

PALM SUNDAY AND EASTER

# Teacher Guide

Levels A & B

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# Preparing the Lesson

Date of Use

## Palm Sunday

Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40

### Key Point

Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain.

### Law/Gospel

Because of my sin, Jesus had to suffer and die. **Because of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, my sin is no more, and I will live in heaven with Him forever.**

### Context

The triumphal entry occurred on the Sunday before Good Friday (John 12:1, 12), which is why Palm Sunday marks the first day of Holy Week. John alone mentions palm branches (12:13).

Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem culminated a great journey begun at an earlier point in His ministry (see Luke 9:1). Before this journey began, Jesus predicted that He would be rejected by the Jewish leaders, die, and rise on the third day (Luke 9:21–22, 44–45).

The feast of Passover was approaching, so Jerusalem and its surroundings would have been crowded and chaotic. Jesus was staying in the Bethany area, two miles east of Jerusalem. Most people near the city would have been walking, so a person on a donkey would have been noticed.

The people who hailed Jesus as King were His disciples (Luke 19:37). Those who rejected Him in this scene were Pharisees (Luke 19:39). Those who crucified Him later were not likely the same people who hailed Him as King at the triumphal entry.

### Commentary

The evangelists' descriptions of the triumphal entry portray Jesus in two interconnected roles: (1) as the promised King who would reign forever on the throne of King David (see 2 Samuel 7:12–17; Zechariah 9:9); and (2) as the

long-expected Christ, or Messiah, who would come on behalf of the Lord to save His people (see Psalm 118:26, one of the many texts that predict the Messiah's coming).

Jesus is portrayed as a king when He sits upon the colt of a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 that Israel's King would come to Jerusalem "humble and mounted on a donkey." The colt had never been ridden; it was consecrated for the Lord's holy purposes. Jesus' riding was out of character since He had previously walked everywhere. King Solomon had ridden a mule for his enthronement (1 Kings 1:38–40). By riding the colt into Jerusalem, Jesus publicly announced to His disciples that He was a king. Jerusalem is "the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35).

The people roll out the red carpet for Jesus, placing garments and branches before Him, acknowledging His kingship (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus' followers shout words from Psalm 118:25–26, "Hosanna!" and "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" In the Old Testament, *hosanna* meant "Save now!" but by Jesus' time it had evolved into a shout of praise, like "Alleluia!"

Jesus' followers apparently ignored the part of Zechariah 9:9 that predicted the King would be "humble." They praised God for the mighty works Jesus had done (Luke 19:37) but made no mention of Jesus' teaching. Had they forgotten that He predicted His own death and resurrection? They would soon realize that He would only show power and glory after suffering and dying to achieve their salvation. His kingship would be shown on the cross as He wore a crown of thorns with the words "King of the Jews" above His head.

It offended the Pharisees that Jesus' disciples were ascribing to Him kingly and messianic words, but He refused to rebuke them. The Pharisees respected Jesus as a teacher (Luke 19:39), but Jesus wants people to know Him as King, Messiah, and Lord over all creation (19:40).

Level A

# Palm Sunday

Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40

## Connections

### Bible Words

Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Mark 11:9

### Faith Word

Hosanna

### Hymn

All Glory, Laud, and Honor (LSB 442)

### Catechism

Apostles' Creed:  
Second Article

### Take-Home Point

Hosanna! Jesus came to save me.

## 1 Opening (15 minutes)

### Welcome Time

**What you do:** Before class, set up two activity areas to build interest and readiness for the lesson. In one, set out copies of the Activity Page, crayons or markers, nonmetallic glitter, and glue sticks. Make copies of Activity Page Fun for parents or classroom helpers. Adjust talk as necessary.

In the other area, set out toy farm animals or farm play sets and some blocks or play dough to make farm animals.

Greet children as they arrive and show them where to put their offering.

**Say** **Hi, [Luis]. I'm glad to see you! I wonder . . . have you ever been to a parade? People have parades because they are happy about something. Sometimes they shout or cheer. Today you'll hear about some happy people in the Bible.**

Direct children to an activity. Encourage parents or caregivers to stay and do the Activity Page with their child.

**Activity Page Fun** Get a copy of the Activity Page, crayons, glitter, and glue. Show the page to your child. Read the word *hosanna*.

**Say** *Hosanna* means "Lord, save me." These children look happy, don't they? Today you will hear how children—and big people too—lined up along the streets to see someone special. They shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9). Have your child color the picture. Help your child trace over the word *hosanna* with glue and sprinkle with nonmetallic glitter.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

1 Opening	2 God Speaks	3 We Live	4 Closing
<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Activity Page (Teacher Guide) Crayons or markers, nonmetallic glitter & glue sticks Musical instruments, CD, or online recording of "Old MacDonald" Blocks Toy farm animals or farm play sets Play dough (optional)	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Story bag Real or paper palm branches Doll clothes Toy donkey or picture of donkey People figures, cookie sheet & cornmeal (optional) <i>Jesus Enters Jerusalem</i> Arch Book (optional) <b>Student Material</b> Lesson Leaflets	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Toy crown or picture of a king Story bag, palm branches & donkey Canning rings or plastic rings, colorful ribbon & jingle bells Paper plates, dry rice, streamers, packaging tape, markers & stickers Animal crackers & pudding or applesauce Animal fruit snacks (optional) Paper Plus supplies (optional) Pictures of children (optional)	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Take-home items

**Active Learning** Talk about the variety of animals God has made. Help the children make a parade of animals. They can use the blocks to make roads or fences along the roads for the animals to walk. Sing the song “Old MacDonald” as you name the different animals, or search online for a video of children singing the song, and play it for the children. *Option:* Children can make animals and roads out of play dough.

**Ask** I wonder . . . who has visited a farm? What was your favorite thing to do there? Accept answers. **Often, farms have lots of animals. Let’s sing “Old MacDonald” now and see how many animals we can think of that live on a farm. Don’t forget, we need to know what sounds they make too.** Let the children take turns suggesting animals to include. Sing “Old MacDonald had a donkey” as the last verse.

Use your classroom signal to let children know it’s time to clean up and gather for story time. Have them pretend to ride a donkey as they gather.

