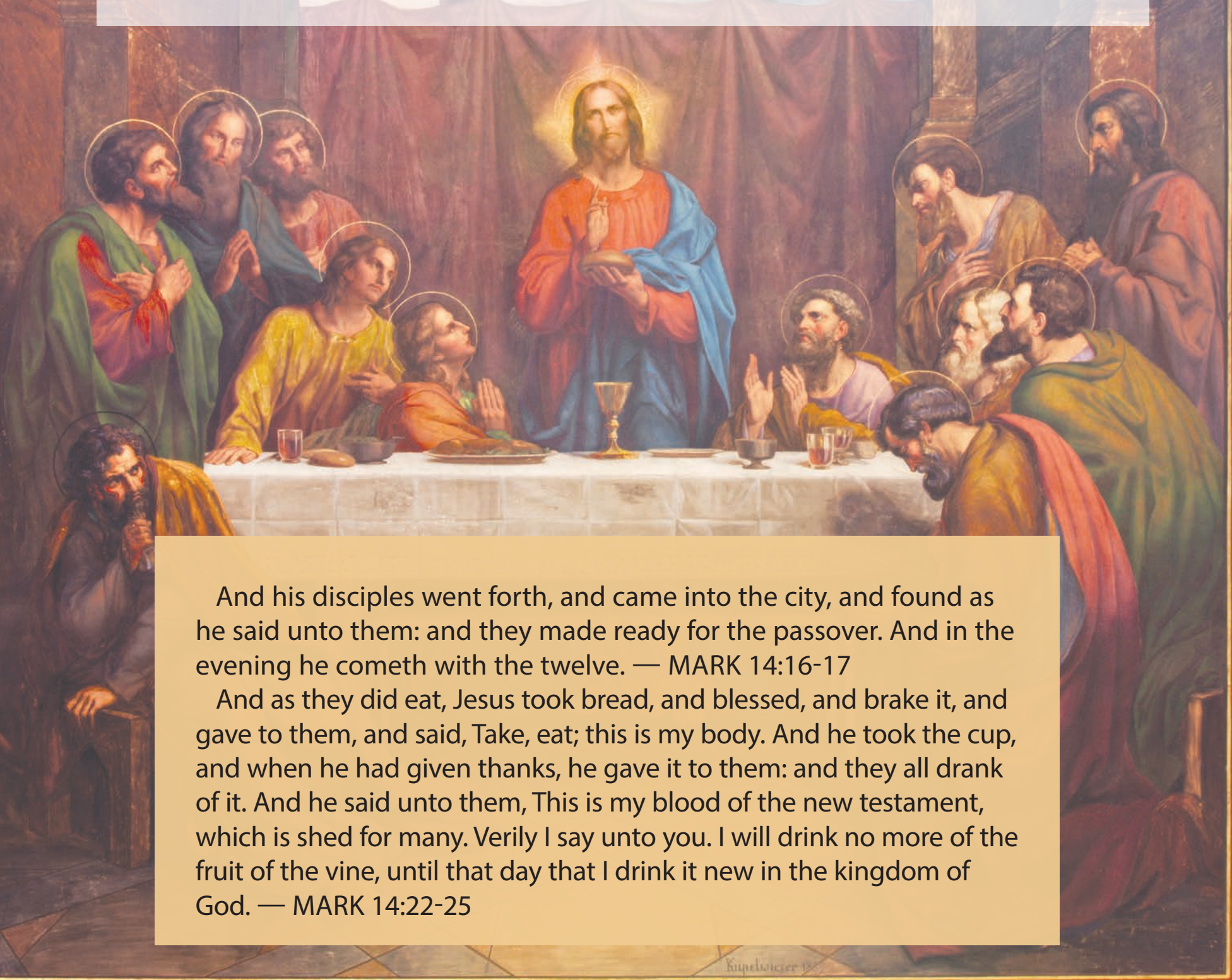
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THURSDAY: *The Last Supper*

Jesus and his followers gathered together in a rented room in Jerusalem to eat the traditional Passover meal. The Jewish people had observed this ritual supper since the time of Moses. Jesus hints that his death is at hand. Christians sometimes use the name “Maundy Thursday” or “Holy Thursday” to describe this day in the life of Jesus.

Partway through the meal, Jesus shares the bread and wine on the table, which would take on new meaning after his death and resurrection.



