



He Is Risen!

(based on Luke 24:1-12)

Jesus had died on the cross. His body had been placed in a cave, and a large stone had been rolled in front of the tomb. His friends were frightened and sad. They did not know what to do. Jesus was dead.

Very early on Sunday morning, just as the sun was coming up, some of the women went to the garden tomb together. They carried the spices they had prepared to place on Jesus' body. As they got closer to the garden, they wondered how they would get into the tomb.

"Who will roll away the stone for us?" they asked each other. "It is so heavy."

When they got there, they saw that the stone had already been moved away, and the entrance to the cave was open. Slowly, they peeked inside the tomb, but Jesus' body was not there.

"Where is Jesus?" they whispered to each other. "What does this mean?"

Suddenly, two men were standing beside them. The men wore dazzling clothes that shone brightly in the darkness of the cave. The women were terribly afraid and fell to the floor in terror.

"Why do you look for Jesus among the dead?" one of the men asked. "Jesus is not here. He has been raised from the dead!"

The women were so surprised! They didn't know what to do. They looked at the empty tomb and looked at each other. Then they remembered that Jesus had said he would be killed on a cross and rise on the third day.

The three women ran all the way home to tell Jesus' friends. The disciples didn't believe the women. How could it be true?

Peter ran to the tomb. When he looked inside, he only saw a linen cloth. There was no body.

"The tomb is empty! Jesus' body is gone!" he exclaimed.

Peter was amazed. He returned home wondering what had happened.



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(based on Luke 24:1-12)

Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Jesus' friends had another up-and-down week. Jesus was dead and buried, but now the tomb was empty! Pretend you were at the tomb. Use your face and body to react as the women, the messengers at the tomb, and Peter did. Wonder together about God's amazing power and love. Jesus was dead and buried, but the tomb is empty. It is a miracle, called resurrection, meaning Jesus is alive!
- Say an Easter liturgy about the resurrection, beginning softly and repeating louder and louder:

One person: Christ* is risen!

All persons: Christ is risen indeed!

*Christ is the name traditionally used in Easter liturgy to distinguish the risen Christ from the earthly Jesus. Use the name Jesus to simplify the activity for young children. Use the name Christ, with an explanation, for older children.



Responding to God's Grace

- Jesus' time in Jerusalem started with a parade and shouts of hosanna. It is time for a bigger parade! Look around for things to use for making noise—pots and pans, lids, wooden or metal spoons, plastic or cardboard containers, whistles, or party horns. Pick a noisemaker and join the parade. March around and shout another word of praise: "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"
- Research the words and tune online to learn and sing the refrain of the hymn "Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks" by Donald Fishel.
- If your family celebrates Easter with an egg hunt, make some special eggs for sharing the good news of Jesus' resurrection with your neighbors. Invite your children to help write "Jesus is risen!" on slips of paper. Place the strips in empty plastic eggs. Pick a day this week to walk around your neighborhood and deliver the plastic eggs. If invited to spend more time with a person, share more of the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- The celebration is just beginning. The season of Easter, called Eastertide, is fifty days long. Plan one way to celebrate Jesus' life, death, and resurrection each day for fifty days. Your celebrations can be as simple as saying alleluia every day or as messy as making paper flowers or symbols of new life. Celebrate with joy!
- Pray this prayer this week:

Praise God! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Thank you, God, for the gift of new life and the promise that nothing, not even death, is stronger than your love. Amen.