



Church of Ireland Children's Ministry

LENT & EASTER NEWSLETTER 2020

Lent and Easter have a habit of creeping up on us very quickly. Sometimes it feels we have just had Epiphany and its suddenly Ash Wednesday! This Edition of our Newsletter has ideas for using during Lent and Easter. Please let us know how you get on using some of them.

All Age Talk from BRF:

Walking Through Holy Week

(<https://ideas.brf.org.uk/walking-through-holy-week>) Matthew 21 - 28, Mark 11 - 16, Luke 19:28 - 24:53, John 12 - 20

Today we are going to follow Jesus' footsteps through Holy Week - eight days of drama that Christians believe changed the world!

During this special week, excited feet soon become sore feet; tired feet become smelly feet; and sad feet do eventually become dancing feet. This is the most amazing week ever! Set them thinking about this special week with these open-ended questions:

- I wonder why this week is so special for Christians that they call it 'Holy Week'.
- I wonder why the Bible has so many stories about this one week.
- I wonder what it felt like to be there that week, following Jesus.
- I wonder what we will discover about Jesus and who he is, as we follow the footsteps of the week.

The following chant is designed to be used as you move through the story one day at a time. Learn the

special words to a clapping rhythm by calling out each line and inviting the congregation to copy what you've said. Use this as you link the days in the story that follows.

We're on a special journey

Of footsteps to the feast.

Jesus comes to rescue us:

The last, the lost, the least.

What follows is a simple action-based story for the whole of Holy Week. In between each of the days, use the chant above to move the story on. Here are the actions for each day:

- Palm Day: wave hands high with fingers splayed.
- Pigeon Day: link thumbs and flap the other fingers to represent the wings of a bird.
- Perfume Day: waft hands towards your nose as if catching a beautiful smell.
- Parable Day: put one finger in front of your lips to call for silence and careful listening (to a story).
- Passover Day: pretend to eat and drink with your hands.
- Painful Day: point with the index finger to each wrist, one at a time (this is sign language for Jesus). Alternatively, put hands in front

of face because you're not able to look at something terrible.

- Prayerful Day: put hands together in prayer.
- Promised Day: hold out hands wide in excitement, because a miracle has happened.

For each day, the congregation should demonstrate the action as you very briefly tell what happened:

- **Palm Day:** The week began with the crowds cheering and waving palm branches as Jesus came into Jerusalem. They were hoping he would be a new king but, to their surprise, he was riding on a donkey. He was going to be king, but not the sort of king they expected.
- **Pigeon Day:** Soon after this, Jesus visited the temple and was angry at how it had become a market place. People were even buying and selling pigeons. It should have been a place of prayer. He pushed over the tables and the pigeons flew everywhere.
- **Perfume Day:** In the evenings, Jesus spent time with his friends outside the city. At one meal, Mary came and poured perfume on to his feet to show how much



she loved him. It was expensive perfume and some people were angry at the waste, but Jesus said that she was preparing him for his death. The smell of the perfume filled the whole place.

- **Parable Day:** Each day at the temple, Jesus would tell stories. He was such a wonderful storyteller that people listened intently, but they didn't always understand what he was saying. These were special stories called 'parables', which were meant to help people discover truths for themselves and to help them draw closer to God.
- **Passover Day:** On the Thursday of that week, Jesus went with his friends to an upstairs room in the back streets of the city for a special meal. They were remembering how God had rescued them long ago. Jesus broke bread and poured out wine and told his friends to do this to remember him in future, because now he too was about to rescue them. They were very puzzled.
- **Painful Day:** That night, in a garden, Jesus was arrested and put on trial. People said terrible things about him and early the next day they took him outside the city to kill him. They nailed him to a cross and by the afternoon he was dead. No one expected this to happen. It was a sad day but, strangely, it is called Good Friday.
- **Prayerful Day:** Next day, Saturday, it seemed as if everything stood still. Jesus' friends were shocked and frightened. What would happen

now? All they could do was hope and pray.

- **Promised Day:** Early in the morning on Sunday, some women went to the tomb, which was a cave in a garden, but the stone was rolled away. They saw angels who told them that Jesus was alive, and later they saw him for themselves. Jesus was king after all a different sort of king who had beaten death and who could now be with everyone, everywhere, for ever!

A Lent Countdown:

When we are counting down to big events the question is often asked 'How many sleeps?' During Advent



we have Advent wreaths or calendars that help us count down - why not try something similar throughout

lent? Jesus without Language has some fantastic ideas for Lent and Easter lessons and includes a Lenten Walk which you can very easily make. Check out <https://www.jesus-without-language.net/len-walk/> and have a go. Each day as we journey towards Easter we could take time to pray or read a Bible story - whatever works!

The Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells have come up with an interesting way of journeying to Easter by focusing on the Cross.

They have issued a Cross Challenge which could easily be adapted for Church use. The challenge is to discover or make 40 crosses over the 40 days of Lent. They provide a PDF with all the information you need including craft ideas, recipes for baking crosses and the Easter Story in 40 sentences. The aim



is to keep the cross at the centre of Easter. Have a look at <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/2018/01/len-cross-challenge/> for more information.

Craft Idea:

The Gospel in an Egg Shell http://www.freefuneaster.com/wp-content/uploads/FNF_Easter-Gospel-in-an-Eggshell.pdf



Oriental Trading have a load of craft ideas compiled under the website freefun.easter.com.

