

**Acts 3:12–19**

**Ps. 4**

**1 John 3:1–7**

**Luke 24:36b–48**

# What a Feeling

**Goal for the Session**

*Tweens will examine another resurrection story and observe the disciples' responses of fear, doubt, and then joy.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Luke 24:36b–48

#### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Sarah S. Henrich

The opening scene is one of a noisy gathering of folks trying to put together their experiences, their memories of Jesus, and their hopes and fears. We can divide this passage into four acts in order to watch how Luke moves us toward the wonderful ending of this Gospel: (1) “Look at me”: First proof that Jesus is not a ghost/spirit; (2) “He ate [it] in their presence”: Second proof that Jesus is not a spirit/ghost; (3) “He opened their minds to understand the scriptures”: Third proof that Jesus’ death and resurrection are part of his lordship; (4) “You are witnesses”: Jesus’ description of and call to the group.

#### WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Stephen A. Cooper

In this passage, Jesus’ visitation has a twofold agenda: to enlighten the disciples about the Christ and to commission them for the preaching of the gospel. The subject of this reading is nothing less than the sum of Easter week—Christ’s passion and resurrection—and the anticipation of Pentecost in the commission of the gospel to all nations. Thus Christ’s resurrected body is the object of the church’s faith, not simply as a miracle wrought by God, but as the centerpiece of the proclamation of the new life in Christ.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Nancy R. Blakely

Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of his early followers. He brought change to their lives as they moved from (1) fright and alarm to (2) joy mixed with disbelief to (3) open and understanding minds and hearts. That marked shift in the core of their beings led them forth to take great risks, witnessing to the risen Christ. Jesus did not bring them security. Rather, they risked all in following his call. For they had come to understand that Jesus had conquered the ultimate threat, death itself, and their fears were groundless. The challenge to twenty-first-century Christians is great. Are we able to let go of our desire to be secure?

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,” Barbara J. Essex

God and Jesus are in cahoots against the powers of the world. Wherever there is inhumanity, exploitation, discrimination, and hopelessness, Jesus shows up offering comfort, assurance, and a bit of fussing. He invites us to be witnesses that are all about God—God’s intention to bring peace, unity, harmony, love, compassion, grace, justice, and mercy to a world that is broken and sinful. Jesus commissions us to declare the presence and power of God in the midst of tragedy, despair, and death.

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

**Luke 24:36b–48**

## Focus on Your Teaching

Tweens will identify with the different feelings in the story, as they have experienced many of them. Some have also known the finality of the death of a family member or friend and can imagine what it would have been like for the disciples to see the resurrected Jesus for the first time. Affirm all responses to the story. Some tweens may feel it is wrong to express disbelief; however, working through questions of doubt is vital for healthy faith development. Providing a safe place where tweens can express doubts and ask questions is important.

*God of hope, give me fresh insights into the meaning of Jesus' resurrection.  
Stay close as I lead this group of tweens. Amen.*

**YOU WILL NEED**

- ☐ white cloth
- ☐ gold or yellow streamers or ribbons
- ☐ large white battery-powered candle
- ☐ copies of Resource Sheet 1
- ☐ scissors, glue sticks
- ☐ Color Pack 14, 32, 34
- ☐ markers
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ bowl of water
- ☐ *Singing the Feast*, 2023–2024; CD player

**For Responding**

- ☐ option 1: copies of Resource Sheet 2, pens
- ☐ option 2: cardboard tubes, paper, scissors, markers, tissue paper, yarn, Easter stickers, wrapped treats
- ☐ option 3: Color Pack 15, 16; poster board; scissors; pencils; fine-tipped permanent black markers; brightly colored markers

## ■ LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

As tweens arrive, greet each by name, saying, “(Name), the Lord is risen!” As needed, prompt learners to respond, “Christ is risen indeed!”