## Gathering in God’s Name

**What you do:** Gather the children and begin with this opening. To teach about Palm Sunday or other times in the Church Year, use the materials in the Church Year Worship Kit, available from Concordia Publishing House.

**Sing** “Hosanna! Hosanna!” (*LOSP*, p. 94) or “All Glory, Laud, and Honor” (*LSB* 442).

Invite the children to say the Invocation and Amen with you. Tell them *Amen* is the special word we say to ask Jesus to hear our prayers.

**Begin** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Offering** Have a child bring the offering basket forward. Sing an offering song. Have children echo your words after the asterisks as you pray.

**Pray** Dear God,\* thank You\* for all Your blessings,\* especially Jesus,\* who came to save us\* from our sins.\* We praise You!\* Amen.\*

## 2 God Speaks (20 minutes)

### Story Clue

**What you do:** Buy a real palm branch from your local florist, or find an online pattern and make a palm branch from green construction paper. Put the palm branch in a story bag. Also put a toy donkey or a picture of a donkey in your bag.

**Say** Now it is time for some story clues. Today I have two things in my story bag. They are clues to help you think about a person in today’s Bible story. Let’s check out the clues. Pull out the palm branch.

**Ask** Oh look. What is this? What do you think of when you see a palm branch? Accept answers. You might be right. We’ll find out later. Now let’s see what else I have in my bag. Invite a child to pull out the donkey. What is this? Accept answers.

**Say** I wonder how a palm branch and donkey are clues to the same person. Let’s be Bible detectives and find out!

## Bible Story Time

**What you do:** Have the children do the actions with you as you tell the story. Give them real or paper palm branches to wave. *Option:* Add cornmeal to a cookie sheet. As you tell the story, move toy figures and a donkey (e.g., Duplo, Lego, or Playmobil figures) in the cornmeal. Line up people figures along the sides. Put down palms and doll clothes when the people shout, “Hosanna!”

**Say** Boys and girls, our story today from God’s Word, the Bible, is a true story of a special journey Jesus took. What animal was one of our story clues? That’s right, a donkey. Let’s practice making donkey ears. Place one of your hands above each side of your head. Encourage children to do so too. Who remembers what a donkey says? Let’s practice saying that too. Bray like a donkey. Now we’re ready. Let’s find out more about Jesus and a little donkey. Each time you talk about the donkey, ask children to make donkey ears and bray.

**When Jesus lived on earth, He did many good things. He gave food to hungry people. He made sick people well. He even made blind people see.** Place your hands over your eyes and then uncover them. **Many people loved Jesus. Now it was time for Jesus to go to the city of Jerusalem. He knew that soon He would have to die on the cross to pay for our sins.** Make a cross with two fingers.

**So Jesus and His friends walked along the road to the big city.** Walk in place. **When they got close to the city, Jesus told two friends, “Go to that village. You’ll find a donkey tied there. Make donkey ears and bray. Bring it to Me. If anyone asks why you are taking the donkey, tell them that I need it. He will let you take it.”**

**Jesus’ friends did what Jesus told them to do. They found the donkey, untied it, and brought it back to Jesus.** Make donkey ears and bray. **Jesus got on the donkey and rode into the big city of Jerusalem.** Make donkey ears again and bray like a donkey.

**The city was full of people. Men, women, and little children—all of them crowded along the road to see Jesus. Some took off their coats and laid them on the road. Others cut palm branches from trees and laid them on the road.** Pretend to put coats on the ground. **They waved palm branches and shouted, “Praise God! Hosanna, hosanna to the Son of David!” Hosanna means “Lord, save us!”** Pass out palm branches and wave them. Say, “Hosanna, hosanna!” **What a happy day!** Smile broadly.

**There were some people in the crowd who were not happy, though.** Make a grouchy face. **They told Jesus, “Tell everybody to be quiet!”** Put your finger over your lips and say, “Shh!” **These people did not love Jesus. They did not want people to praise Him. But Jesus told them, “If My friends are quiet, even the rocks on the ground will shout, ‘Hosanna.’”** Wave the palm branches and say, “Hosanna, hosanna!”

**Jesus knew why the people shouted praises to Him. They wanted Jesus to be their King. They wanted Him to save them from all the bad things that were happening to them.**

**Jesus was their King. He is our King too! Very soon, the people who did not love Jesus were going to put Him on the cross to die. The little donkey would not carry Jesus anymore. Instead, Jesus would carry the cross to the hill where He would die.** Make a cross with two fingers.

### Key Point

Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain.

**Jesus loves us so much that He died on the cross to save us from the worst things of all—sin, death, and the devil. Now, because Jesus died and came alive again, we will live forever with Him in heaven. Jesus is our Savior and King!** Wave the palm branches one more time and say, “Hosanna, hosanna! Jesus is our King!”

## Bible Story Review

**What you do:** Hand out the Lesson Leaflet and crayons. Have the children turn to the Search & Find activity on the inside pages. *Option:* Show the pictures in *Jesus Enters Jerusalem Arch Book* (CPH, 59-1585) to review the story.

**Ask** **What is Jesus doing?** He is riding the donkey into Jerusalem.

**What did the people do to welcome Jesus?** They waved palms and put coats on the road.

**What word did they use to praise Jesus?** Hosanna.

**Say** Use your finger to point to Jesus. Have children do this. **Point to the children waving palm branches. Now look at the little pictures on the side of the big one.** Point out the Search & Find pictures. **All of these things are hiding in the Bible story picture. Can you find them? When you find the picture of Jesus’ face and the Bible, remember that God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and King. The Bible tells us so.**

## Bible Words

**What you do:** Read the Bible Words from Mark 11:9.

**Say** The people shouted praises to Jesus when He rode on the little donkey into Jerusalem. They said, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” They wanted Jesus to be their King and save them from the bad things that were happening to them. Raise your hands in the air and say, “Hosanna!” with me. Lead children in doing this. *Hosanna means “save us.”*

**We praise Jesus, too, because Jesus is our Savior and King! He saves us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He did this by dying on the cross to take away our sins. Let’s wave our palm branches and say our Bible Words together.** If you do not have palms, wave pretend branches as you say the words.

