

Growing in God's Love

A Story Bible Curriculum

April Faith@Home Easter Surprises



Faith@Home Letter to Families

Dear Family,

Alleluia! Jesus is Risen! He is risen indeed! We are excited to share with you 5 stories of Jesus' resurrection appearances for you and your family to explore together.

There are three movements to do with each story called The Story, Around the Table, and Family Activity. You can do these at your pace, and you don't have to do everything all in the same day or in one sitting. Read the supply instruction sheet to see what to do for the **Surprises** unit.

- ⇒ **The Story** – This is the easy part! Read or listen to one of the stories from *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* together as a family. **You may listen to the story from "Growing in God's Love" A Story Bible using the audio file provided in the Children's Thursday e-newsletter. Or if you have older children, invite them to read it from a Bible or Children's Bible.**
- ⇒ **Around the Table** – This section contains wondering questions that everyone can discuss about the story. Wondering questions have no right or wrong answers. They are meant to evoke imagination and further discussion as everyone thinks about the story and wrestles with their place in it. A great time to ask these questions is during a family meal or at another time when your family can gather together.
- ⇒ **Family Activity** – There are several suggestions for activities you can do together as a family. Choose one that works best for your family. Some activities require supplies found in this supply bag or things you may have at home. If you are missing something, feel free to substitute or adapt the activity. There are video suggestions that may be included in a session. You can or watch these read-aloud versions online or watch the videos as your family chooses. Internet links are provided in the Thursday e-letter and on the website.

We hope this helps your family learn about the stories of the Bible and guides you through talking about faith in your home. If you have any questions, please contact trose@fpcnashville.org

Blessings,

Deb O'Brien and Tina Rose and the Children's Ministry Team

First Presbyterian Church/Nashville.

Faith@Home Guide

These are the stories we will look at during this unit.



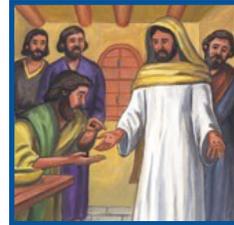
Woman at the Tomb
Luke 24:1-12



Memory & Surprise
Luke 24:13-35



Mary Finds Her Friend
John 20:11-18



Thomas Wants to See
John 20:19-31



Jesus Gives Peter a Job
John 21:15-19

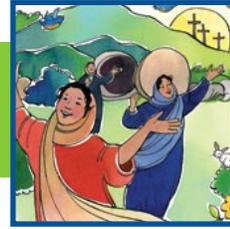
In this supply bag you will find:

- ⇒ Letter to families
- ⇒ Supplies provided in the at-home kit:
 - Cinnamon stick, Muslin bag ribbon to tie bag.(Women at the Tomb)
 - Jingle bells and ribbon (Women at the Tomb)
 - River rock (women at the Tomb)
 - Resource pages 1-4 (Memory and Surprise)
 - Resource page 1 (Mary finds her Friend)
 - Card stock (Women at the Tomb, Jesus Gives Peter a Job)
 - Resource Pages 1 and 2 (Jesus Gives Peter a Job)
 - Heart shaped cards (Jesus Gives Peter a Job)
- ⇒ Supplies not included in the supply bag:
 - Crayons, markers, or colored pencils (Women at the Tomb, Thomas Wants to See, Jesus Gives Peter a Job)
 - Large pieces of paper or tape to put smaller pieces together to create a mural size page. (Jesus Gives Peter a Job)
 - Herbs for a sachet (small amounts of various herbs like cloves, allspice, ginger, lavender, mint, rosemary, and sage. If you happen to have an herb garden use the fresh herbs; if not herbs from the spice aisle will work. (Women at the Tomb)
 - two coins, construction or colored paper strips (Memory and Surprise)
 - copy paper (Mary finds a friend)
 - gallon ziplock bag, items to put in the bags like bottle water, fruit cup, granola bar or jerky, etc. (Jesus gives Peter a Job)

Web based resources including links suggested in this guide and the link to the audio file of the story (from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible*) can be found in the Thursday e-letter and on our website.

Password is FAITH2020

Women at the Tomb



Women at the Tomb (Luke 24:1–12)

The Story: Read this story from your Bible or listen to the story from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible* using the audio file link four in the Thursday e-letter or on the website. (Password is Faith 2020)

Around the Table: Engage in conversation using the following questions:

I wonder where in the story you were surprised?