And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he said unto them: and they made ready for the passover. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. — MARK 14:16-17

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you. I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. — MARK 14:22-25

Easter traditions around the world

Easter is a special day for Christians across the globe. While the highlight of Easter celebrations are

ue to be put in place in various locales.

Bermuda

Celebrants create and fly homemade kites on Good Friday Kitefest, which features bold, geometric designs. It’s also traditional to eat codfish and hot cross buns during Holy Week. On Easter Sunday, the faithful participate in sunrise services on various Bermuda beaches.

Costa Rica

Costa Ricans take Holy Week and Easter quite seriously. Each town hosts parades and processions during Holy Week, providing dramatic reenactments of Jesus’ journey through Jerusalem to his crucifixion and resurrection.

England

Good Friday visitors to Trafalgar Square can see a classic dramatiza-

tion of Jesus’ resurrection. “The Passion of Jesus” is a 90-minute performance that attracts thousands of visitors.

France

Many people visit the famed Notre-Dame Cathedral to hear its bells toll throughout Easter Sunday. A fire destroyed a portion of the cathedral roof in 2019 and repairs are still underway. There also are Paris Easter egg hunts. Parisians and tourists also can visit La Sainte Chapelle, which offers Easter concerts consisting of classical music and choral singers.

Israel

Israel is a melting pot of both Jewish and Christian faithful. Easter is a solemn celebration here. In Old Jerusalem, faithful pilgrims and priests walk the Via Dolorosa, which is the same path that Jesus took on the day he was crucified. The Way of the

Cross, which is what the procession is called, is among the most amazing sights in the world.

Italy

Easter is special in Italy and particularly in Vatican City, the home of the Pope. The Pope holds a special mass on Easter in Saint Peter’s Square, which traditionally draws huge crowds. Elsewhere in Italy, masses take place at area churches and many towns host parades and other celebrations.

Mexico

Holy Week reenactments take place in devout areas of Mexico. Residents in other areas may take part in silent processions through town, or by visiting 12 churches in 12 days.

Easter is a time of celebration and reflection in various parts of the world.



the religious events, particularly the vigils and church services, Easter fanfare sometimes stretches beyond church walls.

The following are some Easter traditions across the globe. Travelers should confirm the festivities are still on as COVID-19 restrictions contin-



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Easter

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Thursday: Jesus Prays in the Garden

After the meal, Jesus took his closest disciples to a nearby garden called Gethsemane, where he prayed.

Luke 22:39-42: “And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”

The Only Road is Through

BY VONDEL STEVENS
Pastor of St. Paul UMC Pampa

This week, I picked up a book of Lenten poems by Ann Weems, who was known as “the Presbyterian Poet Laureate.” Many of the poems in this book are outstanding and thought-provoking, but one in particular caught my heart. It is simply entitled “Holy Week,” and it begins with these words:

*Holy is the week...
Holy, consecrated, belonging to God...
We move from hosannas to horror
with the predictable ease
of those who know not what they do.*

She goes on to narrate the story of Holy Week – the cursing of the fig tree, the cleansing of the temple, the anointing of Jesus by Mary, and the Last Supper. Then, she ends her poem reflecting on the events of Good Friday:

*And on that darkest of days, each of us
must stand
beneath the tree
and watch the dying
if we are to be there
when the stone is rolled away.
The only road to Easter morning
is through the unrelenting shadows of
that Friday.*

*Only then will the alleluias be sung;
only then will the dancing begin.*

(From *Kneeling in Jerusalem*, Westminster John

Knox Press, 1993.)

“The only road to Easter Morning is through the unrelenting shadows of [Good] Friday.” I think we often forget the truth of that statement. We rush from the glorious “Hosannas” of Palm Sunday straight to the glorious “He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!” of Easter; and when we do, we miss the opportunity to experience the depth of Christ’s self-sacrificing love for us on the cross, as well as the grief and sorrow experienced by Jesus’ first disciples.



Vondel
Stevens

For that reason, my favorite Holy Week service is *Tenebrae*, an extended meditation on the passion of Christ. As worshipers enter the church, they are greeted by 14 lighted candles, plus a candle representing Christ. As the story of Jesus’ betrayal, trial, and crucifixion is read, candles are snuffed one-by-one, leaving the sanctuary a little darker each time. After each reading, silence is also observed, allowing the depth of Jesus’ suffering love to sink into one’s heart. As the final scripture – where Jesus is sealed in the tomb – is read, the Christ Candle is snuffed; and worshipers leave in silence and darkness.