<b>Say</b> Hosanna!	<i>Wave palm branches.</i>
<b>Blessed is He</b>	<i>Hold hands out, palms together.</i>
<b>who comes</b>	<i>Hold hands out, palms up.</i>
<b>in the name of the Lord!</b>	<i>Hold arms up, palms up.</i>

## 3 We Live (20 minutes)

Help children grow in their understanding of what the Bible story means for their lives. Choose the activities that work best with your class.

### Growing through God’s Word

**What you do:** Put a toy crown in your story bag or a picture of a king wearing a crown. Have your palm branch and toy donkey or picture of a

donkey to show. Have palm branches to hand out to the children for them to wave.

**Ask** What were our Bible story clues? Show clues. **Yes, a palm branch and a donkey. What did the people do with the palms?** Let children tell. **Who rode on the donkey? Yes, Jesus! The people were excited to see Jesus riding into Jerusalem! I have another clue in my story bag. It tells us why the people were happy to see Jesus. What do you think it is?** Take out the crown or a picture of a crown.

**Say** It's a crown. Kings and queens wear crowns. **What are some things kings and queens do?** Talk to the children about kings and their jobs. For example, kings make rules, they protect people, they help their people by giving them land or food or the things they need to live.

**The people were happy to see Jesus because they thought He was coming to be their King. They wanted Jesus to save them from the enemy leaders who ruled over them. And Jesus was coming as their King. But King Jesus wouldn't sit on a throne or rule over them like other kings. No, Jesus is the King of heaven and earth. He was coming to save them and us from the worst trouble of all—our sin. He did this by dying on the cross for us.**

**After Jesus suffered, died, and rose again, He went back to His home in heaven, where He still rules over all things. He is there preparing a place for you and me. It is a new home where we will live with Him forever. But Jesus is still with us here on earth, too, just as He promised He would be. Through His Word and Sacraments, He gives us His forgiveness. He helps us grow as His children. He sends His angels to watch over us and keep us from harm. He hears our prayers and helps us when we have troubles. Jesus is the best King ever.**

**Do you remember the special word the people shouted when Jesus rode on the little donkey? Yes, "Hosanna!" Let's sing a song to praise Jesus for being our Savior and King.**

Invite the children to stand and wave their palm branches. Sing "Hosanna! Hosanna!" (*LOSP*, p. 94) or the following song to the tune "Are You Sleeping?"

**Sing** Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,  
To the King, to the King.  
Riding on a donkey, riding on a donkey,  
Jesus comes, Jesus comes.

## Craft Time

**What you do:** Make praise wavers or celebration shakers. For wavers, you will need a canning jar ring or plastic ring, several lengths of colorful ribbon, and jingle bells. Precut the ribbon into varied lengths. Show children how to tie the ribbons onto their ring. Thread jingle bells onto some of the ribbons and knot to secure.

For shakers, place a handful of dry rice onto 8-inch paper plates. Fold the plates in half and use packaging tape around the edges to secure the seam. Give the children markers, stickers, glitter glue, and the like to decorate their shakers. Attach crepe-paper or tissue-paper streamers with tape. Use the wavers or celebration shakers to praise King Jesus.

*Paper plus option:* Make a praise banner to hang in your classroom or church. Use green finger paint to paint a large stem on newsprint. Then, have the children make a large palm branch by placing their handprints extending out from the stem on both sides, and with at least one handprint pointing straight up from the top. Add the words “Hosanna! Christ, Our Lord, Is King!” If you have additional space, add faces of happy children. *Option:* Get permission to take individual pictures of the children in your class. Print these and add them to the banner.

## Snack Time

**What you do:** Serve animal crackers and dip them in applesauce or pudding. Have the children watch for any crackers that look like the little donkey Jesus rode. Talk about the different sounds animals make and remind them of the sounds we make to praise the Savior, “Hosanna! Hosanna! For Christ, our Lord, is King!” *Option:* Serve fruit snacks that come in the shape of animals. Remind the children of the little animal that says “Hee-haw” and how it carried Jesus on a special ride.

## Live It Out

**What you do:** Have a parade! Let the children use their praise wavers or celebration shakers as they follow the leader and parade around your room or march around your building to tell others about Jesus and His love. They can sing “Hosanna! Hosanna!” as they march.

**Say** We are so happy Jesus loves us. Let’s have a praise parade and tell others!



# 4 Closing (5 minutes)

## Going Home

**What you do:** Gather the children’s take-home items so they can be easily distributed. Invite the children to use their praise wavers, celebration shakers, or palm branches during the closing.

**Say** Hosanna! Jesus came to save me. Have children echo you. “Hosanna, Hosanna,” to our Savior and King. “Hosanna, Hosanna,” hear the dear children sing.

**Sing** “Praise Him, Praise Him” (LOSP, p. 68).

**Pray** Dear Jesus, we praise You! Thank You for being our King and coming to save us from our sins by dying on the cross for us. We love You! Amen.

## Reflection

Did the children feel glad that Jesus is their King? In what ways did they praise and thank Jesus? How can you continue to help children express their feelings and their faith in Jesus?



# Preparing the Lesson

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**Date of Use**

## Palm Sunday

Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40

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### Key Point

Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain.

### Law/Gospel

Because of my sin, Jesus had to suffer and die. **Because of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, my sin is no more, and I will live in heaven with Him forever.**

### Context

The triumphal entry occurred on the Sunday before Good Friday (John 12:1, 12), which is why Palm Sunday marks the first day of Holy Week. John alone mentions palm branches (12:13).

Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem culminated a great journey begun at an earlier point in His ministry (see Luke 9:1). Before this journey began, Jesus predicted that He would be rejected by the Jewish leaders, die, and rise on the third day (Luke 9:21–22, 44–45).

The feast of Passover was approaching, so Jerusalem and its surroundings would have been crowded and chaotic. Jesus was staying in the Bethany area, two miles east of Jerusalem. Most people near the city would have been walking, so a person on a donkey would have been noticed.

The people who hailed Jesus as King were His disciples (Luke 19:37). Those who rejected Him in this scene were Pharisees (Luke 19:39). Those who crucified Him later were not likely the same people who hailed Him as King at the triumphal entry.

### Commentary

The evangelists' descriptions of the triumphal entry portray Jesus in two interconnected roles: (1) as the promised King who would reign forever on the throne of King David (see 2 Samuel 7:12–17; Zechariah 9:9); and (2) as the

long-expected Christ, or Messiah, who would come on behalf of the Lord to save His people (see Psalm 118:26, one of the many texts that predict the Messiah's coming).