Gather the group and work together to arrange the white cloth in the center of your meeting space. Place the candle on it and arrange gold or yellow streamers in a festive design. As you light the candle, say: “The light of the risen Christ is with us!” Pass the candle from person to person, inviting tweens, as they hold the candle, to tell about a high point or low point during the past week. Then offer this prayer:

*God of new life, send your Spirit to help us grow in understanding how the new life Jesus brings can transform the way we live. Let all God's people say . . . Amen.*

Show Color Pack 14, inviting tweens to identify the feelings associated with the different emoticons. Ask:

- ✂ Which of these feelings have you experienced in the past few days?
- ✂ When have you moved from one feeling to another very quickly (such as moving from sad to joyful)?

Challenge tweens to pay attention to the variety of emotions in the Bible passage today.

### EXPLORING

Review the events leading up to today's story by distributing copies of Resource Sheet 1 (The Disciples' Wild Ride). Have tweens work alone or in pairs, following the instructions on the sheet. If they have trouble recalling the sequence, suggest they consider the order of the Bible verses. After completing the sheet, discuss:

- ✂ If you were one of Jesus' disciples, what would you be thinking and feeling at this point in the story?

Sit in a circle and invite tweens to imagine they are gathered with the disciples in the upper room. Sing "Were You There?" (Color Pack 32; track 24 on *Singing the Feast*, 2023–2024). Ask them to imagine they are discussing the events that have happened. Explain that you will read from Luke 24, and that when you say, "Freeze," they are to create a "frozen" picture or tableau of what is happening in that scene. When they hear the word "go," they are to do and say what they think the people in the story would do and say next.

Read aloud Luke 24:36b–37, and then say, "Freeze." After ten seconds, say, "Go," and encourage tweens to ad-lib what they think the disciples said and did next. After ten seconds, say, "Stop." Repeat this sequence after reading each section of verses in Luke 24: 38–40, 41–43, and 44–46. Afterward, ask:

- ✂ Why do you think the disciples thought Jesus was a ghost?
- ✂ What evidence did Jesus give that he was not a ghost?
- ✂ Why do you think the writer of Luke included this story in the Gospel?

Form teams of three or four. Have teams line up in your meeting space across from a small table or chair. Tweens will take turns traveling to the empty tomb (the table), looking under it and saying, "Hello! Anyone here?" and then running back to tag the next person while saying, "Jesus has risen! The tomb is empty!" The next player follows suit, until all players have done this. The team that finishes first earns a point. Play several times, changing the way tweens move—hopping, crawling backward, skipping, or holding something between their knees.

After the game, applaud the winners and gather to look again at Color Pack 14. Ask:

- ✂ Which of these emotions were part of the Bible story today? (*Use a marker to circle the ones named.*)
- ✂ What questions about this story do you wish you could ask Luke?
- ✂ How does this story change the way you think about life and death? In what way might it change the way you live each day?

Distribute Bibles and read Luke 24:46–48. Ask:

- ✂ In what ways are Christians today witnesses to Jesus' death and resurrection? What feelings might disciples today have about being such a witness?

## RESPONDING

Mark the activities you will use:

- 1. Bible Detectives** Like the first disciples, tweens can look at the evidence of Jesus' resurrection and consider their response. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (Bible Detectives) and work as a group to use the Bible verse hints to answer the questions and discuss the implications of the evidence given. Ask tweens to imagine they were

A part of British celebration and tradition, crackers consist of a short cardboard tube wrapped in bright paper and twisted at each end. Crackers may contain paper hats, small toys, and candies. To open crackers as a group, stand in a circle, holding a cracker by the ends between each pair of people. On the count of three, all pull on the ends of the crackers until they open, then scramble to collect the items that fall out.

with the disciples in the room and had seen and talked with Jesus. At the bottom of the resource sheet, have them write their own witness statements—what they saw, their reaction to this, and what they believe about what happened. Encourage them to read their statements to the entire group.