The darkness itself is palatable, and one is left with the sense of grief Jesus’ disciples must have felt on that terrible day. Unlike us, they didn’t know Jesus would be resurrected 3 days later. They couldn’t glibly skip from Palm Sunday to Easter because they didn’t know Easter was com-

ing. For them, all hope had vanished. The One they thought to be the Messiah was dead and lain in a rock-sealed tomb.

Three days later, however, their hope was revived, and their joy was overflowing! Jesus – their Messiah and Savior – was alive! The darkness and grief of Good Friday had been dispelled by the resurrected Light of the World! Their joy was incalculable because they had experienced immeasurable grief. Only those who allow themselves to experience the deep grief of Good Friday can know the ecstatic joy of Jesus’ resurrection. Otherwise, our Easter gladness will be shallow and fade quickly. Light is more glorious for those who have been wrapped in darkness.

Re-experiencing the darkness and grief of Good Friday also reminds us Christians are an Easter people in the midst of a Good Friday world. Although Jesus was resurrected and is alive forevermore, we still live in a world of darkness, grief, and pain. As Christ-followers, we have been commissioned by Jesus to spread the light and love of God to the darkened world around us. God has also called us to comfort those who grieve with the same comfort and hope God has given us through Christ’s death and resurrection. This Holy Week may we experience God’s comfort and hope anew by traveling the road through “the unrelenting shadows” of Good Friday to the eternal joy of Easter morning. “Only then will the alleluias be sung; only then will the dancing begin.”





Friday: *Jesus Arrested*

After midnight, Jesus woke his followers, who had fallen asleep as he prayed. Judas Iscariot, one of his closest twelve disciples, had arrived in the garden with a group of soldiers to arrest his teacher.

The Betrayal

FRIDAY

And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. — MATTHEW 26:47-49

And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. ... And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. — MATTHEW 27:2, 23-26



May the miracle of His resurrection bring hope and comfort to your heart and home this Easter season.

Easter? Ok? Or Not Ok?

We find ourselves at that time of the year known as Easter; which means that there will be some well-meaning Christians who feel compelled to denounce this season as a “pagan holiday celebrating

the goddess Eastre or Ostara” that must be avoided by all Christians. Is that true?

The most often referenced support for that idea is found in the 8th century AD writings of a monk and historian by the name of Venerable Bede. Eastre cannot be found in any ancient writing and archaeologists have found no shrines or altars documenting worship of Eastre. It is very possible that Bede simply reasoned to the worship of Eastre since the Saxon’s had the spring time month of Eosturmonath.

Some others attack Easter based on a German folklorist named Jakob Grimm who wrote in the 19th century AD. Grimm admitted that he could find no solid link between Easter and pagan celebrations. Like Eastre, the fictional goddess Ostara was based entirely on supposition and conjecture. Therefore, there is no solid support for historically connecting Paganism with Easter. So DO NOT let anyone bully you with false information.

That being said, the dominating commercialization of Easter by Easter eggs, Easter candy and the Easter bunny certainly doesn’t point anyone to Christ. So, although Easter cannot be connected to paganism, it isn’t connected to Christ either.

That is, unless Christians intervene with the historically documented death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ, the only

begotten Son of God. Then Easter can become Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and RESURRECTION SUNDAY. (1 Corinthians 15:14)

So should Christians celebrate Easter or allow our children to go on Easter egg hunts? Some Christian parents and church leaders struggle with this question every year. Ultimately this question is a matter of conscience (cf. Rom. 14:5). Neither painting eggs, nor hiding/hunting for eggs are evil, there is nothing bad about them. That is also true about the bunny. Decide in your own conscience and then obey your conscience on the matter. Oh, and allow others to do the same.

What is important, as is true in all things, what is our focus? If it is on Christ, then our children can be taught to understand that the eggs, the candy and the bunny are just fun. Then they can also be taught that the true meaning of RESURRECTION SUNDAY is about the risen Christ and that empty tomb.