Jesus is portrayed as a king when He sits upon the colt of a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 that Israel's King would come to Jerusalem "humble and mounted on a donkey." The colt had never been ridden; it was consecrated for the Lord's holy purposes. Jesus' riding was out of character since He had previously walked everywhere. King Solomon had ridden a mule for his enthronement (1 Kings 1:38–40). By riding the colt into Jerusalem, Jesus publicly announced to His disciples that He was a king. Jerusalem is "the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35).

The people roll out the red carpet for Jesus, placing garments and branches before Him, acknowledging His kingship (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus' followers shout words from Psalm 118:25–26, "Hosanna!" and "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" In the Old Testament, *hosanna* meant "Save now!" but by Jesus' time it had evolved into a shout of praise, like "Alleluia!"

Jesus' followers apparently ignored the part of Zechariah 9:9 that predicted the King would be "humble." They praised God for the mighty works Jesus had done (Luke 19:37) but made no mention of Jesus' teaching. Had they forgotten that He predicted His own death and resurrection? They would soon realize that He would only show power and glory after suffering and dying to achieve their salvation. His kingship would be shown on the cross as He wore a crown of thorns with the words "King of the Jews" above His head.

It offended the Pharisees that Jesus' disciples were ascribing to Him kingly and messianic words, but He refused to rebuke them. The Pharisees respected Jesus as a teacher (Luke 19:39), but Jesus wants people to know Him as King, Messiah, and Lord over all creation (19:40).

Level B

# Palm Sunday

Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–40

## Connections

### Bible Words

Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Mark 11:9

### Faith Words

Palm Sunday

### Hymn

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna  
(LSB 443)

### Catechism

Apostles' Creed: Second Article

### Liturgy

Gospel Processional

### Take-Home Point

Hosanna! Jesus came to save me.

## Prepare to Teach

Write these phrases on separate pieces of paper for use during "God Speaks."

- Jesus started for Jerusalem.
- Jesus rode into the city.
- "The Lord has need of it."
- Jesus sits on cloaks on the donkey.
- The disciples were sent into the village for a colt.
- "Hosanna!"
- They drew near Bethany and Bethphage on the Mount of Olives.
- "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Optional phrases for the Luke 19 text will include:

- Many spread cloaks and branches on the road.
- "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
- "Tell the disciples to be quiet!"
- "Even the stones will praise Me."

Make copies of any reproducible or resource pages you plan to use.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

1 Opening	2 God Speaks	3 We Live	4 Closing
<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Hymnals Bibles	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Papers prepared as directed in "Prepare to Teach" Yarn Paper and pencils (optional) <b>Student Material</b> Lesson Leaflets	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Level B Activity Page Catechisms Cardstock or cardboard Markers or crayons Glue or glue sticks Hole punch Scissors String or rubber bands Suggested snack items (optional)	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Hymnals

# 1 Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the children and take attendance. As students arrive, engage them in a discussion about parades.

**Ask** **Have you ever been to a parade?** Allow time for responses. **Today we might have a parade for sports stars or for leaders of a country. We might have a band play special songs for a person of honor. Or sometimes people lay out a red carpet for celebrities or movie stars to walk on.**

**Say** **The Bible tells us of one important parade that happened one Sunday in the springtime. As most people were walking into Jerusalem that day to celebrate the Passover, Jesus' riding on a donkey made Him stand out from the crowd. They probably remembered that King Solomon had ridden a mule to his enthronement in ancient days. Now, Jesus was the person of honor, the King who came riding on a donkey. In our church, the day of Jesus' journey into Jerusalem is called Palm Sunday. Why?** Read Mark 11:8 and John 12:13 for clues. **People cheered and waved palm branches as the King passed by. They laid coats on the ground to honor the King, much like we might lay out a red carpet for important people. Palm Sunday also marks the beginning of Holy Week. Let's start with worship and then learn more about this special day.**

## Worship

Light the candles on the altar. Invite students to make the sign of the cross in remembrance of their Baptism as you say the Invocation.

**Say** **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Gather offerings and celebrate any special occasions.

**Sing** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" (LSB 443).

**Say** Psalm 118:19–29, or just verses 25–26.

Encourage the children to notice when the pastor and possibly attendants such as acolytes process into the sanctuary the next time they are at Divine Service. What happens? Are there any other processions? Does your congregation do a Gospel processional, when God's Word is brought to the nave and read in the midst of the people? Is a processional cross ever used? We have our own special processions to worship our King today!

**Pray** **Almighty and everlasting God, give us an increase of faith, hope, and love, that, receiving what You have promised, we may love what You have commanded; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## Snack

### Animals on Parade

A colt plays a role in today's text. Offer animal crackers or cookies shaped like donkeys or horses for a snack. Provide frosting for dipping, or serve with pudding or fruit cups. Unrolled sheets of fruit leather can remind students of the garments laid on the road ahead of Jesus, the King.

### Teacher Tip

As much as possible, avoid distractions during class time. Try to limit noisy interruptions that could distract all students from learning, particularly those children with difficulty focusing attention for long activities.

## 2 God Speaks (20 minutes)

**Say** Jesus has been in Jericho, where He talked to Zacchaeus and healed a blind beggar, Bartimaeus. He is close to Bethany again, and Bethphage, and He is going up to Jerusalem. This journey is the beginning of the end—Jesus’ way to the cross. He made this journey so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain.

Randomly arrange and tape the papers prepared earlier to a wall of the classroom. Attach a piece of yarn to “Jesus started for Jerusalem.” As Mark 11:1–11 is read, ask students to “journey” with Jesus by connecting the papers sequentially with pieces of yarn taped to the papers. Alternatively, arrange the papers on the floor and have one student stand at each piece of paper and hold the yarn for a larger version of the same activity. *Option:* You may also read Luke 19:28–40, connecting the papers with a different color of yarn. You will need the additional papers described in “Prepare to Teach” for this activity.

You may wish to point out that while both versions relate the same event, the details are slightly different. Both are the inspired Word of God. Details differ in the Gospels for the same reason that two people who attend the same event relate different details of the event afterward. Their perspectives are dependent upon their location and their observations, but both accounts are true.

