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FRESH START

A GUIDE TO CREATING
NEW TRADITIONS THIS EASTER



HELPING FAMILIES CELEBRATE EASTER TOGETHER

The Easter season is a special time to celebrate the gift of new life and forgiveness found in Jesus. It's also a time for families to connect with each other and their faith. We've created this guide to help your family find easy ways to celebrate Easter together. In this guide, you'll find various activities, crafts, recipes, and family devotions to enjoy together.

For more information on all Easter events and service times at Sugar Creek, visit sugarcreek.net/easter



EASTER SERVICES AT SUGAR CREEK

-01-

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

Join us at one of our three campuses for Good Friday services. During the service, we will worship, take the Lord's Supper, and reflect on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

Sugar Land Campus

6:00 PM - English Service

7:30 PM - Spanish Service

Missouri City Campus

6:00 PM - English Service

Richmond|Rosenberg Campus

6:00 PM - English Service

-02-

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES

Join us as we celebrate Easter at all our campuses across Fort Bend County. We will talk about how failure isn't final and the resurrection of Jesus offers all of us a fresh start.

Sugar Land Campus

8:00 AM - Traditions Service

9:30 & 11:00 AM - Modern Service

12:35 PM - Spanish Service

Missouri City Campus

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 AM & 12:35 PM -

Modern Services

Richmond|Rosenberg Campus

9:30 AM - Spanish Service

11:00 AM - Modern Service

FOR THE FAMILY

O1

Week 1: New Life

Scripture: John 3:1-8

Craft: Seed Planting

Recipe: Resurrection Rolls

O2

Week 2: Forgiveness

Scripture: Luke 23:32-34

Craft: Cross Sun-catcher

Recipe: Hot Cross Buns

O3

Week 3: Sacrifice

Scripture: John 15:12-13

Craft: Easter Story Stones

Recipe: Easter Nest Cookies

O4

Week 4: Victory

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:54-57

Craft: Empty Tomb Garden

Recipe: Resurrection Cookies

W E E K

01

NEW LIFE

New life is at the heart of Easter, beautifully demonstrated through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His victory over death offers us the gift of new life; redeeming us and restoring our relationship with God. We also see reflections of this renewal in the world around us—flowers blooming, trees budding, and new life emerging in spring. Just as Christ's resurrection brings us spiritual renewal, nature reminds us of God's power to bring life from death. This week, we'll dive into what it truly means to have new life in Christ and how we can fully embrace this incredible gift in our daily walk with Him.

WEEK 1



Family Craft: Seed Planting

Materials Needed:

- Small pots or biodegradable cups
- Potting soil
- Various seeds (grass, flowers, herbs, or vegetables)
- Water
- Popsicle sticks for labeling

Instructions:

1. Fill each pot or cup with potting soil, leaving about an inch of space at the top.
2. Plant 2-3 seeds in each pot, following the depth instructions on the seed packet.
3. Water the soil gently until moist.
4. Label each pot with the type of seed planted using popsicle sticks.
5. Place the pots in a sunny spot and water regularly.
6. Watch your seeds grow over the coming weeks, discussing how this relates to new life in Christ.

*you can reuse these seeds in the week 4 craft if desired



Recipe: Resurrection Rolls

Ingredients:

- 1 (8-oz.) cans crescent roll dough
- 8 large marshmallows
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 2 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to package instructions.
2. Separate crescent rolls into triangles.
3. Mix sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl.
4. Dip each marshmallow in melted butter, then roll in a cinnamon-sugar mixture.
5. Place a marshmallow on the wide end of each triangle and roll up toward the small end, pinching edges to seal.
6. Place rolls on a baking sheet and bake according to the package instructions.
7. Let cool slightly before serving.

The rolls will be empty inside when broken open. As you make and eat these rolls, discuss how the empty space inside represents the empty tomb after Jesus' resurrection.

WEEK 1

Family Devotional

Read: John 3:1-8

Reflect

Today we're going to talk about new life. In the Bible, Jesus tells a man named Nicodemus that to see the kingdom of God, we must be "born again." This might sound strange, but Jesus isn't talking about being born as a baby again. He's talking about a spiritual rebirth - a new life that God gives us when we believe in Jesus.

When we trust in Jesus, God gives us a fresh start. It's like He's wiping our slate clean and giving us a chance to live a new kind of life - one that's guided by His love and filled with His presence. This new life changes how we think, how we act, and how we see the world around us.

Just like the seeds we planted (or will plant) in our craft this week, this new life starts small but grows over time. As we learn more about Jesus and follow His teachings, our new life in Him grows stronger and bears fruit - things like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

Discuss

1. What does "new life" mean to you?
2. How have you seen God working to change your heart and mind?
3. What are some ways we can help our new life in Christ grow stronger?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for the gift of new life through Jesus. Help us to grow in our faith and to live each day embracing the new life You've given us. Amen.

