

ZION'S FAITH AT HOME MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER theParentLinkSM



April 2011

Celebrate Jesus' Resurrection

Each spring, we see reminders of new life and rebirth. Trees bud, flowers bloom, and butterflies emerge from their cocoons. For Christians, the most important celebration of new life is Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter. Children may associate this holiday mainly with bunnies, baskets, and candy. So it's important to share with them the real reason we rejoice: the empty tomb.

Use these creative ideas to share the Easter message with children of all ages. Let them know that Jesus, our loving Savior, died and rose again so we can go to heaven and be with him forever.

Palm Sunday—Make "praise shakers" to celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Decorate the bottoms of paper plates, fill them with beads or unpopped popcorn, and then staple together the edges. Add streamers and then have a parade. Shout out praises to Jesus and make noise to celebrate that he is our King.

Good Friday—Buy a small vine wreath at a craft store and insert toothpicks to resemble the crown of thorns Jesus wore. Whenever a family member makes a sacrifice for someone else, they should remove one thorn. On the night before Easter, after your children are asleep, remove the remaining thorns and decorate the crown with white ribbons and bright flowers.



Easter Sunday—Using a stamp pad and colored pencils, make thumbprint pictures that tell the Easter story. For example, draw a tomb with a rolled-away thumbprint rock and a butterfly with thumbprint wings.

Zion's Worship Schedule for Holy Week:

Palm Sunday: Worship at 8:30AM and 11:00AM

Maundy Thursday: 7:00PM

Good Friday: 7:00PM

Easter Sunday: 6:30AM, 9:00AM, and 11:00AM

PowerSource

Ask God:

1. To bless your Easter celebrations and keep your focus on his resurrection.
2. To help your children know that Easter is for them.
3. To keep the joy of Easter in your hearts all year long.

Parenting Insights

These age-level insights from *Children's Ministry Magazine* will help you share the Easter message with kids of all ages.

Ages 2 to 5

Tell young children that people who hated Jesus nailed him to a cross and left him there until he died. Explain how sad and afraid Jesus' friends were but emphasize their joy when Jesus returned to life three days later.

Ages 6 to 9

Fairness is a big deal at this age, so explain in simple language that Christ willingly died in our place because he loves us. Kids may be fascinated by crucifixion details. Avoid euphemisms for death such as sleeping.

Ages 10 to 12

Kids who are familiar with the details of the Easter story are ready for the "why." Explain why it was necessary for Christ to die, referring to the blood sacrifices of the Old Testament.

Elementary Youth

Palm Sunday Parade April 17th

Students are invited to meet in the Narthex before worship to receive their palm and parade through the sanctuary in celebration of Jesus' ride through Jerusalem.



Easter Egg Hunt

Preschool through fifth grade students join us April 17th following 2nd service for an Easter devotion,



Egg Hunt for Kids

lunch and the annual egg hunt. Don't forget your basket!

Family Experience: Easter Is for Me!

Get closer to one another and to God during Easter by using these simple activities that will have a lasting impact.

Prayer Eggs—During Easter week, use a basket of eggs to encourage your family to spend time together talking to God. Place slips of paper with prayer topics inside plastic eggs. Make enough eggs for each family member to open one per day during the week leading up to Easter. Include praises and gratitude, as well as prayer requests for family members, your church, and the community. Open the prayer eggs at meals or bedtime and pray together for the opened requests. Place special prayer eggs in the basket on Easter morning to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

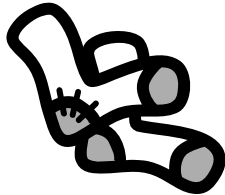


Resurrection Buns—Make edible "empty tombs" with just a few ingredients. Wrap a packaged crescent-roll triangle around a large marshmallow. Dip the roll in melted butter, then cinnamon and sugar. Cook the rolls according to the instructions on the roll package. The marshmallows "disappear" and leave an empty, sweet surprise.

Read aloud Luke 24:1-12. Then give each family member a roll and have them take one bite. Ask: "What do you see inside your roll? How do you think the women felt when they found the tomb empty?" Say: "Remember that even as these rolls are empty, Jesus' tomb was empty, too, because he rose from the dead."

Sunday School Offering Focus

During the month of April we will be collecting new children's underwear and socks for the Kent Area Council P.T.A. clothing bank. Your donations are needed and appreciated.



Faith at Home Ministries

support for parents and youth!

Because sexuality is a gift from God, Zion is hosting the "Sex has a Price Tag" video to equip and nurture households in ways that promote healthy stewardship of this gift. All middle school and high school youth and their parents/guardians are invited to attend.

- **May 1st 6:00pm in the Parish House:** Preview of "Sex has a Price Tag" video, open to adults only.
- **May 22nd: 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm:** Dinner (potluck) and "Sex has a Price Tag" video for families 6th grade – 12th grade.

Celebrate Jesus' Gift of Forgiveness From Sins



"Jesus did not come simply to make bad people good. Jesus came to bring dead people to life." That quote from Christian activist Shane Claiborne sums up the reason Christians celebrate Easter. Because Jesus came back to life on Easter morning, he offers his followers new life as well.