### Review

To review the story, have the students read the Search & Know text, crossing out the false information and writing the correct words above as a replacement. The words that need to be changed follow.

Paragraph 1: *Jericho to Jerusalem; four to two; goat to colt or donkey*

Paragraph 2: *tie to untie; Bethany to here; tying to untying; sing to say*

Paragraph 3: *money to cloaks; on earth to in heaven*

Paragraph 4: *kings to Pharisees; trees to stones*

### Alternative Review

An alternative review is to provide blank paper and invite students to illustrate Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem. They may want to use the story summary on the front of the leaflet for sequencing the story events. Suggest depictions of the disciples untying the colt or Jesus riding the colt and people throwing their cloaks and branches on the road. Students may add speech bubbles with text from the story. Encourage them to share their pictures with family members or friends to retell the story.

**Say** Today we are going on another journey. To help you imagine the journey, I’m going to ask you to draw a few things while you are listening. Let’s begin.

**Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. It was time for Him to suffer and die for the sins of all people. As He and His disciples got near to Jerusalem, Jesus sent two of the disciples ahead of Him. He said, “Go**

into the village where you will find a donkey's colt, one on which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell them, 'The Lord needs it.' " Now, boys and girls, draw a donkey. Wait as the children draw.

**The disciples found the colt just as Jesus had said. They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it, and then Jesus climbed on.**

**Draw Jesus and some coats on the colt.** Offer encouragement as the children add details. **As Jesus rode along, the people spread coats on the ground. They cut palm branches. They waved them and laid them on the ground in front of Him. Draw some coats and palm branches along a road.**

**As they came down the Mount of Olives, many people rejoiced and praised God saying, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Before Jesus was born, Hosanna meant "Save now," but when these people called it out, it was probably a shout of praise or a cheer like "Alleluia!" Many people were excited. Jesus was coming, riding on a colt into Jerusalem. Draw some happy people waving palm branches.**

**But some church leaders were not happy. They did not believe that Jesus was the Savior God promised. He was not a king. They said to Jesus, "Tell Your disciples not to sing praises to You." To show these unhappy church leaders, draw some people with sad faces.**

**But Jesus said, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." Let's draw some stones nearby.** Wait as the children finish their drawings.

**It must have been hard for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem because He was going to suffer and die for the sins of all people. And even though His death would be horrible, Jesus went. He loved us so much that He rode into Jerusalem to die.**

## Bible Words

*Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!* Mark 11:9

Help the students locate the Bible Words on the leaflet. Read them out loud together. Compare today's Bible Words with Luke 19:38. The people greeted Jesus with the words of a psalm (Psalm 118:26). Explain that *Hosanna* is from the Psalms and means "save now, we pray."

**Say Today's Bible Words are a cheer that people said as Jesus rode by them into Jerusalem. Those who called Jesus "King" were His followers. We are His followers too. Jesus is our King. Because we are baptized, we are also members of His kingdom. We will live forever with Him in heaven.**

To learn the Bible Words, organize your class into a line. Divide the class into three sections. As each section says their part, they also raise their hands.

**Say Hosanna!  
Blessed is He who comes  
in the name of the Lord!**

## Key Point

Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain.

## 3 We Live (20 minutes)

Compare Zechariah 9:9 to today's text.

**Say** This prophecy of Zechariah was fulfilled in Jesus, the Savior, and written about in Mark and Luke.

**Ask** What do you think is the significance of the colt never having been ridden? (The colt's first "job" was to convey the Son of God into Jerusalem for His Passion. It was set apart for that purpose; in a sense, it is holy, which means "set apart.") **Let's think about what it means that Jesus is the holy Son of God and what only He is able to do for us.**

**Ask** What does Jesus know that the crowd doesn't know and that even the disciples don't quite understand yet? (That He is going to Jerusalem to die for the sins of the people. The phrase "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord" connects Jesus with God's plan of salvation.) **What kind of king were the people expecting?** (An earthly king; Jesus' kingdom is in heaven.) **But what did Jesus know the people needed?** (Because of sin, we deserve to suffer and die eternally. We need a Savior from sin.) **What will Jesus' death accomplish?** (Salvation for all who believe; Jesus suffered and died in our place. His blood is the final sacrifice for our sin, and through His death and resurrection, our sin is removed from us and we gain eternal life through Him.)

Invite the children to use their catechisms to read the Third Part of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism together.

**Ask** Why is Jesus' journey into Jerusalem so important for us? (Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that our journey to heaven and life eternal would be made certain. Our faith in Jesus, given to us in Baptism by the power of the Holy Spirit, guarantees this promise. Because we are baptized into His death and resurrection, our sins are forgiven, and we are certain that we will live in heaven with Jesus forever. Jesus has fulfilled God's demands, so our forgiveness and eternal life with Him in heaven have been secured.)

### Craft—Palm Sunday Spinner

**To Prepare:** Make copies of the Activity Page, found at the end of this lesson. Also have on hand good cardboard or cardstock, scissors, glue or glue sticks, crayons or markers, string, and a hole punch.

Follow the directions on the Level B Activity Page. When the craft is complete, the children hold the strings about three or four inches from the cardboard and twist the strings between their fingers to cause the disk to spin. Look at the disk. When the speed is just right and the spinning is steady, you should see Jesus headed toward the cross. When the children have finished,

**Say** Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem on His way to the cross so that we might journey through this life to life eternal. Hosanna! Jesus came to save me.

For an extra aid in having success with spinning, watch a video online about making and spinning a thaumatrope. You can also find ideas online for alternatives to the string on each end, such as using a straw as a handle and rubbing it back and forth between your palms or using a rubber band on each end.

## 4 Closing (5 minutes)

**Sing** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna" (LSB 443).

Relate the lyrics of the hymn to the details of the text and emphasize that Jesus rode on to Jerusalem in lowly state so that our journey to heaven and eternal life would be made certain.