As for Mike and Shari Sublett, Shari and Cherylann Moore have been preparing for the HCC annual Easter Egg hunt at Hi-Land Christian Church for a few weeks. It will be one of the highlights for our Sunday School age kids at church on Easter morning. Then the main feature will take place during our morning worship time with the children’s Resurrection Play. (thanks to Judy, Katy, Cherylann and Sarah)

We want our kids at HCC to have the fun of the eggs and candy. However, we want them to know the difference between the eggs/candy and the RESURRECTION. God bless.

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The Pampa News
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Explaining Holy Week



rates the Last Supper, when Jesus celebrated the Passover feast with his disciples. In the story of Jesus Christ, the night of the Last Supper was the same night that Jesus was betrayed by his disciple, Judas.

• **Good Friday:** Good Friday commemorates the trial, punishment and crucifixion of Christ. Though the official presiding over the trial of Jesus, Pontius Pilate, found no evidence of Jesus's guilt in relation to the charges filed against him, he ultimately agreed to Christ's crucifixion anyway in an effort to appease the crowd and avoid a riot. As a result, Christ was stripped, flogged and crowned with thorns before being made to carry his cross through the streets to the place where he was ultimately crucified. On Good Friday, the tabernacle inside Catholic churches is left empty to symbolize that Christ is departed.

• **Holy Saturday:** The final day of Holy Week, Holy Saturday is a day to remember that Christ descended into hell, where he preached the gospel and opened the way to heaven for all those who were worthy.

Easter is a significant holiday for Christians across the globe. Though Easter Sunday is when faithful Christians gather to celebrate their faith, the week preceding Easter Sunday is full of significant events as well.

Known as Holy Week, the week preceding Easter begins with Palm Sunday and ends with Holy Saturday, the day preceding Easter Sunday. Holy Week commemorates different events that unfolded over the final days of Jesus Christ's life.

• **Palm Sunday:** According to Catholic Online, Palm Sunday cele-

brates the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. On the day of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, residents laid palms before him, which is why palms are distributed to the Christian faithful each year during Palm Sunday Mass. Palms are blessed at Mass, and many Christians turn their palms into crosses upon arriving home. The palms are eventually returned to the church, where they are burned, and the ashes of the palms are then used during the following year's Ash Wednesday services.

• **Holy Thursday:** Holy Thursday commemo-

Explaining the meaning of Easter to children

Explaining Easter to children can be a delicate matter, especially for very young children who may not fully understand the tenets of the Christian faith. Although Easter ends with Jesus Christ emerging from his tomb, prior to this glorious miracle there are subjects of betrayal, suffering and death. These religious messages can confound when commingled with the imagery of bunnies delivering chocolates, chicks and pastel-hued eggs. How do well-meaning parents relay the message of Easter without scaring or confusing children?

Temper the message to the audience

A child's age bears consideration when gauging just how much to share about Easter. Between Palm Sunday, when Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem, to Easter Sunday's Resurrection, the story of Easter features torture and death - which are topics not easily digested by anyone, especially children. Even the core symbol of the Christian faith - the crucifix - is shocking.

For the youngest children, the extent of the torture and betrayal can be muted. For example, parents may say that Jesus was bullied and made fun of and that people didn't believe him when he spoke. Parents can note that even some of the closest friends to Jesus had their doubts. This may be easier for kids to digest because it's something they may relate to.

Children may not understand the death on the cross; it's even challenging for adults to wrap their minds around that visual. It briefly can be mentioned that he was placed on a cross, as was customary during that era, but forgo the finer details.

Focus on the Resurrection

Parents will not want to talk about death without ending on the high

note of Jesus' Resurrection. Remind children that Christ's death was temporary and that He now always will be with adults and children. Read passages from scripture that exemplify the Good News and the happy components of the Easter celebration.

Explain secular images

Young children may be more focused on the commercial images of Easter rather than the religious ones. Parents may want to gear symbolism toward the religious explanations and focus their traditions thusly. Baking hot cross buns can be fun and showcase the crucifix. Explain how eggs are representative of Jesus Christ's new life when coloring them is another way to cut through mixed messages.

Read books

Some authors already have taken the challenge out of explaining Easter to children. Visit a religious bookseller, the church or a bookstore to find Easter stories geared to children.

Parents can decide how to explain Easter to their children. Many moms and dads have found that focusing on the joyful aspects of Christ's resurrection story is a simple, enjoyable way to explain Easter.





