

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus is alive!	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles	SPARK RESOURCES: None
EMPTY EGGS: Kids will decorate empty eggs as a reminder of the empty tomb and Jesus' resurrection.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Eggs, straight pin, egg dye (may need vinegar), bowls, spoons, paper towels, white glue, small paintbrushes, glitter, plate or pie tin, zipper bags (sandwich sized)
Upper Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus died and rose from the dead for me.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: None
STORY EGGS: Kids will make a storytelling kit to tell the story of Holy Week and Easter.	SUPPLIES: Pencils	SUPPLIES: Eggs (plastic), markers (permanent), egg cartons or gallon zipper bags, scissors, leaves (small silk or green foam sheet), small silk flowers, dimes, felt (red, black, and white), twine, brown sheet of foam, yellow sheet of foam, sponge, copies of Holy Week Bible References (page 29)
All Kids		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: We have Good News to share at Easter!	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: None
GOOD NEWS BANNERS: Kids will work together to create a banner that expresses the Good News of Easter.	SUPPLIES: Front page of several newspapers, pencils	SUPPLIES: Felt, dowel, fabric scissors, letter stencils, scrap paper, pencils, tacky glue, items to decorate (sequins, jewels, bric-a-brac, etc.; optional)



Looking for additional Spark content to further engage kids? Visit www.wearesparkhouse.org to learn more about these options for purchase.

- The Director CD-Rom contains Activity Pages, Coloring Pages, Family Pages, Large Group Openings, and two additional in-class activities for each lesson.
- A Sparkhouse Digital annual subscription gives you access to all content contained in the Director CD-Rom and the Spark Leader Guides, plus administrative tools and other extras.

Workshop Focus: Jesus is alive!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Holy Week and Easter Storytelling

We are going to hear a Bible story about the happiest day ever! First, I would like you to turn to a partner and tell them about your happiest day ever. Give pairs about one minute to share. **Let's hear about some of those happy days. Who would like to tell me what your happiest day was?** Get responses from as many kids as would like to share. **Those all sound like great days!**

Our Bible story starts with something sad. Jesus had died. When people die, they do not breathe anymore and their hearts do not beat, do they? We don't get to talk to them anymore nor do we get to see them anymore. That was one of the saddest days ever. Jesus' friends missed him a lot and they were very sad about the way that Jesus died. Do you remember how Jesus died? (*He was hung on a cross.*) **When someone is hung on a cross we say they were "crucified." Being crucified was a terrible way to die. Jesus friends were feeling very sad at the beginning of this story.**

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
None

But, wait! Listen to what happened next. I'm going to read The Empty Tomb on page 482 of the Spark Story Bible.

Remember what I said about people who die?? How we can't see them anymore and we can't talk to them anymore?! What happened after Jesus died? (*They could see him and hear him.*) **Jesus didn't stay dead, did he?** (*no*) **God brought Jesus back to life! How did Jesus' friends feel at the end of this story?** (*happy, excited, etc.*) **Why were they so happy?** (*Jesus wasn't in the tomb anymore; Jesus was alive; they saw Jesus.*) **It was the happiest day ever because the tomb—that's the place where they put Jesus' body; it's like a grave—was empty and Jesus was alive. We celebrate that happy day every year and we call it Easter.**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Empty Eggs

Set Up: Prepare the eggs a couple of days before class. You will blow the white and the yolk out of the egg, leaving an empty shell that becomes stronger with time. Using the straight pin, poke a hole in one end of the egg. Use the pin to make the hole about 1/8 inch (1/3 cm) wide. Do the same thing on the opposite end. Gently hold the egg over a bowl and blow through one end of the egg so that the white and yolk come out the other end and into the bowl. If you are blowing hard and nothing comes out, just make the hole a bit larger. Clean off the outside of the egg and return it to the egg carton.

Prepare the egg dye just prior to class.

Activity Instructions

I'll bet that some of you have an egg hunt at Easter time. What kind of eggs do you try to find? (*eggs with candy in them, chocolate eggs, hard-boiled eggs, etc.*) **Do any of you hope to find empty eggs at Easter? There aren't many things that are better when they are empty than when they are full. The tomb was better when it was empty because it meant that Jesus was not dead anymore. We are going to make Easter eggs today, but these are very special Easter eggs—they are empty!** Show a blown-out egg. **These eggs have nothing in them, just like the empty tomb. We will decorate these eggs and when you take them home you can keep them as a reminder that the empty tomb means that Jesus is alive!**