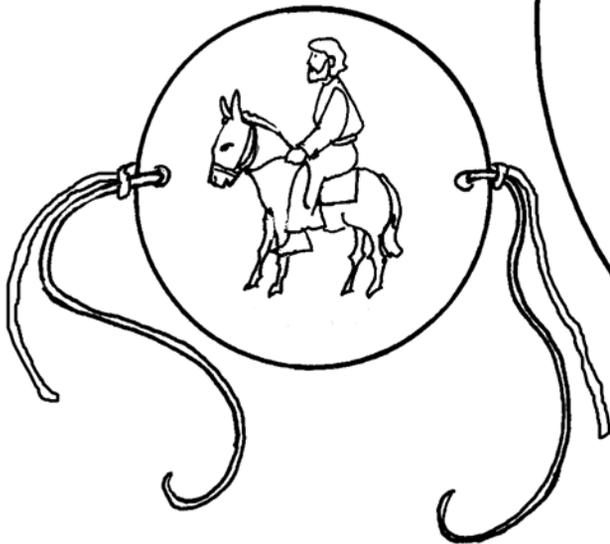
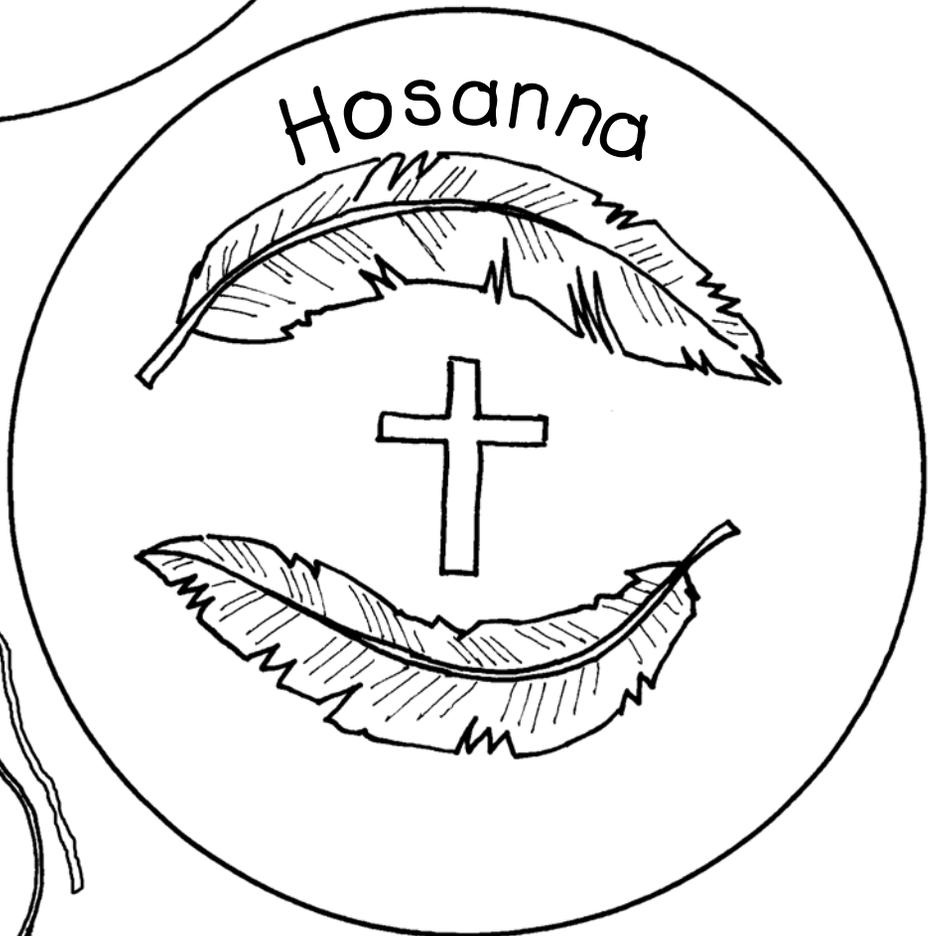
**Say** Without Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, He would not have completed the events of Holy Week, which include His death on Good Friday and His resurrection on Sunday. He fulfills God's demands and assures us of our salvation and an eternal home in God's presence in heaven.

**Pray** Dear Lord, You rode into Jerusalem to face death so that we may have eternal life. By Your Holy Spirit, teach us to love You, because You have given to us what we could not accomplish for ourselves: salvation. In Your name we pray. Amen.

**Say** Hosanna! Jesus came to save me.



1. Cut out the circles.
2. Trace around one circle on cardboard.
3. Cut out the cardboard circle.
4. Glue the paper circles to the front and back of the cardboard circle. The image on the back should be upside down.
5. Punch the holes where shown through all thicknesses.
6. On each side, thread the center of a 20-inch piece of string, folded in half, through the hole. Secure the string by pushing both ends through the center loop.
7. Twirl the disk by holding both pieces of string, turning the disk over a few times, and then tugging gently outward on the pieces of string.



# Preparing the Lesson

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 Date of Use
 

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## Easter

 Mark 15:1–16:8
 

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### Key Point

Jesus' death and resurrection grants us eternal life in heaven with Him.

### Law/Gospel

The cost of my sin is death. **Jesus died for me and rose again in payment for my sin, fulfilling God's demands and securing my forgiveness and eternal life with Him in heaven.**

### Context

Our Holy Week was for the Jews the week of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In Jerusalem, it was standing room only. Because the Jews were under Roman rule, the death penalty could be pronounced only by a Roman official—thus Pilate's involvement.

Jesus is executed on Friday but rapidly removed from the cross because of the approaching Sabbath. He rests in the tomb the few remaining hours of Friday, then Saturday (the Sabbath), and then rises sometime on the third day, Sunday. Sunday, therefore, becomes the day for Christians, replacing the Sabbath of the old covenant.

### Commentary

Nothing happened to Jesus by chance. It was all predicted and foreshadowed in the sermons of Moses and the prophets. The enmity between the seed of Satan and the Seed of Eve culminates in this death scene, where the hellish snake sinks his fangs into the heel of the woman's Seed, while simultaneously that heel comes crashing down on the serpentine skull (Genesis 3:15). Death is slain, as is Jesus, the slayer Himself.

As Isaac carried the wood of sacrifice on his back, so this promised Son carries the wood of crucifixion on which He will be offered in the stead of all of us Isaacs (Genesis 22). Here is the Suffering Servant, whom Isaiah foresaw "stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted . . . pierced for our transgressions . . . crushed for our iniquities; . . . with His wounds we are healed" (53:4–5). As He Himself chanted in Psalm 22, Christ is forsaken by His Father because He became the sinner—indeed, sin itself—on the accursed tree. He is buried in the heart of the earth, as Jonah was buried in the belly of the fish, for three days and three nights. Yet His body is preserved, and He saw no decay (Acts 2:26–27), as David had prophesied (Psalm 16:9–10).