W E E K

02

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is such an important part of the Easter story. As Jesus hung on the cross, suffering for our sins, He spoke words of unimaginable grace: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). In that moment, He demonstrated the depth of God's mercy and love, offering forgiveness even to those who crucified Him. Through His sacrifice, we are forgiven and restored to God. But His example also calls us to extend that same forgiveness to others. This week, we will reflect on what it truly means to receive God's forgiveness and to share that same grace with those around us.

WEEK 2

Family Craft: Cross sun-catcher

Materials needed:

- Contact paper
- Tissue paper cut into small squares (various colors)
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Pipe cleaners (optional)



Instructions:

1. Choose a color of construction paper, fold your paper in half, use a ruler to draw half a cross onto the fold, and cut the cross along drawn line lines.
2. Cut another cross out inside of the first cross leaving a cross-shaped border.
3. Cut 2 pieces of contact paper the same size, making sure your cross border will fit inside.
4. Remove the backing from one of the contact paper pieces and place it sticky side up. Place the cross border in the middle of the contact paper.
5. Place the squares of tissue paper on the sticky parts of the contact paper inside the cross, overlapping colors.
6. When finished, remove the backing from the second contact paper cross and carefully place it over the tissue paper, sticky side down.
7. Trim excess contact paper around the edges.
8. Hang in a window to let light shine through and talk about how Jesus is the light of the world!

WEEK 2

Recipe: Hot Cross Buns

Ingredients:

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 packet active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 cup warm milk
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup raisins or currants
- 1/4 cup mixed candied peel (optional)

For the crosses:

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 4-5 tablespoons water

Instructions:

1. Mix flour, sugar, yeast, salt, and spices in a large bowl.
2. Add warm milk, melted butter, and beaten eggs. Mix to form a soft dough.
3. Knead for 5-10 minutes until smooth and elastic.
4. Place in a greased bowl, cover, and let rise for 1 hour.
5. Punch down dough and add raisins and candied peel if using
6. Divide into 12 balls and place on a baking sheet. Cover and let rise for 30 minutes
7. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
8. Mix flour and water to make a paste for crosses. Pipe crosses onto buns
9. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown.
10. As you enjoy these, discuss how the cross reminds us of Jesus' forgiveness.



WEEK 2

Family Devotional

Read: Luke 23:32-34

Reflect

Today we're talking about forgiveness. In the Bible, we see Jesus hanging on the cross - in pain and suffering. But even in that moment, He says something amazing. He asks God to forgive the very people who put Him there. Can you imagine forgiving someone who hurt you that badly?

Jesus shows us that forgiveness is powerful. When we forgive others, we're following Jesus' example. It doesn't mean that what they did was okay, but it means we're choosing to let go of anger and hurt. Forgiveness can be hard, but it's also freeing. It helps heal our hearts and our relationships.

God forgives us for all the wrong things we do, and He wants us to forgive others too. When we forgive, we're showing God's love to the world around us.

Discuss

1. Why do you think Jesus asked God to forgive the people who crucified Him?
2. Can you think of a time when someone forgave you? How did it make you feel?
3. Is there someone you need to forgive? How can you take a step towards forgiving them this week?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for forgiving us. Help us to forgive others, even when it's hard. Show us how to love like Jesus loved. Amen.

W E E K

03

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is at the very heart of the Easter story. Jesus willingly laid down His life for us, fulfilling God's plan of redemption and demonstrating the greatest love imaginable: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). His sacrifice was not only an act of love but also a call for us to follow His example. This week, we will reflect on the true meaning of sacrifice and how we can live out Christ's sacrificial love in our own lives.

WEEK 3



Family Craft: Easter Story Stones

Materials needed:

- Smooth, flat rocks (one for each key event in the Easter story)
- Acrylic paints
- Paint brushes
- Fine-tip permanent markers

Instructions:

1. Clean and dry the rocks.
2. Paint simple images on each rock to represent different parts of the Easter story (e.g., palm branch, bread and cup, cross, empty tomb)
3. Once dry, use markers to add details if desired.
4. Use these stones to retell the Easter story throughout the week, remembering Jesus' sacrifice.

*you can add these rocks to your week 4 craft if desired



Recipe: Easter Nest Cookies

Ingredients:

- 2 cups shredded coconut
- 1/3 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Mini chocolate eggs or jelly beans

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C).
2. Mix coconut, condensed milk, and vanilla in a bowl.
3. Drop spoonfuls onto a lined baking sheet.
4. Use your thumb or the back of a spoon to make an indentation in the center of each cookie.
5. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown.
6. Let cool completely, then place 2-3 mini eggs or jelly beans in each "nest".
7. As you enjoy these cookies, discuss how birds sacrifice to build nests and care for their young, relating it to God's sacrificial love for us and how He takes care of us.