1. Dye the eggs in the prepared egg dye. Because the egg is empty, it has to be held down in the liquid with a spoon or continuously spun on the top of the liquid to achieve darker colors.
2. Dry the egg with a paper towel.
3. Use a paintbrush to apply white glue to the egg where glitter will be added. Paint a shape, stripes, spots, or whatever design you like on the egg.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Eggs, at least 1 per child
Straight pin
Egg dye (may need vinegar)
Bowls
Spoons
Paper towels
White glue
Small paintbrushes
Glitter
Plate or pie tin
Zipper bags, sandwich-sized

4. Hold the egg over the plate or pie tin and sprinkle with glitter.
5. Transport the egg home, put it in a sandwich zipper bag, inflate the bag with air to act as a cushion, and seal.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it and come together for Wrap Up.

Name two things that are better when they are empty than when they are full.

(tomb, egg) Why was an empty tomb a good thing? (It meant Jesus was not there; he was alive.) Why is an empty egg a good thing? (reminds us of the empty tomb and that Jesus is alive)

Jesus' friends had the happiest day of their lives when they found the empty tomb and saw that Jesus was alive. We can celebrate that Good News at Easter and every day when we look at our eggs.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

When you put your hand in the air, have kids put their hands to their mouths and loudly say, "Jesus is alive!"

Dear God,

We are celebrating today! (raise hand)

When the women found the empty tomb, they said... (raise hand)

The angel told them... (raise hand)

The women ran to tell their friends that... (raise hand)

Help us to share the Easter joy with our friends as we say... (raise hand)

Amen.

Workshop Focus: Jesus died and rose from the dead for me.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Holy Week and Easter Storytelling

I love a good story. What's a good book or story you've heard recently? Let each kid respond. **Those all sound like great stories.**

One of my favorite true stories comes from the Bible. It's a story that most of you probably know, too. Open your Spark Bible to Matthew, Chapters 26, 27, and 28 (pages 1092-1098) and see if you can figure out which story I am talking about. Assist kids who need help finding the correct place in their Bible. **Look at some of the titles in these chapters. What do they say? There are many little stories within a bigger story. Have you figured out the big story yet? It's the story of Holy Week and Easter.**

This is the story of Jesus. It tells us that he was crucified and died and that God raised him after three days. Jesus is alive!

Turn to Chapter 28 of Matthew. This is the best part of the story, when the women go to the tomb and find that Jesus is not there. We call this part of the story Easter, and on Easter we celebrate that Jesus is alive! Put a Makes Me Feel sticker by Chapter 28. Then write in the margin how it makes you feel.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Pencils

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Story Eggs

Set Up: Make one set of Story Eggs to use as a sample. **Make copies of the Holy Week Bible References from page 29 of this guide—one copy per kid.**

Activity Instructions

We are going to make a storytelling kit so that you can remember and tell this amazing story. Each of you will get 12 plastic eggs. You will put something inside each egg that will help you tell the story of Holy Week and Easter.

Give each kid 12 assembled eggs and a permanent marker. Number the eggs 1 through 12. Fill each egg with the following items and corresponding Holy Week Bible Reference slip after cutting the page on the dashed lines. Put the completed eggs in an egg carton or gallon zipper bag.

- #1: Palm Sunday - small silk leaf or leaf cut out of a green foam sheet and Matthew 21:8-11
- #2: Last Supper - small communion cup cut from yellow foam sheet and Matthew 26:26-29
- #3: Jesus Prays in the Garden - small silk flower and Matthew 26:36
- #4: Judas Betrays Jesus - dime and Matthew 26:14-15, 47-48
- #5: Scarlet Robe - small piece of red felt and Matthew 27:28
- #6: Crown of Thorns - twine tied in a small circle and Matthew 27:29
- #7: Cross - cross shape cut from brown foam sheet and Matthew 27:32
- #8: Darkness - small piece of black felt and Matthew 27:45
- #9: Sponge - small piece of sponge and Matthew 27:46-48
- #10: Linen Cloth - small piece of white felt and Matthew 27:57-59
- #11: Stone at the Tomb - small stone and Matthew 27:60
- #12: Empty Tomb - Matthew 28:1-6

When you have completed your Story Eggs, find a partner and take turns reading the Bible verse for each egg to each other so that you know what the symbols represent. If you have time, you can go through and open the eggs in order again and see if you can remember the part of the Easter Story that each represents.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Eggs, plastic, 12 per kid
Markers, permanent
Egg cartons or gallon zipper bags
Scissors
Leaves, small silk or green foam sheet
Flowers, small silk
Dimes
Felt, red, black and white
Twine
Foam sheet, brown
Foam sheet, yellow
Sponge
Copies of Holy Week Bible References, page 29

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it and come together for Wrap Up.