Even as Daniel was protected from the lions' jaws behind the sealed stone, so the roaring lion of hell could do no more damage to Jesus behind that sealed tomb. Both emerge alive, triumphant over their enemies. As Jonah was vomited forth from the fish to preach repentance to Nineveh, so Jesus is cast from the earth, alive again, to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins to all the world via His disciples. All is sketched beforehand in the Scriptures so that we might see this as the plan of the Father from Genesis onward.

Good Friday is the best of days and the worst of days. It is the worst because it reveals the gravity of our sin and the divine wrath sin arouses—a wrath so immense that only the sacrifice of God's Son could quench its flames. But more important, it is the best of days, for on it, the Father reveals His heart to us. How much God loves us is forever portrayed in the crucifixion and resurrection of His Son. He demonstrates the extent of His great love for us. He stopped at nothing—even sacrificing His own Son—to assure that we could live with Him in heaven eternally.

Level A

# Easter

Mark 15:1–16:8

## Connections

### Bible Words

Christ has been raised from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:20

### Faith Word

resurrected

### Hymn

Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia  
(LSB 466)

### Catechism

Apostles' Creed:  
Second Article

### Take-Home Point

Jesus died and came alive again for me.

## 1 Opening (15 minutes)

**What you do:** Before class, set up two activity areas. In one, set out copies of the Activity Page and crayons. Make copies of Activity Page Fun for parents or classroom helpers. Adjust talk as necessary.

In the other area, hide a variety of small objects in a dishpan of cornmeal for the children to discover, or set out pastel-colored play dough and cookie cutters of crosses, Easter eggs, butterflies, chicks, and spring flowers.

Greet children as they arrive and show them where to put their offering.

**Say** Hi, [Gabrielle]. **Happy Easter! I wonder . . . what do you like best about Easter?**

Direct the children to an activity. Encourage parents or caregivers to stay and do the Activity Page with their child.

**Activity Page Fun** Get a copy of the Activity Page and crayons. Have your child draw a line from the pictures on the left side to their “new life” matches on the right side. Begin by pointing to the chrysalis.

**Ask** **Do you know what this is called? It’s a chrysalis. It looks dead, but inside there is a beautiful butterfly getting ready to come out. Draw a line from the chrysalis to the butterfly.** Talk about the remaining pictures and have child match pictures in the same way. Then point out the tomb.

**What does this look like? Yes, a cave. On Good Friday, Jesus died on a cross. His friends put His body in a tomb like this. But Jesus didn’t stay dead! He came back to life just as He said He would.** Draw a line from the tomb to Jesus to show that He came back to life. **Today you will hear more about what happened on that first Easter Sunday!**

## MATERIALS NEEDED

### 1 Opening

#### Teacher Supplies

Activity Page (TG)  
Dishpan, cornmeal & small objects to hide  
Play dough & cookie cutters (optional)

### 2 God Speaks

#### Teacher Supplies

8 plastic Easter eggs that open  
Small cross, nail, rock, cinnamon stick, paper angel, white fabric  
Basket  
Sprout or another puppet  
Paper-plate puppets faces  
*The Easter Surprise* Arch Book (optional)  
Crayons

#### Student Material

Lesson Leaflets

### 3 We Live

#### Teacher Supplies

Sprout  
Paper faces  
Tissue paper  
Small zipper bags  
Pipe cleaners  
Paper Plus supplies (optional)  
Jell-O & Easter cookie cutters  
Scissors

### 4 Closing

#### Teacher Supplies

Scarves, ribbon twirlers, or rhythm instruments

**Active Learning** Encourage the children to look for the items you hid in the cornmeal. Have them hide the objects again so their friends can be surprised.

**Say** **Happy Easter! We can't see them, but there are some surprises hidden in the cornmeal. Can you find them? Jesus was in the grave for three days. His friends couldn't see Him. But surprise! Jesus came alive again on Easter. He is our Savior.**

*Option:* If you set out play dough, have children use the cookie cutters to make Easter shapes. Talk about Easter and the new life we have through Jesus.

Use your classroom signal to let children know it's time to clean up and gather for story time. Have them pretend to be chicks or butterflies as they move to your story area.

## Gathering in God's Name

**What you do:** Begin with this opening. To teach about Easter Sunday, use the materials in the Church Year Worship Kit, available from Concordia Publishing House.

**Sing** "Do You Know Who Died for Me" (*LOSP*, p. 93) or "Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia" (*LSB* 466).

**Say** **Happy Easter, friends! We have a special way of saying hello at Easter. Let's try it now. I will say, "Christ is risen!" Then you say, "He is risen indeed. Alleluia!"** Do this with the children.

Invite the children to say the Invocation and Amen with you. Tell them *amen* is the special word we say to ask Jesus to hear our prayers.

**Begin** **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Offering** Have a child bring the offering basket forward. Sing an offering song. Have children echo your words after the asterisks as you pray.

**Pray** **Dear Jesus,\* thank You for dying on the cross\* to pay for all our sins\* and rising again\* on Easter.\* We are happy\* that You are alive!\* We are happy\* that we will live with You\* in heaven.\* Amen.\***

**Celebrate** Birthdays, Baptism birthdays, and special occasions.

## 2 God Speaks (20 minutes)

### Story Clue

**What you do:** Have Sprout come out looking sad.

**Teacher:** Hi, Sprout. Happy Easter! (*Looking more closely at Sprout.*) What's wrong? Easter is a happy time because we're celebrating that Jesus came back to life. But you look sad.

**Sprout:** (*Hanging head*) Hi, Teacher. I *am* sad. Yesterday, I was coloring Easter eggs with Lily. But she kept hogging all the colors I wanted! I got so mad at her that I pushed her and knocked all her eggs on the floor. They cracked and broke. Lily started crying. Now I feel bad. I wish I hadn't been so mean to Lily. She won't even talk to me now.