My favourite is the Gospel in an Egg Shell. If like me you have stockpiled plastic eggs from making resurrection eggs, seed holders and various games, then this is a great way to use some up. Each egg contains a baby Jesus (made from a wooden bead and cloth), a wooden cross, some grass and a label. All of these components can be used to tell the gospel in an Egg Shell!





Multi-media Ideas:

I am always on the look for good videos that can be used as part of Family Services or during Sunday Schools.

Saddleback Kids have produced loads of videos covering everything from the Old Testament right through to the story of Paul and much more. You can have a look at their You Tube channel and can purchase videos on their church website. The Easter story is told over three stories but I found Jesus Scarifice to be the most useful. Follow this link to watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HL8R158Ujp4&t=25s>



Cbeebies have also produced a number of videos for Easter that are available on their website. They include 2 children preparing for Easter Sunday and an insight into making an Easter Cross during Church on Easter Sunday. There is also a fantastic Sand Art Video where the Easter story is told while an artist uses sand to create the images. Could some of your older children have a go at this?

On Cbeebies Radio Rev. Kate Botley

(who used to be on Gogglebox and now presents Songs of Praise) tells the story of the very first Easter with some input from friends who bring the story up to date.

For the videos click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/lets-celebrate-easter>

For the First Easter Story click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/radio/easter-story>

The **Bible Society** produce Easter resources each year, including a video and other supporting ideas which can very easily be accessed and used. Have a look at the Three Friends and the Miracle Man or The Seriously Surprising Story. All the material can be accessed here: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/easter/>

Song Suggestions:

- All Through History – Nick and Becky Drake
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQS2HHayr38>

A catchy song which looks at some Old Testament stories and saying thank you to God for being so faithful all through history. This song finishes with the Easter message and Jesus dying on the cross and saying thank you for that as well.



- One Way – Hillsong Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNe4HCO4SuQ>



This is an old favourite and there are lots of different actions you can do. It is fast paced and

kids love to join along with the clapping! A great reminder that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life...

- 1,2,3 Jesus is Alive – Yancy



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIf9jv4pVTM>

A perfect Easter song which explains how Jesus died but 1,2,3 days later he was alive again! You can have some fun with this one and split your group into two to sing the repetition part.

- Rend Co Kids have brought out a worship album called Sparkle, Pop, Rampage and it is filled with joyful worship songs that you can sing along to! There is one called The Story of the Cross which is slightly quieter and more reflective – perfect for lent and Easter and tells why Jesus died on the cross. This can be bought or downloaded from amazon or other music outlets, as well as being available on Spotify and YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKji7LUuYWhgFFezqTCNbRg>





Craft Idea:



Easter Wreath
<http://www.weelittlemiracles.com/2012/04/make-easter-story-wreath-free.html>

Wreaths are normally associated with Christmas but this is a beautiful example of how they can be used to look at the Easter Story and beyond. You need to download 3 word documents to give you the images and Bible verses. These can then be coloured in and stuck to the rim of a paper plate to make your wreath.

Smartie Prayer Idea:

<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2012/02/easter-smarties-prayer.html>



Interactive prayers are always a big hit – especially when food is involved! Flame Creative use smarties to pray during Easter. Each different coloured smartie reminds us of a different part of the Easter story. You could make individual bags up with the various colours or give a small multipack with a printed prayer sheet attached so it can be done at home.

- Pink for the people who came and praised
- Green for the palm leaves that they raised;
- Purple for the robe that Jesus wore,
- Brown for the cross that Jesus bore;
- Red for the blood that Jesus shed
- Blue for the tears when he was dead;
- Orange for the stone that was rolled away,
- Yellow for joy - He's alive today!

#LiveLent for God's Creation:

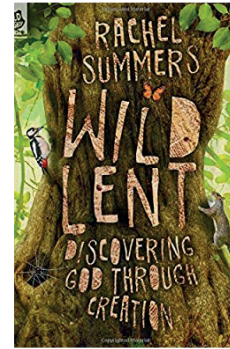
#LiveLent Care for God's Creation is the Church of England's Lent resources for 2020. These resources have been inspired and informed by



the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2020 Lent book, Saying Yes to Life by Ruth Valerio. You can get a booklet for adults which is supported by a

free app, as well as a book for families which has 40 challenges to carry out during Lent, and one for Easter Sunday. Each week of Lent there is a theme which the tasks revolve around. For more information and a free sample download have a look at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/livelent>

Wild Lent:



Wild Lent
Discovering God Through Creation by Rachel Summers.

Rachel has put together various activities that families can do over Lent,

spending time together and with God exploring nature. The book is divided into 7 sections including Things to do in the rain, short and easy things to make and do, and even shorter things to make and do! The book is not meant as an exhaustive list to work your way through but a way to spark ideas and discussion. Each activity has two reflections based on a journeying theme – putting down, picking up, setting off, into the wilderness, and finding home. You can also download a Wild Lent Wall Planner. Why not take some time to journey towards Easter using a Wild Lent approach?

 **Did you know we are also on Facebook?**

Our page is updated regularly with tips, ideas and resources. Why not have a look at our page next time you are scrolling through? Our page can be found at;

<https://www.facebook.com/churchofirelandchildrensministry/>