Good stories are worth telling over and over again. Your Story Eggs will help you remember the many smaller stories in the big story of Holy Week and Easter. Take your eggs home, and use them to tell the story to someone in your family.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Have kids repeat each phrase of the prayer after you.

Jesus, you are alive!

Thank you for dying on the cross for me.

Thank you for coming back to life for me.

Thank you for promising

That I will live with you

Forever in heaven one day.

Amen.

Workshop Focus Statement: We have Good News to share at Easter!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Holy Week and Easter Storytelling

Do any of you ever watch the news on TV or look at the newspaper at home?

Why do people watch the news on TV or read the newspaper? (*to find out what's happening, to be informed, etc.*) **I brought some newspapers in today.** Pass them around. **The headline of a newspaper story is like its title. Look at the headlines of the stories of the newspaper you have in front of you. What do you notice about headlines?** (*big letters, bold letters, short phrase*) **Look at what the headlines say—are most headlines about good news or bad news?** (*Many are about bad news.*) **It sometimes seems like the world is full of bad news.**

Our Bible story today is a Good News story. If you have a Spark Bible, open it to Matthew, chapter 28, page 1097. Assist kids who need help. **What is the headline or title of this story in the Bible? I am going to read the story from the Spark Story Bible. You can follow along in your Spark Bibles if you like. The words will be a little bit different, but the story is the same.** Read The Empty Tomb from page 482 in the Spark Story Bible. **What is the Good News in this story?** (*Jesus is not in the tomb; God has raised him from the dead.*) **Look at verse 7 in your Spark Bible—what does the angel tell the women to do?** (*go and tell the disciples*) **Now**

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
Newspapers, front page of
several
Pencils

look at verse 10—what does Jesus tell the women to do? (*go and tell the disciples*)

The women had Good News to share and they wanted to tell everyone right away! If you have a Spark Bible, take out your stickers and put the Makes Me Feel sticker by Matthew, Chapter 28. Then write in the margin how this story makes you feel.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Good News Banners

Set Up: Make a pocket on the felt for the dowel. On one of the short ends of the felt, turn the edge over about 3 inches (7½ cm). Either sew the edge down or glue it with tacky glue.

Activity Instructions

Many, many years after it happened, the story of Jesus' resurrection is still Good News worth sharing. There are many ways to share Good News. We are going to work together today to make a banner to hang in our church that will share the Good News of Easter with people.

1. Decide together on a "headline" for your banner. Remind kids that a headline is a short phrase and is usually written in big bold letters. Possible headlines could be "He Is Risen," "Jesus Is Alive," "Easter Is Good News."
2. Work as a group to decide what other symbols or pictures will go on your banner. Pictures tell stories, too, so choose pictures that help tell the story (empty cross, empty tomb, flowers, smiling faces, sunshine, hearts, etc.).
3. Assign a few kids to use the letter stencils to trace the letters for the headline on felt and cut them out.
4. The remaining kids can work together on the pictures or symbols for the banner. Use the scrap paper to draw and cut out patterns for the symbols. Then cut the symbols out of felt.
5. As letters and symbols are finished, lay them on the banner, but do not glue them down until all pieces are completed and all are happy with the layout.
6. Use tacky glue to glue the small pieces to the banner.
7. Add other decorations as desired.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Felt, about 30 x 40 inches (75 x 100 cm)

Dowel, ½-inch dowel, 36 inches long

Scissors, fabric

Felt, several small pieces in a variety of colors

Stencils, letters, 3 inches (7½ cm) or larger

Paper, scrap

Pencils

Tacky glue

Items to decorate: sequins, jewels, bric-a-brac, etc. (optional)

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it and come together for Wrap Up.

The Good News that Jesus is alive is meant to be shared. The angel told the women to share it right away. Jesus told them to share it, and we can share it, too, because it is too good to keep to ourselves. When this banner is dry, I will hang it somewhere in our church, and you will be sharing the Good News.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Have kids repeat each phrase of the prayer after you.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for dying on the cross for me.

I am so happy that God raised you back to life.

Help me to share this Good News

That you are alive

During this Easter season and always.

Amen.

Holy Week Bible References

Matthew 21:8-11

Matthew 26:26-29

Matthew 26:36

Matthew 26:14-15, 47-48

Matthew 27:28

Matthew 27:29

Matthew 27:32

Matthew 27:45

Matthew 27:46-48

Matthew 27:57-59

Matthew 27:60

Matthew 28:1-6