WEEK 3

Family Devotional

Read: John 15:12-13

Reflect

Today we're talking about sacrifice. Sacrifice means giving up something valuable for the sake of others. In the Bible, Jesus tells us that the greatest love is to lay down one's life for friends. This is exactly what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Jesus' sacrifice shows us how much God loves us. He was willing to give up everything - even His own life - so that we could be forgiven and have a relationship with God. This kind of love is powerful and life-changing.

Jesus calls us to love others the same way He loved us. While we might not be asked to give our lives, we can make smaller sacrifices every day. Maybe it's giving up our time to help someone, or sharing something we'd rather keep for ourselves. When we sacrifice for others, we're showing them God's love.

Discuss

1. What do you think it means to "lay down one's life for friends"?
2. Can you think of a time when someone sacrificed something for you? How did it make you feel?
3. What are some ways we can show sacrificial love to others in our daily lives?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for Jesus' sacrifice for us. Help us to love others sacrificially, just as You have loved us. Show us ways we can put others first this week. Amen.

W E E K

04

VICTORY

Easter Sunday is the celebration of Jesus' ultimate victory over sin and death. His resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith, proving His power and fulfilling God's promise of redemption. Because He lives, we have the hope of eternal life and the assurance that nothing—not even death—can separate us from God's love. "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). This week, we will reflect on what Christ's triumph means for us and how we can live as people of unwavering hope, grounded in the truth of His resurrection.

WEEK 4

Family Craft: Empty Tomb Garden

Materials needed:

- Short plastic container/basin
- Small flower pot
- Potting soil
- Small rocks
- A large rock for the tomb
- Moss, grass seed, or chia seed
- Sticks for the crosses
- String
- Small figurines (optional)



Instructions:

1. Search your yard or neighborhood park for some of the things you'll need for this craft. Spend some time outside with your family as you collect rocks, sticks, and other decorations for your small garden.
2. Fill the container/basin with potting soil and place the small planter on top.
3. Fill in around the small planter (tomb) adding soil around the sides and on top.
4. Place the large rock to the side of your "tomb" to show that the tomb is empty.
5. Arrange small rocks and moss or sprinkle seeds around the garden.
6. Tie sticks together with string to create crosses and stick them into the soil.
7. Add figurines if desired to represent the Easter story.
8. Water if using grass seed and watch it grow over the coming days.

WEEK 4

Recipe: Resurrection Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole pecans
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 3 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 1 cup sugar
- Cookie sheet liner
- Zipper baggie
- Wooden spoon
- Tape
- Bible



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C).
2. Place pecans in a zipper baggie and beat them with a wooden spoon to break them into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.
3. Smell (and maybe taste) the vinegar. Add 1 teaspoon of vinegar to the mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
4. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.
5. Pinch some salt into the mixing bowl. Taste the salt and explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.
6. So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16.
7. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3.
8. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto a lined cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matthew 27:57-60.
9. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door, and turn the oven OFF. Place a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matthew 27:65-66.
10. Time for bed! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.
11. On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matthew 28:1-9.

WEEK 4

Family Devotional

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:54-57

Reflect

Today we're talking about victory. When we think of victory, we might think of winning a game or a race. But the Bible talks about an even greater victory - Jesus' victory over death. In 1 Corinthians 15:54-57, Paul writes about this amazing victory: "When our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: 'Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?'"

This passage tells us that one day, our bodies that can die will be changed into bodies that will live forever. When that happens, death will be completely defeated. It's like death has been swallowed up - it's gone forever! Paul goes on to say that the "sting" of death comes from sin, and sin gets its power from the law. But here's the amazing part - through Jesus, we have victory over sin and death. Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins, and when He rose from the dead, He showed that He has power even over death itself.

This victory gives us hope. Even though we might still feel sad when someone we love dies, we know that death doesn't have the final word. For those who believe in Jesus, death is not the end - it's just the beginning of eternal life with God. Let's thank God for this incredible gift. We can say with Paul, "Thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Discuss

1. How does knowing about Jesus' victory over death change how we think about dying?
2. What are some ways we can live that show we believe in this victory?
3. How can we share this hope with others who might be afraid of death?

Pray

Dear God, thank you for the victory You've given us through Jesus. Help us to live with hope, knowing that You have defeated death. Thank you that we can look forward to eternal life with You. Amen.

THANK YOU!

We pray this resource helps you and your family connect with Jesus and each other this year.