Blessings to You This Easter Season

Easter Passover - April 15th
Ascension of Jesus - May 26th
Pentecost - June 5th



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For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Sunday</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;">9:45 a.m. Bible Study 11 a.m. Worship (broadcast on KGRO) 6 p.m. Worship</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Wednesday</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 5px 0;">6:30 p.m. Adults, Youth, Children & Preschool Activities</p>
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Central Baptist Church

Norman Rushing, Pastor

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Easter symbolism complements the holiday

Tradition plays an important role in Easter celebrations for many families. Cherished traditions and symbols of Easter may include anything from egg hunts to lilies to lambs. Understanding the importance behind these symbols can make sharing the miracle of Easter that much more special.

Eggs

Eggs are one of the more recognizable symbols of Easter. For Easter egg hunts, eggs are hard-boiled and decorated in bright hues. It's believed that the origins of Easter eggs are both secular and religious. From the secular (once pagan) perspective, the egg is an ancient symbol of new life, according to The History Channel, and has been associated with pagan festivals that celebrate spring. Some Christians feel that Easter eggs represent Christ's emergence from the tomb and his subsequent resurrection. Eggs were once a food not consumed during Lent, therefore painting and decorating them to mark the end of fasting and penance became a way to celebrate Easter.

Crucifix

The crucifix is one of the central symbols of Easter and Christianity. The cross is a symbol of Christ's crucifixion and sacrifice. The crucifix also highlights the ability of God to give new life to people after death.

In addition to wearing and displaying the cross during Easter, some people bake "hot cross buns" as another symbol of the season.

Rabbit

The Easter bunny is very much a secular symbol of the holiday, but one that has become so ingrained with the season that many people ascribe to it a Christian meaning. Pagan celebrations of spring often linked rabbits or hares with the season because of their fertility and ability to bring forth new life. According to the Christian living resource Crosswalk, believers associate the rabbit coming out of its underground home as a symbol of Christ emerging from the tomb.

Lilies

Lilies are often exchanged during Easter celebrations or presented as hostess gifts for those sharing the holiday meal with others. The American Bible Society says lilies grow in the spring around the time when Easter is typically celebrated. Also, because they look like trumpets, they can be a symbol that heralds Christ's resurrection.

Lamb

The lamb is another symbol associated with Easter. Lambs were originally associated with the Jewish holiday of Passover, when lambs were sacrificed and their blood was used to mark which houses contained those faithful to God. As a result of his crucifixion, Christ became the symbolic lamb for all — the ultimate sacrifice. In fact, Christ is often referred to as "The Lamb of God."

Easter is replete with many recognized symbols. Unearthing their meanings can be a learning experience and a way to further immerse oneself in this holy holiday.



Create colorful Easter eggs

Beautifully colored Easter eggs are a beloved holiday tradition. In many cultures, eggs represent new life, fertility and rebirth. For Christians, the Easter egg is symbolic of the resurrection, or the eternal life, of Jesus Christ. The practice of coloring eggs and offering them as decorative items is embraced during both secular and religious Easter celebrations.

Many fond memories and traditions are tied to Easter egg coloring, and some people may have their preferential kits or practices to achieve beautiful eggs. But embracing some new tips and tricks can produce beautiful eggs and make this beloved tradition even more fun.

• Begin with firm, hard-boiled eggs. Bring a pot

of water to a rolling boil. Then use a large spoon to gently lower the eggs into the water. Lower the heat to maintain a simmer and boil for just about 12 minutes. Transfer the eggs to a bowl with ice cold water and let them cool. Allow the eggs to cool completely before coloring.

• Lay out newspaper or an old tablecloth to soak up any spills. Spills are inevitable, so don't let them spoil the fun. In addition, empty egg cartons make ideal drying racks, so do not discard them.

• Make patterns or other designs on the eggs. Use a white crayon to draw on the egg directly. The dye will not stick to the wax. Or use string, rubber bands, tape, stickers, or other items to create your pattern. Dip the

egg and then remove the materials afterward to reveal the design.

• Swirl a few drops of food coloring into shaving cream on a flat surface. Roll the eggs into the mixture, let dry, and then gently clean to remove the excess shaving cream. The result is a marbled effect.

• Recognize that you don't have to "dye" eggs at all. Use a sponge to dab on a design. Strips of tissue paper can be adhered to the egg with glue or shellac. Children may enjoy submerging the egg in glue and then coating it in glitter.

