

The community of believers was one in heart and mind. (Acts 4:32a)

Resurrection – Matthew 28:1-10

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: SHARE

In today's story, women are the first to find the empty tomb. They do not come to anoint Jesus' body, like in Mark; they come to see the tomb. Some argue this is because they heard Jesus' teachings about his resurrection and wanted to see if God's promise had been fulfilled. An angel appears. The angel insists that the women participate as faithful followers of Jesus and proclaim the resurrection message. The women are called to go out and share the good news.

But what is the resurrection message, and how do we share this message with our children? To understand the miracle of resurrection, we can start with wonder and amazement. The women came to the tomb and were surprised, confused, and amazed. They wanted to know all that had happened and where their Lord might be. Resurrection can be like this for us too. We might not always understand, but we can be amazed at all that God can do.

There is also the idea of new beginnings. Resurrection can remind us that with each new day there is opportunity to see the goodness and to share that goodness with others. God continues to give us new life, and this is modeled in the story of Jesus' resurrection. Resurrection is a hard topic for children and even for adults. However, if we can embrace our wonder about what might have happened, how Jesus' followers might have felt, and what this means for our faith, we can begin to explore this story in new and amazing ways. Then we can share it with others.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Easter is about celebration, but before the joy there is darkness. We all feel sadness and pain sometimes. Easter reminds us that even Jesus suffered, but the story wasn't over. Find a plastic egg before Easter. Write on a piece of paper something that might be painful or difficult, and then place it inside the egg. During the week, hold the egg while you pray. Remember today's Bible story as you pray. Remember that Jesus goes before you. The resurrection story teaches us that the world brings suffering, but Jesus brings hope. Each day we get a chance to celebrate and to be resurrected. The pain will not last forever. There is joy coming in the morning.

Come Together

Welcome to Wonder

Supplies: *Class Pack—pp. 2 & 31, 10 & 23, 16 & 17; Leader Guide—pp. 4, 85; Activity Sheets (Session 5); Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD; CD player; stickers or markers; items for Wonder Table (small table, white cloth, and items such as a candle, crosses, small stones or rocks, Easter lilies); Wonder Box; empty plastic egg*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Attendance Chart (Class Pack—pp. 16 & 17). Set up a Wonder Table (see Leader—p. 4). Place the empty plastic egg inside the Wonder Box. Set the Wonder Box on the Wonder Table. Display the “Easter Poster” (Class Pack—pp. 2 & 31).*

- Play “Celebrate Wonder” (CD) as the children arrive. Lyrics are on page 85 of the Leader Guide.
- Greet each child. Show the children where to mark the Attendance Chart using a sticker or a marker.
- Distribute this week’s Activity Sheet (Session 5). Help the children interact with the activities on each page.

Tip: *Display the Wonder Wall poster (Class Pack—pp. 10 & 23), or use the instructions on the back of the poster to create your own.*

Sing and Celebrate

Supplies: *Leader Guide—p. 87, Celebrate Wonder Annual Music CD or Celebrate Wonder DVD, CD player, DVD player, TV*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy “Song Sheet—Unit 2” for each child.*

- Gather the children around the Wonder Table, and hand out the Song Sheets.
- Play “Tell Somebody” (CD or DVD). Invite the children to sing and celebrate.

Wonder Time

Share a Story

Supplies: *CEB Bible, Class Pack—pp. 6 & 27, Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player, small pieces of paper or sticky notes, pens, pencils, crayons, markers*

Prepare Ahead: *Obtain the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat (pp. 6 & 27).*

- Lay the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat on the floor.

- Read from the Bible today's story in Matthew 28:1-10.
- Have the children write or draw good news and put it on the Wonder Story Mat.
- Watch the Session 5 video on the DVD.

Wonder with Me

Supplies: *Class Pack—insert, pp. 12 & 21; Wonder Box (containing an empty egg)*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Unit 2 Faith Word poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 21), and locate the Wonder Cube (Class Pack—insert).*

- Let a child roll the Wonder Cube. Direct the children to answer the question(s) about the Bible story. You can interact with the Wonder Cube as time allows.
- Then pick up the Wonder Box and place it in front of the children.

SAY: Today's faith word is *Share*: to offer God's blessings to others.