2. **Easter Crackers** Like the disciples, tweens are called to witness to the joy of Jesus' resurrection. Guide tweens in making Easter crackers, following these steps: Print Easter messages, such as *Jesus has risen!* on small pieces of paper. Place several messages in a cardboard tube, such as a paper-towel tube or toilet-paper tube. Add a few small Easter stickers and wrapped treats to the tube. Roll the tube in tissue paper, twist the ends to close, and secure the twists with yarn. The finished package will resemble a cracker (see sidebar). Decorate the crackers with Easter symbols. Encourage tweens to give their crackers to friends or family members. Option: Take crackers to a church school group of younger children and follow instructions from the sidebar for opening them, saying, "Happy Easter!" as the crackers are pulled apart.
3. **Decorated Crosses** On the first Easter Sunday, the disciples moved from deep sadness to incredible joy. Artists in El Salvador decorate crosses with images of new life, so that the cross—which was once a place of sadness—is transformed into a joyful symbol of hope. Show Color Pack 15 and read aloud the information. Guide tweens in making their own decorated crosses, following these steps: Trace the cross pattern on Color Pack 16 on heavy poster board and cut it out. Plan what to draw on your cross, considering the suggestions on Color Pack 15. Draw the pictures on the cross in pencil first, then go over the pencil lines with fine-tipped permanent black marker. Color inside the marker lines with brightly colored markers. Display the finished crosses where others in your church can be inspired by them.

## CLOSING

Gather the group and light the candle. Place a bowl of water on the white fabric. Dip your hand in the water, letting water splash back into the bowl, as you say, "In baptism, we are called by Christ Jesus into a new and changed life." Invite tweens to take turns dipping a hand in the water as they name one thing they have learned or thought about today that will help them live with hope.

Close by singing "I've Got Peace like a River" (Color Pack 34; track 12 on *Singing the Feast*, 2023–2024).

Extinguish the candle.

As you say good-bye to tweens, tell them you will hold them in prayer during the week to come, and invite them to pray for you as well.

### I've Got Peace like a River

I've got *peace like a river*,  
I've got peace like a river,  
I've got peace like a river in  
my soul.

I've got peace like a river,  
I've got peace like a river,  
I've got peace like a river in  
my soul.

I've got *joy like a fountain*,  
...