I wonder Why the storyteller started by talking about plants? I wonder what a plant life cycle has to do with Jesus?

I wonder what happens to plants and animals when they die?

I wonder why the disciples didn't trust the women who went to the tomb?

Family Activities

Reflecting on the story:

Supplies from supply bag: River rock

Invite family members to take a rock from the supply bag center and hold on to it as you share the story. Invite family members to hold their rock and be quiet for a few moments as they reflect on the story. Encourage them to sit in a comfortable position and focus on how their hands feel holding the rock. Suggest that they imagine they were with the women on that early Sunday morning and picked up their rock as they stood outside the empty tomb. Using their senses, what do they see, hear, smell, and feel? After a few minutes, say "Amen" and invite everyone to share any thoughts they had.

Sounds of Easter:

Supplies from Supply bag: length of ribbon and three jingle bells.

Help your child string their bells onto the ribbon provided and tie the ends to make a sort of bell rattle. Invite family members to ring the bells and say Alleluia! Christ is Risen! If you watch a live stream of worship your child could ring the bells during the hymns.

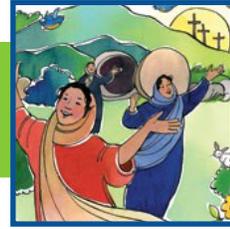
Good News Notes

Supplies from supply bag: cardstock

Supplies needed from home: crayons, markers, stickers you may have.

We can all use a little good news now and then! Make a list of people who probably haven't heard good news in a while. Write notes or make cards to remind them of the good news of Jesus' love for them—along with yours! I wonder to whom you will send or give your notes?

Women at the Tomb



Family Activities:

Spices to Remember

Supplies from supply Bag: Muslin square, piece of ribbon to tie the bag, and cinnamon stick

Supplies needed from home: fabric markers (you received one with the February touchpoint), small amounts of various herbs like cloves, allspice, ginger, lavender, mint, rosemary, and sage. If you happen to have an herb garden use the fresh herbs; if not herbs from the spice aisle will work.

Make a sachet of sweet-smelling spices and/or herbs to remember the women who first learned that Jesus was alive and told the good news to others. Take the muslin square, soft ribbon and cinnamon stick from your supply bag. With a fabric markers invite family members to write words or draw pictures on one side of the fabric that remind them of the good news of Jesus.

After they are done writing or drawing, have them turn over the fabric so that the colored side is on the table.

Provide a variety of spices and/or herbs such as cloves, cinnamon stick pieces, allspice, ginger, lavender, mint, rosemary, and sage. Invite family members to choose a selection of spices and herbs that make a scent they enjoy and place them in the center of their fabric. Encourage them to keep the ingredients in the center so that they have plenty of room to gather the fabric.

Invite family members to gather the edges of their fabric together, keeping the ingredients in the center.

Ask a partner to tie the provided ribbon around the gathered fabric, making a knot and then a bow.

Memory and Surprise



Memory and Surprise: Luke 24:13–25

The Story: Read this story from your Bible or listen to the story from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible* using the audio file link four in the Thursday e-letter or on the website. (Password is Faith 2020)

Around the Table: Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- At the beginning of the story how do you think Cleopas and his friend are feeling?
- I wonder why Cleopas and his friend didn't recognize Jesus right away?
- I wonder what changed so that the disciples could recognize Jesus?
- I wonder what it was about the table that made the disciples recognize Jesus?
- I wonder why the disciples knew it was Jesus when he gave them the bread?
- I wonder why Cleopas and his friend go back to Jerusalem at the end of this story?

Family Activities:

Encountering God

Supplies from supply bag: none

Supplies needed from home: tablet or phone

Watch the YouTube video "Marble Storytime: Maybe God Is Like That Too" (link is on the website and in Thursday e-letter). After the story, engage family members in conversation using the following questions:

- How was the main character surprised by God?
- Have you ever been surprised by God in similar ways?
- Where else do you encounter God?
- What are ways that you might say, "Maybe God is like that too!"?

Remembering Jesus

Supplies from supply bag: 4 game pages

Supplies needed from home: two coins, construction paper strips or colored paper

Tell family members that they are going to play a game to remember some of the highlights of Jesus' life and ministry. Form teams if possible. Give each team a set of game spaces made from Resource Pages 1–4 and sheets of colored paper. Have each group lay out a path of game spaces in consecutive order. They can place them on the floor in a straight line or winding around the space, as they wish. Provide each team with two coins.