- Wonder together:
 - What kinds of things do you share?
 - Is it hard to share? Why or why not?
 - What was shared in today's Bible story?
- Open the Wonder Box and reveal the empty egg.

WONDER: Why do you think there is an empty egg in the Wonder Box?

SAY: When the women went to the tomb, Jesus was not there. Our egg represents Jesus' resurrection. An egg also represents new life and new beginnings. This means that, even though Jesus is gone physically, we can share Jesus' message of hope.

Experience Wonder

Stone Painting (Art)

Supplies: *baking sheets, shaving cream, acrylic paint, card stock cut into large circles (one for each child), toothpicks, jumbo craft sticks, smocks*

- Hand out the supplies, and have the children put on smocks.

SAY: In the Bible story, the stone was rolled away from Jesus' tomb and Jesus was gone. Jesus' disciples were sad at first, but then they remembered Jesus' message and wanted to share that message with others.

- Have the children cover a baking sheet in shaving cream. Then squeeze a few drops of paint onto the shaving cream.

- Direct the children to use a toothpick to swirl through the paint to mix it into the shaving cream.
- Place the card stock circle on the mixture, press down, and let it sit for two minutes.
- Gently remove the card stock circle, and use a jumbo craft stick to scrape off the excess mixture. Set the circle aside to dry.

SAY: Now you have a special stone to remember Jesus' resurrection.

3-D Butterfly (Craft)

Supplies: *Leader Guide—pp. 36, crayons, markers, scissors, string (optional)*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy "3-D Butterfly" (Leader Guide) for each child.*

SAY: Butterflies remind us of Jesus' resurrection and of new life.

WONDER: Who knows how the butterfly's life cycle works?

SAY: Butterflies go through a special life cycle and show us that life goes on and on, even when it seems impossible.

- Give each child a copy of "3-D Butterfly" to color and decorate.
- Show the children how to cut out the butterfly on the outside lines and then on the solid lines inside the wings. Fold the wings up on the dashed lines.
- If you choose, you might hang up the butterflies in your Sunday school space.

Go and Tell the Good News (Game)

Supplies: *strips of paper, pen, empty plastic eggs (one for each child), basket, music, music player*

Prepare Ahead: *Gather a plastic egg for each child in your group. Place a blank strip of paper in each egg, except for one. On the paper strip for the final egg, write the Bible verse: "The community of believers was one in heart and mind." Place the eggs in the basket.*

- Gather the children in a circle.

SAY: On Easter we are invited to share good news with everyone.

WONDER: What good news do you have to share?

- Give each child an egg. When you start the music, have the children pass the eggs around the circle. When you stop the music, invite the children to open their egg. The child who has the egg containing the Bible verse will stand up and say something that makes her or him happy. Play the game as long as time allows.

Peaceful Place

Supplies: suggested books: *"Hope Is an Open Heart"* by Lauren Thompson and *"Waiting for Wings"* by Lois Ehlert; quiet items: butterflies (stuffed toy or model), plastic eggs, stickers

- Locate the suggested books and quiet items, and place them in the Peaceful Place.
- Allow children who want or need a quieter activity to visit the Peaceful Place.

Tip: You may choose to include other quiet toys, books, or activities.

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice—Sharing the Good News Through Witness

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 89, *"Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book"* (optional)

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy *"Celebration Chart"* (Leader Guide) for children who have not received it yet.

- Gather the children in a circle near the Wonder Table.

SAY: Today we have talked a lot of about resurrection, new life, and new beginnings. Easter is a special day to learn about these things.

WONDER: What have you learned today?

SAY: Let's use our bodies to send out the good news of Easter. Do the motions I do.

- Bend down and wrap your arms around your legs.

SAY: I can begin somewhere,...

- Stand halfway up and place your hands on your knees.

SAY: Even if I am small.

- Stand all the way up and place your hands on your hips.

SAY: I can keep growing...

- Flap your arms like butterfly wings.

SAY: To share the good news!

- Send *"Celebration Chart"* home with children who did not receive it yet.
- Encourage the children and their families to use the *"Celebration Chart"* and to read together the quarterly *Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book* (if purchased).

**CELEBRATE
WONDER™** 3-D Butterfly