The good news of Easter is that although we're still sinners, Jesus forgives our sins when we confess them. We no longer have to be burdened with our wrongs and the guilt that accompanies them. But that can be tough to remember on a day-to-day basis—for adults as well as teenagers.

In *Group Magazine's* recent survey of more than 26,000 Christian teenagers, half of them agreed with this statement: "I've done things no one really knows about that impact my ability to feel loved by God." The first hurdle is finding someone to confess these burdens to. If your teenagers aren't comfortable talking to you about their sins, they may be able to open up to a youth leader or pastor who can

assure them of God's mercy and grace.

The next hurdle is letting go of the remaining guilt. As longtime youth leader Jeanne Mayo said, "We must teach kids not only to repent from sin but to deal with Satan's harassing mind games long after God has wiped the slate clean." Past mistakes don't have to mean lifelong regret. That's a message you can share with your kids long after the Easter fanfare has quieted for another year.

Forgiveness is a gift from God, but then he puts the ball in our court. We, in turn, must forgive others, too. Youth minister Andy Dish expounds on this important topic at SimplyYouthMinistry.com.

Colossians 3:13 spells it out very clearly: "Forgive as your Father in heaven forgave you." On a daily basis, God must get sick of me. But he still forgives me. If God the Father can forgive me for all my stupidity, attitudes, thoughts, and words, then I can forgive others.

1. Forgiveness is a choice. Sure, we don't have to. It's all up to us. We can hear what Paul tells us in Colossians and just toss it away. We all have a choice—and others are watching our choices.

2. Forgiveness is necessary for healing. When you forgive, you're trading the poison inside of you for God's love. Until that happens, you'll walk around with poison inside, dying little by little.

3. Forgiveness is a command. ...but I thought you said it was a choice? It is. But God calls us to a higher calling. He calls us his children and representatives, so we must follow and obey. Bottom line: God says we must forgive because he loves us and wants us to share his love with others.

Senior High Youth

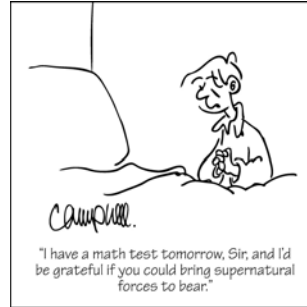
Happenings in the Faith Café:

9:45am to 10:45am

April 10th and 17th

JOIN US FOR

Why WE pray and How to Pray



We understand a basic truth that if you want to become a better friend with someone, you have to spend time with that person. That same basic principle can carry over to prayer. You pray because you value your relationship with God and you want that friendship to deepen.

CALENDAR:

April 10th: Wii Night!

April 24th: Easter Breakfast 7:30 am to 8:30 am



“We’re going on a Mission Trip!”
JULY 30th to AUGUST 6th

BUT even if you can’t go this year....
that doesn’t mean you can’t join the
team and follow along!

We meet the first and third Sundays
starting March 20th, after second
service to eat, fellowship and Bible
Study. Noon to two!

Wii Night!

Middle School and Senior High
Youth!

Come for a fabulous Glow in the
Dark Egg Hunt and Wii
Competition!

April 10th
5pm - 8pm
\$5

Please sign up on the bulletin
board.



Living Word

The focus of *Living Word* is to make Jesus the center of your life.
We can do that through:

inWord: Digging deeper into God’s Word,
upWord: Living life in daily worship and prayer,
outWord: Serving others in Christ’s name and
forWord: Sharing Jesus Christ with other people.

During the month of April we will be learning more about the
Prophets and The Easter Story.

- ✦ Throughout history, the people of Israel had disobeyed God. They rejected the prophets God sent, like Amos and Hosea. They took advantage of people who were poor and powerless.
- ✦ Because they rejected God and the prophets and did not take care of those who were poor, Israel was abandoned by God and became exiled.
- ✦ Solomon became the third king of Israel (1 Kings 1:30). Although Solomon was considered a wise man, he disobeyed God and worshipped false gods, and so did the people of Israel (1 Kings 11:2-6).
- ✦ During the exile, the Israelites wondered why, since they were God’s chosen people, they felt so abandoned. Remembering the words of God’s prophets, like Amos and Hosea, helped.

Do you ever wonder if God still cares about you? Where do you turn when you feel like?

What’s Coming Up?



Camp Lutherhaven: Sixth-Eighth Graders!
Prepare for adventure! Invite your friends, grab your swimsuit and let’s go to camp. Grow in your relationship with God and one another as we share tons of thrills and excitement. We will be going to Lutherhaven July 10th - 15th. Please pick up a registration packet from Kelly Mullin and return it by **April 3rd**. If you have any questions please contact Kelly Mullin.



April 6th & 13th: Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer Service. Dinner is at 6:00pm and worship starts at 7:00pm. Bring the whole family!

April 10th: High School and Middle School Wii Night! 5PM-8PM

April 17: Following 2nd service; Faith at Home Lunch and Egg Hunt

April 24th: Easter Sunday Worship at 6:30, 9:00 and 11:00AM;
Easter Breakfast from 7:30-8:30AM