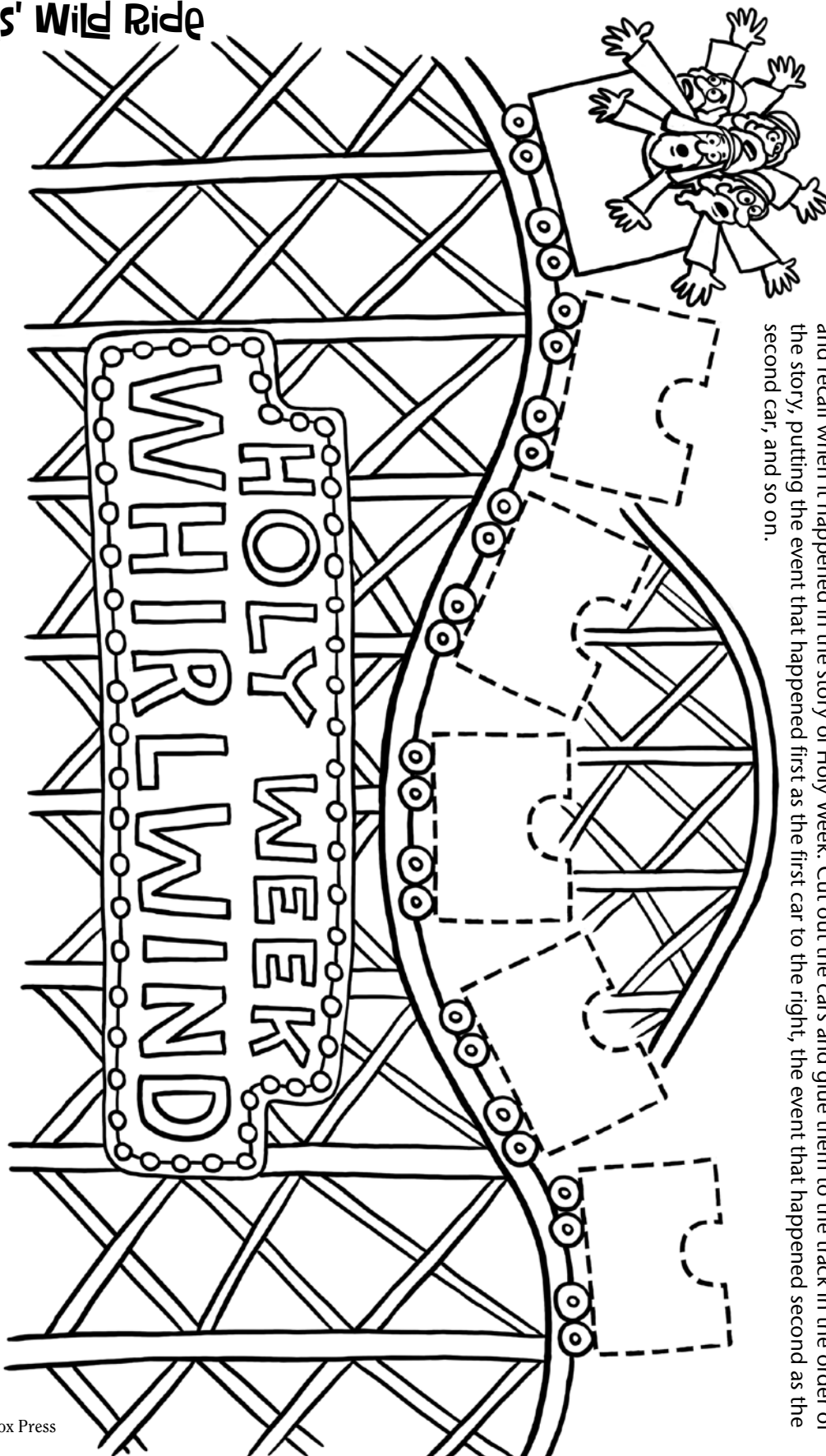
I've got *love like an ocean*,  
...

April 14, 2024  
What a Feeling

Tweens  
Resource Sheet 1

# The Disciples' Wild Ride

The time between Palm Sunday and the first Easter Sunday was an emotional roller coaster for the disciples. There were exciting highs and scary lows. Below the roller coaster track are descriptions of these events. Read each one and recall when it happened in the story of Holy Week. Cut out the cars and glue them to the track in the order of the story, putting the event that happened first as the first car to the right, the event that happened second as the second car, and so on.



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|--|--|--|---|--|
| Jesus enters Jerusalem and is greeted by a huge crowd of people singing his praises. (Luke 19:35-38) | The women run to tell the disciples that Jesus has risen, but the disciples don't believe them. (Luke 24:11) | Jesus is arrested, crucified, and buried. (Luke 22:47-23:56) | On Sunday morning, when the women arrive at the tomb, it is empty! Two men in shining clothes tell them Jesus has risen from the dead. (Luke 24:1-10) | The risen Jesus talks with two disciples as they walk to Emmaus. They run back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples they have seen the Risen Lord. (Luke 24:31-33) |
|--|--|--|---|--|



## Bible Detectives

Imagine you are a police investigator sent to check for evidence of the resurrection. In this amazing case of the risen Jesus, there is some physical evidence, such as the empty tomb and the abandoned grave clothes. There also is a growing number of statements from witnesses. Examine these statements, and draw your own conclusions.



What is the first piece of evidence that Jesus is truly risen, and not a ghost? (Hint: Luke 24:39)



What is the second? (Hint: Luke 24:41–43)



What is the third? (Hint: Luke 24:46)



Some say the disciples were seeing things that weren't really there. Consider the number of witnesses reported in the final chapter of each Gospel. What do you think?



Some say the disciples completely made up the story of Jesus' resurrection. Consider how the early disciples faced imprisonment and death for preaching about Jesus' death and resurrection. What do you think?



What is your verdict about what happened? How will you report on this—whom will you tell?