The potential to create creative Easter eggs is limitless. Embracing new strategies can set this year's eggs apart.

Tasty bites for Easter meals

Easter dinner is a special occasion, presenting an opportunity for family and friends to gather, celebrate their faith and give thanks for their blessings.

Traditional dishes tend to find their way to the Easter dinner table, but no meal would be complete without some sort of deviled eggs appetizer. Deviled eggs make good use of hard-boiled eggs that may not have been colored, or even those that have been dyed and can now be safely repurposed as food.

"Debonaire Deviled Eggs" from "Southern Appetizers" by Denise Gee (Chronicle Books) teaches home chefs how to craft tasty, aesthetically pleasing eggs.

Debonaire Deviled Eggs

- Serves 8 to 12
- 12 large eggs
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled (optional)
- 3 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
- 2 teaspoons prepared mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- Sprigs of fresh savory or another herb for garnish
- Turn the eggs bottom- (wider-) side up in the carton. Use a pushpin to delicately poke one hole squarely in each center.
- Fill a large saucepan or small Dutch oven with 2 to 2 1/2 quarts of

water (enough to cover the eggs; use two pans if cooking all the eggs at once). Bring the water to a rolling boil.

• Use a slotted spoon to add six eggs to the pan (working quickly but carefully to get them in at the same time); boil the eggs for 6 minutes.

• Remove the pan from the heat. Let the eggs sit for 6 minutes for slightly soft yolks; add about 40 seconds for firmer yolks).

• Remove each egg with a slotted spoon and place it on a kitchen towel. Repeat with the remaining six eggs. Let the eggs cool to room temperature, about 20 minutes, before peeling. (Store in the refrigerator, unpeeled, for up to 1 week; peeled for up to 4 days).

• Peel the eggs under cool running water. Slice the eggs in half lengthwise, gently scooping out the yolks into a medium bowl. Add the mayonnaise, three-fourths of the crumbled bacon (if using), pickle relish, mustard, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine (and adjust seasonings as desired). Use a small spoon (or better yet, a piping bag) to insert the filling into the egg halves. Garnish with the remaining chopped bacon and savory, if desired, before serving.

Note: Large eggs are best used for egg plates and are easier to eat in one or two bites.



Explore the true meaning of Easter

Bunnies and baskets, chocolates and candies. It's that time of year when parents scramble to ensure their children wake up to a trove of treats, and families decide on who is serving the lamb dinner this year.

These are some of the familiar Easter traditions, but much more is involved with the holiday than egg hunts and brightly adorned bonnets. For the religious, it can be important to delve into the true meanings behind Easter and let those discoveries help shape celebrations.

Easter, above all, is a religious commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the culmination of the holy period known as Lent, and is the most significant date on the Christian liturgical calendar.

Jesus Christ was the Son of God, who fulfilled the prophecies that he would give his own life for his people so they could enjoy eternal life after their own mortal bodies perished. Easter, from Jesus' very own words, marked a new covenant for the faithful.

According to scripture, Jesus was enjoying the Passover dinner when he sat down with his disciples. Understanding that this would be his last earthly meal and that someone close to him would betray him, he took bread and gave thanks to God

for it. He broke the bread and said it was his body that should be given up so sins would be forgiven. He did a similar gesture with wine, indicating that it was his blood that should be shed as a sacrifice for all. Christ instructed the disciples to do the same ritual in the future in memory of him.

Jesus was subsequently betrayed and turned over to the authorities. He was sentenced to crucifixion and perished on the cross. His body was cleansed and placed in a tomb sealed by a stone. His followers were unaware of the miracle that would ensue in the days to come. On Easter Sunday, the tomb was discovered open and empty. Jesus had risen from the dead, providing irrefutable proof that he was the Son of God. In turn, Jesus fulfilled all he was born to do and preached.

Easter did not always symbolize Christ's resurrection when it was first celebrated. It was once a pagan ritual of renewal and birth. However, when early missionaries began spreading Christianity's message, the holiday - falling around the time of Christ's actual resurrection - was adopted to commemorate the religious miracle. Today it stands as a testament to ultimate sacrifice and the promise of eternal life for all who believe in him.