Explain the game play as follows:

- The person with the birthday closest to December 25, the day we celebrate Jesus' birth, will go first. Family members will take turns then with whomever's birthday comes next, and so on.
- To take a turn, someone flips the two coins and moves as follows:
 - one head and one tail: move ahead one space
 - two heads: move ahead two spaces
 - two tails: stay where you are
- When a family member moves to a space, they follow the instructions on that space. If they have to remain on a space, they do not have to repeat the instructions. If they have to go to a new space, they follow the instructions on that space as well. If they land on a space again, they follow the instructions again.
- Play until all have completed the game and "run to tell the others!"

Memory and Surprise



Family Activities:

Closing Prayer

Close with the following prayer, inviting family members to repeat after you:

God of surprises, /
reveal your presence to us today. /
Even when we do not recognize you, /
help us know /
that we must treat everyone with love. /
Show us the way to live /
and walk with us every day. /
Amen. /

Mary Finds Her Friend



Mary Finds Her Friend John 20:11-18

The Story: Read this story from your Bible or listen to the story from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible* using the audio file link four in the Thursday e-letter or on the website. (Password is Faith 2020)

Around the Table: Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- *I wonder why this story was set in a garden?*
- *I wonder how Mary felt when Jesus said her name?*
- *I wonder what people said when Mary shared the good news that Jesus was risen?*
- *I wonder what good news you hear in this story?*

Family Activities:

Names

Supplies needed from home: copy paper and crayons or markers

Remind family members that our names are important. When Jesus called her by name, Mary recognized him as her teacher. Even though Mary was a common name, when Jesus said it, it felt unique. Jesus knows and loves each of us uniquely too.

Invite each family member to share how they got their name. You can share with your children the process you used to name them.

Hand out white paper and crayons and/or markers. Invite family members to write their name down the left-hand side of the paper, one letter at a time, and form an acrostic based on their name. Encourage them to think of descriptions of themselves beginning with the letters. Explain that they can use one word or a phrase.

Family members with short names can use their first *and* last names, if they wish. Encourage them to decorate their papers. Share your name acrostics with each other. Celebrate each family member.

Optical Illusions

Supplies from supply bag: none

Supplies from home: tablet, computer or phone

Mary did not recognize Jesus right away. Sometimes the simplest things can be hard to see. Or maybe they are there the whole time, but it is hard to distinguish them from other images!

Visit an optical illusion website to learn about optical illusions and to try some out. A link will be on the website or in the Thursday e-letter or just Goggle optical illusion for kids.

Wonder together:

- I wonder what you think was preventing Mary from seeing Jesus?
- I wonder what enabled her to see Jesus even though her mind was convinced he was dead?
- I wonder when was a time your perspective shifted so that you could see a situation another way?

Mary Finds Her Friend



Family Activities:

Good News

Supplies from supply bag: Resource 1

Supplies needed from home: Pen or pencil

Hand out copies of Resource Page 1 and invite family members to solve the puzzle.

Answer: Christ is risen!

For older children:

Hymn Research and Singing

Supplies needed: computer or tablet

Research the hymn “In the Garden,” written by C. Austin Miles, using links provided in e-letter or on website.

Watch the YouTube video “In the Garden—Reflect Worship—Lyrics” (link in Thursday e-letter or on website.)

Discuss the questions and then sing the hymn together.

- Have you sung this hymn before? Are you familiar with it?
- Do you typically associate this hymn with Mary’s encounter with Jesus at the tomb?
 - Do you think of it as an Easter hymn?
- What do you think “he [Jesus] tells me I am His own” means? How does this line relate to Mary’s story?
- Which other lyrics do you find meaningful in light of the hymn’s story and today’s Scripture passage?

Thomas Wants to See



Thomas Wants to See John 20:19-31

The Story: Read this story from your Bible or listen to the story from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible* using the audio file link four in the Thursday e-letter or on the website. (Password is Faith 2020)

Around the Table: Engage in conversation using the following questions:

- I wonder how Jesus entered the room when the door was locked?
- I wonder why the disciples were happy?
- I wonder how Thomas feel when he heard that Jesus was alive?
- I wonder why Thomas had questions?
- I wonder how you think Thomas changed in this story?
- I wonder if there was a time when you needed proof of something to believe it?
- I wonder what it means to you to believe in something you can't see?

Family Activities:

Sensory Journal

Supplies needed from home: paper and pencils or pens.

