

big faith

SESSION 8

Unit 2: Seeds of Faith

Faith Focus: Jesus helps us grow in our faith.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

GROW IN FAITH

Grow Through Love—John 20:1-18

Although the story of the Resurrection is very familiar, the story is always surprising and maybe even a little confusing. None of the Gospels actually describe the Resurrection itself, and even Mary Magdalene does not recognize Jesus in John's account. She encounters Jesus but mistakes him for the gardener. Only when Jesus speaks Mary's name does she finally realize.

Jesus' resurrection will always remain a part of the mystery of our faith. But our faith is a Resurrection faith—one that does not rely on evidence of how the Resurrection actually occurred. We know that Jesus is alive because of the witness from those who have gone before us and by our own experiences of Jesus' presence in our daily lives. Just like Mary knew the sound of Jesus' familiar voice, we too know the love of Jesus all around us. Easter is a time to grow in our faith as we celebrate God's great, never-ending love. Jesus is alive!

- Play outside.
- Celebrate love.
- Use wonder to explore the Resurrection.

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—Jesus Helps Us
Grow in Our Faith

Happy Easter Bouquet (Craft)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

FUN WITH FAITH

Egg Love Notes (Craft)

Egg Hunt Storytelling
(Game/Storytelling)

Run and Tell Relay (Game)

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

SUPPLIES

scissors

chenille stems

glue

markers

CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible
storybook

TV and DVD player or
streaming device

sticky notes

crayons

plastic eggs

colored pencils

paper

sets of matching stickers

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

Prepare Ahead: Set up your area with the supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13), Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19), and Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Spring Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the stone sticker on the Session 8 space.

SAY: In today's story, we will learn about the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

Faith Focus—Jesus Helps Us Grow in Our Faith

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19).

- Show children the Faith Focus Poster.

SAY: Our faith focus for today is "Jesus helps us grow in our faith." When we love others, we grow closer to God. Jesus showed love to everyone through his resurrection.

ASK: What are your favorite ways to show love?

- Give children time and space to share their ideas.

Happy Easter Bouquet

Supplies: Activity Sheets, scissors, chenille stems, glue, markers

Prepare Ahead: Tear out "Happy Easter Bouquet" (Session 8 Activity Sheet) for each child.

SAY: Today we will read about Jesus' tomb. When Mary went to the tomb, Jesus wasn't there. Jesus rose from the dead. To celebrate, let's make our own Happy Easter Bouquet to share with someone we love.

- Give each child a copy of the activity sheet.
- Have the children cut out the flower pieces and assemble the flowers around the centers. Let them write "Happy Easter" at the centers of the flowers.
- Let the children twist chenille stems together to use as the stems of the flowers.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: *CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook*

- Invite the children to join you in a circle.
- Read the Easter story (John 20:1-18) from a CEB kids' Bible or your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

ASK: How do you think Mary felt when she found the tomb was empty?

Big Faith Video

Supplies: *Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device*

- Watch the Session 8 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Give children time to respond to the questions on the screen. Discuss the questions as partner pairs, as small groups, or all together.

ASK: What was your favorite part of the video?

Faith Response

Supplies: *All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, crayons*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) if you haven't already.*

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

SAY: Jesus loved all people. When we show love to others, we are spreading God's love.

ASK: What makes you feel loved?

SAY: The Easter story tells us that God's love is greater than anything we can imagine. Jesus overcame death to show us God's love for all people.

- Lay the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Give each child a sticky note and crayons.

ASK: What do you see on our poster?

- Invite each child to write on the note one word that comes to mind when she or he thinks about Easter. Let the children place their notes on the poster.

FUN WITH FAITH

Egg Love Notes

Supplies: plastic eggs, colored pencils, paper, scissors

SAY: When we celebrate Easter and Jesus' resurrection, we celebrate a story of love. Let's spend some time spreading love to others.

- Give each child a few plastic eggs.
- Have the children write kind messages or draw pictures of kindness.
- Have the children cut the messages into strips or fold them so that each message fits into an egg.
- Have the children take the eggs home to hide for others to find.

Egg Hunt Storytelling

Supplies: CEB Bibles, scissors, plastic eggs, sets of matching stickers

Prepare Ahead: Make copies of "Egg Hunt Storytelling" (Leader Guide—p. 58).

ASK: Do you remember the order of today's story? What happens first? What happens next?

- Give each child a copy of "Egg Hunt Storytelling" and have the children work together to complete the activity by following the instructions.
- Give the children time to hide their eggs and look for matching sets. To save time you might want to limit how many sets are hidden and then let children work in teams to sort out the verses.

Run and Tell Relay

Supplies: CEB Bibles, two sets of the “Egg Hunt Storytelling” activity eggs with the story strips inside

SAY: Mary ran to tell the others what she had learned. We are going to run to tell the good news of Easter in a relay.

- Have the children divide into two teams.
- Have half of each team stand on one side of the room and half of the team on the opposite side.
- Have the teams relay back and forth. In order to tag in the next racer, each runner must shake hands and say, “Jesus is alive!” before that teammate can run to the next person.
- For an added challenge, mix up the groups and play again, this time using the plastic eggs with the strips from the “Egg Hunt Storytelling” activity. Each team will need its own batch of eggs. Set the two full batches in the center of the room. Each racer must stop at his or her team’s eggs, find the next correct excerpt from the Bible story, and read it aloud before he or she can tag in the next racer.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in Jesus

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Spring Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21). Photocopy the Unit 2 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 93–94) as needed.

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

SAY: We grow in our faith when we share love with others.

- Have the children gather in a circle.
- Have each child share one person he or she wants to show love to this week.
- Invite the children to pray with you.

PRAY: Lord, we love you. We are grateful for your love. Teach us to grow in our faith as we share love with others. Amen.

- Send the Family Faith Letter home with each child who hasn’t received it yet.
- Send home any activities or items made during today’s session.

REPRODUCIBLE

SESSION 8

Egg Hunt Storytelling

Cut out the following verses. Put each verse in its own plastic egg. Use eggs that are all the same color or put a matching sticker on each of your eggs so you know they are from the same story batch. Hide the eggs. Have a friend look for your eggs and then put the story back in the right order. If anyone needs help, use your Bible and look at John 20:1-18.

Mary Magdalene left and announced to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord." Then she told them what he said to her.

Peter and the other disciple left to go to the tomb.

Mary stood outside near the tomb, crying. As she cried, she bent down to look into the tomb.

Jesus said to her, "Mary."

Early in the morning of the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

She ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they've put him."

She replied, "They have taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they've put him."