Happy Easter

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FRIDAY *Jesus Led Away, Mocked*

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand; and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying Hail King of the Jews! And they spit on him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him and led him away to crucify him. — MATTHEW 27:27-31

And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there followed him a great company of people and women, which also bewailed and lamented him. — LUKE 23:26-27

Second chance at life

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

While we may look at the day that Christ died and read of the anguish and hurt that was felt by those who were there, we know that the story doesn't end at the cross. The story doesn't end when the stone was rolled in front of the tomb. It goes beyond to the empty tomb.

We know that it moves to three days later when the stone was rolled away and Jesus arose victorious over death, hell and the grave. It tells of the victory that Jesus brought to the hearts and lives of people when He arose from the dead. It reaches out to those who struggle with their past actions pointing them to a hope that reaches out to them in the midst of their trials.

Peter was one who struggled with what he had done and then experienced the loss of the One who had loved him unconditionally. As he stood watching the crucifixion and saw the death of Jesus, I am sure he was overwhelmed with the guilt of his denial (Mark 14:66-72).

But what Peter didn't know was that the story was not over. He served the God who loved Him and desired to give him another opportunity, a second chance, to surrender to Him.

In Mark 16:7 we find the words that specifically point to Peter having another opportunity to follow Jesus. The young man in a white robe told the women — “But go, tell His disciples - and Peter, - ‘He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He said to you.’”

For Peter the empty tomb was very personal. Known as Simon to many, Jesus called him Peter. God determined to use Peter in a way that he never imagined. He continues to use ordinary people today to change the hearts and lives of people and reach out into this world.

You might remember that Jesus met with Peter alone. Even though Peter denied Jesus in public, Jesus reached out to Peter alone to speak to him and share with him the plans He had for him. Peter was restored by Jesus and given the opportunity to once again lay aside the things of this world and follow Him.

Peter's life was transformed once again as Jesus reached out to him. He went on to Pentecost and after that

to become a leader in the early church. The Risen Lord moved in his life enabling him to rise above the past and become the man God desired him to be.

Our Risen Lord enables us to live in such a way that He can use us to share the Good News that He gave His life for our sins on Calvary, was laid in a tomb, but has risen from the dead and is alive forevermore.

On this Easter many of us stand where Peter stood, in need of a second chance, in need of the Gospel. Jesus continues to reach out to souls that are lost and separated from Him. His desire is that all should be saved and none should perish.

Remember John 3:16 — “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Our Risen Lord stands beside the Father inviting all to call upon Him to forgive their sins and live in their hearts. He stands victorious over death and offers us a second chance at life. That is the hope of the empty tomb and our Risen Savior.

JESUS, JESUS, JESUS, there IS something about that name!! Christ only, always, Bro. Paul

The reverence of Easter

Easter is the time when the world celebrates Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Without this wonderful sacrifice by Him and God, we would have no hope for a better place after we pass on from this life. In the churches of Christ we celebrate Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection every Sunday by participating in communion.

As members of the church of Christ we partake in communion every Sunday and not just Easter Sunday. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 is where we are commanded to participate in communion. The bread represents Jesus' body he gave for our sins on the cross. The cup of juice represents the blood he shed on the cross again for our sins. Acts 20:7 is where it tells us the disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week.

John 2:18-22 Jesus foretells the future. He tells them the temple (His Body) will be destroyed (death on the cross) and in three days will be rebuilt (resurrection).

Romans 6:1-11 reminds us that yes Jesus died for our sins and if we believe he is the Son of God and died the horrible death on the cross for us, we can have hope of eternal life because his grace covers our sins. However, that does not mean we can just keep on living our lives in sin. Verse 3 says we must be baptized into his death. Our baptism represents a death to our old life of

sin and when we come up from the waters of baptism this signifies a new life and a fresh start. Later in that chapter we read verse 23 where it tells us “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Christ came for all and the gift of eternal life is free! BUT, we still must follow the plan of Salvation to be saved and gain the crown of life we are told about in Revelation 2:10. We can gain that crown of life if we remain faithful unto death and be the example Christ would want us to be in everything we do in our lives.

The plan is to Hear the Gospel, Romans 10:17. Believe what we hear is true, John 3:16. Repent of our sins, Acts 17:30. Confess our sins and confess the name of Jesus and that he was sent for us, Romans 10:10. Be baptized under water for the remission of our sins, Acts 2:38.