Invite family members to keep a journal for the week, either individually or as a group or family, about their five senses. Encourage them to record something each day that they saw, tasted, heard, smelled, and touched that reminded them of God's love. At the end of the week, compare journals with others and see how everyone experiences God's love in a different way.

Seeing Jesus

Supplies needed from home: internet connected device

Watch the YouTube video "Michael W. Smith— Open the Eyes of My Heart" (link on website or in Thursday e-letter)
Invite Family Members to sing along as they become familiar with the words and tune.

Wonder together:

- What do you think is meant by "the eyes of my heart"?
- Do you want to see Jesus? Why or why not?
- Would it be easier to believe in Jesus if you met him in person? Why or why not?

Play the song again and sing along.

Thomas Wants to See



Family Activities:

Doubting to Believing

Supplies needed from home: internet connected device

Watch the YouTube video “The Story of Doubting Thomas” (link on the website or in Thursday e-letter)

Pause the video at 0:43 and ask family members to answer the narrator’s question, “Which miracle would you have loved to see?”

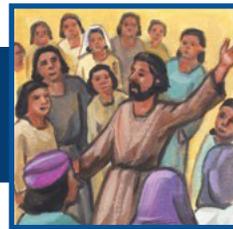
Continue the video and pause again at 0:53 to answer the narrator’s questions about nicknames.

Continue the video and pause again at 2:35. Ask family members what questions they may have for Jesus.

Finish the video. At the end the narrator asks, “What about you? Do you believe in Jesus?”

Wonder together if we need questions answered to believe or if we can believe without having every question answered.

Jesus Gives Peter a Job



Jesus Gives Peter a Job John 21:15–19

The Story: Read this story from your Bible or listen to the story from *Growing in God's Love: a Story Bible* using the audio file link four in the Thursday e-letter or on the website. (Password is Faith 2020)

Around the Table: Engage in conversation using the following questions:

What did Jesus tell Peter to do?

I wonder why Jesus singles out Simon Peter and asks him the questions?

I wonder what you think it means for Peter to feed Jesus' sheep?

How do you think Jesus wanted Peter to follow him?

Family Activities:

Top Ten Ways to Serve

Supplies from Supply Bag: Resource page 2

Brainstorm together practical, doable ways your family can follow Jesus by serving others. Write the ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Give each family member a copy of Resource Page 2 and encourage them to fill it out with various ways they choose to follow Jesus. Encourage them to put this paper on their refrigerator, in the bedroom, or someplace they will see it each day.

Love Notes

Supplies from supply bag: Heart shaped cards

Supplies from home: art supplies and crayons or markers

Just like it was important for Peter to tell Jesus that he loves him, it's important for us to remind people that we love them—and that Jesus loves them too! Use art supplies to make cards for people whom you love.

Older children:

Metaphor Math

Supplies from supply bag: Resource page 1

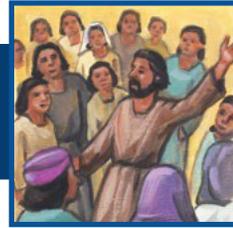
Share with family members that in this story, Jesus is using a “metaphor,” which is a way of comparing one thing to another thing without using the words *like* or *as*, even though the two things aren't usually related to each other. Explain that a metaphor is different from a simile, another figure of speech, which uses the words *like* or *as* to compare things.

Wonder together:

- What are some examples of similes? (*For example: She is as brave as a lion. He swims like a fish.*)
- What are some examples of metaphors? (*For example: She was a lion when the dog barked at her. He is a fish each Saturday at the pool.*)
- What is the metaphor in this story about Peter and Jesus? (*Jesus asks Peter to feed and take care of his sheep.*)
- If Jesus isn't literally telling Peter to feed his sheep, what does he mean?

Hand out copies of Resource Page 1 and encourage family members to solve the puzzle to decipher Jesus' meaning. (Answer: When Jesus said, “Feed my sheep,” he meant, “Help my people.”)

Jesus Gives Peter a Job



Family Activities:

Feeding Jesus' Sheep

Supplies needed from home: gallon ziplock bag, items to put in the bags.

Make snack packs to keep in cars or backpacks to hand out to people who are hungry or food insecure. Fill bags with protein bars, dried fruits, nuts, and other nutritious snacks, along with small bottles of water. You may wish to include small gift cards for local fast food restaurants or convenience stores. Flashlights and small trash bags are also welcome items.