We welcome you to join us at any of our services. We have Sunday Morning Bible Class at 9:30 AM. Worship is at 10:30 AM. We also have a Wednesday Bible Study at 7 PM. Sunday morning Worship services are live streamed on YouTube. Search “Mary Ellen and Harvester Church of Christ.” We also post daily scriptures and messages as well as a link to services on our Facebook page: @MEHCOC.

Zachary Green is one of the interim preachers at the Mary Ellen and Harvester Church of Christ. Frankie Lemons is the other interim preacher. Find them on Facebook: @MEHCOC. You can contact the church at 806-665-0031 or by email office@mehcofc.org. Their website is www.mehcofc.org.



Paul Nachtigall



Zachary Green



The Crucifixion

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do. — LUKE 23:33-34

And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, he said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. — LUKE 23:44-47

FRIDAY: *The Execution*

Jesus was taken outside the city walls to be executed by the Roman method of crucifixion. With him were two other convicts who were also to be killed that day.

The Death of Jesus

With a large crowd watching, Jesus died. The Roman empire kept time differently than we do today: the "sixth hour" corresponds roughly to the modern-day 12 p.m. and the "ninth hour" to about 3 p.m.

Friday is traditionally known as "Good Friday" by Christians. While it may seem contradictory - what could possibly be good about Jesus' death? - the name comes from an old meaning of the word "good"; holy.



Wishing you and yours a blessed and happy Easter. Thanks for hopping by; we really appreciate your business!

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Listen Up...

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Saturday: His Body is Buried

Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, and Nicodemus, a religious official, paid to have the body of Jesus quietly buried. By local custom, the body was not embalmed but buried as soon as possible after death. The body lay untouched through Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath day, because no one could go near a dead body on this holy day.

John 19:41-42: "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."



A Time to Rejoice & Celebrate

In this season of hope, joy and renewal, we wish you a blessed and happy Easter!



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Easter Sunday Mass in the Vatican

Easter is a Christian holiday that is steeped in tradition. Families have their own Easter traditions, some of which are secular in nature while others are faith-based. The Catholic Church has its own Easter traditions, and perhaps none are as awe-inspiring as the celebration of Easter Sunday Mass in the Vatican.

Each year, the Pope says Mass in St. Peter's Square beginning at roughly 10 a.m. The square holds as many as 80,000 people and on Easter Sunday it is typically filled to capacity. Celebrants often arrive hours before the Mass is scheduled to begin in order to secure their place on the square.

The Pope says the Mass to the gathered crowd, and at noon delivers the Urbi et Orbi, a message "to the city and to the world" from the Loggia of the Blessings, which is the central balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square. Of course, as it did with so many Easter traditions across the globe in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced changes to Easter celebrations in the Vatican.

In normal years, Easter week celebrations in the Vatican may attract thousands of visitors from across the globe.

But in 2020, the public was barred from attending Holy Week liturgical celebrations in the Vatican, and such restrictions will likely remain in place in 2021. But many Holy Week celebrations were live-streamed, allowing Christians to safely enjoy them and celebrate their faith.

The Vatican Museum even offers virtual tours to those interested in viewing the many significant works of art tourists often try to see when visiting the Vatican in person. For example, a virtual tour of the Sistine Chapel is available online. Christians may not get to celebrate their faith in person in the Vatican in 2021, but they can still partake in some of the awe-inspiring Easter traditions surrounding the most significant holiday on the Christian calendar.

Jesus Is Risen

Sunday Fear and Great Joy

With the Sabbath over, Jesus' disciples Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome came to the tomb to anoint the body with ritual herbs. They worried that they would not be able to roll away the heavy stone that blocked the entrance to the tomb.

When they reached it, they found that the stone was already gone, and an angel greeted them. This encounter began the story of the Christian faith.

Matthew 28:5-8a: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy."

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Easter

He is Risen!

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Received up into Heaven

So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. — MARK 16:19-20

And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. — LUKE 24:51-53

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Easter

A Time to Resurrect
Faith, Love &
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Easter Week Services With Guest Speakers:

April 13, 14 and 15 • 7:00pm • Speakers Amanda & Bob Ellis

Sunday Morning Events:

9:45 am - Sunday School

10:45 am - Resurrection Celebration in the Sanctuary

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Easter Services

Easter Sunday
Schedule:

Sunday School: 9:45 am

Worship Service: 11:00 am

Sermon will be given by Brother Brian Mullins

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