### Liturgy Link

"This Is the Feast" in the liturgy is taken from the song the angels sang in heaven praising God for Christ's victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil (Revelation 5:12). Help the children learn the chorus to it by singing "This Is the Feast" (*LOSP*, p. 95).

**Teacher:** Oh, I see why you are sad now. When we say or do bad things, we are sinning. Sin hurts others, and it hurts us, too, on the inside. But I have good news for you, Sprout!

**Sprout:** You do?

**Teacher:** Yes! Jesus helps boys and girls to be friends again. That's what makes Easter so happy! Jesus died on the cross to pay for all our sins, and He came alive again on Easter! He is with us now. He helps us say we're sorry. He helps us forgive one another. Let's listen to our Bible story and find out just what Jesus did to take away the bad things we do. (*Set Sprout nearby.*)

## Bible Story Time

**What you do:** Number plastic eggs 1 to 7. Fill them with the following things: (1) a small cross, (2) a nail, (3) a piece of white fabric, (4) a cinnamon stick, (5) a small rock, (6) nothing (leave it empty), and (7) an angel figurine or picture of an angel. Put the eggs in a basket. *Option:* Tell the story using the Arch Book *The Easter Surprise* (CPH, 59-2275).

**Say** When Jesus lived on earth, He taught people about God. He obeyed all of God's rules and never sinned. He did that for us. Some people still wanted to hurt Jesus. They sent guards to capture Him. The guards tied Jesus' hands behind His back and took Him to a ruler named Pilate.

Pilate had Jesus beaten. But this was not enough for Jesus' enemies. So, even though Jesus had done nothing wrong, Pilate said to nail Jesus to a cross. Open Egg 1. The nails hurt Jesus. Open Egg 2.

But Jesus still loved the people who were hurting Him. He prayed, "Father, forgive them." After a few hours, the sky became very dark. The earth shook. Jesus said, "It is finished," and He died. Jesus' friends wrapped Jesus in a clean cloth. Open Egg 3.

They put Him in a tomb—a cave in the side of a hill. Then they put a big rock in front of the opening so no one could go in or out. Then they left. All this happened on Good Friday.

Early in the morning three days later, some women were walking to the tomb. They were going to put spices on Jesus' body. Open Egg 4. Let children smell the cinnamon stick.

As they walked, they wondered, "Who will move the stone away from the door of the tomb?" When they got to the tomb, they had a big surprise! The large stone was already rolled away. Open Egg 5.

Quickly, they hurried inside to look for Jesus' body, but they had another surprise. The tomb was empty! Open Egg 6.

"Where was Jesus' body?" they wondered. Surprise! An angel stood beside the women. Open Egg 7.

The angel asked them, "Why are you looking for Jesus here? He's not dead anymore. He's alive! He has risen!" Then the angel told the women to go tell Peter and the other disciples the happy news.

**Sing** "Jesus Came from Heaven" (*LOSP*, p. 92).

**Say** Jesus suffered and died on the cross to pay for our sins. But surprise! On Easter, Jesus came alive again just as He said He would! Someday, Jesus will make us alive when we die and take us to live with Him in heaven. Jesus loves us so much! That makes us happy, doesn't it!

### Key Point

Jesus' death and resurrection grants us eternal life in heaven with Him.

## Bible Story Review

**What you do:** Draw a sad face on one side of a paper plate and a smiley face on the other side. Make similar plates for each of the children, or let them draw and decorate the faces on the plates themselves.

When you hold up your paper-plate face, have them hold up the face that matches yours as you review the story. Have the Lesson Leaflet and crayons ready to hand out.

**Say** The Bible story we just heard about Jesus has sad parts (show sad face) and happy parts (show happy face). **I'm going to tell the story again. This time, let's think about the story a little more. I'm going to give each one of you a face puppet. When you think the story is sad, hold up the sad face. When you think the story is happy, hold up the happy face.**

As you talk about Good Friday, have the children show the sad faces on their plates. As you talk about Jesus' resurrection, have the children hold up their happy faces.

Then hand out the Lesson Leaflet and crayons. Have the children turn to the Search & Find activity on the inside pages.

**Say** Use your finger to point to the women. Have children do this.

**Ask** Where are the women going? They are going to Jesus' tomb.

**What did they want to do?** They wanted to put spices on Jesus' body.

**What does the angel tell them?** Jesus is not there; He's alive! Go and tell.

**Say** Now look at the little pictures on the side of the big one. Point out the Search & Find pictures. **All of these things are hiding in the Bible story picture. Can you find them? When you find the picture of Jesus' face and the Bible, remember that God sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Jesus died and came alive again for you!**

## Bible Words

**What you do:** Use the paper-plate faces. Read the Bible Words from 1 Corinthians 15:20. Use the activity to help the children learn the words.

**Say** Jesus died on the cross for us on Good Friday. Hold up sad face. **On Easter, Jesus came alive again!** Hold up happy face. **The Bible tells us so. It says, "Christ has been raised from the dead"** (1 Corinthians 15:20). **Let's say our Bible Words together.** Have children stand and say the Bible Words with you; do the actions as you say the words to the action poem.

**Say** "Christ has been raised from the dead." **What good news this is! Let's stand and say this good news with our loud voices.** Say the verse. **You were very good at using your loud voices so everyone can hear. Now can you use your whisper voices to say the Bible words?** Softly say the verse again. **Very good. Now watch what I do; then do it too.**

**When Jesus died, they buried Him** *Crouch down low.*

**Inside an empty cave.** *Make motion outlining "cave."*

**But Easter came and—happy day—** *Make circle with arms to represent sun.*

**My Jesus is ALIVE!** *Raise arms above head, and jump up.*

From *Fingers Tell the Story*, © 1989 CPH, p. 30.

## 3 We Live (20 minutes)

Help children grow in their understanding of what the Bible story means for their lives. Choose the activities that work best with your class.

### Growing through God's Word

**What you do:** Use the happy and sad paper-plate faces and Sprout. Begin by showing the sad face.

**Teacher:** Sin makes God angry and sad. (*Show sad face.*) But God loves us. He sent Jesus to pay for our sins—all the wrong things we think and say and do—on the cross. And because Jesus is God, He didn't stay dead. He came back to life. That makes me joyful. (*Show happy face.*) Because Jesus is alive, someday all those who believe in Jesus will live forever with Him in heaven.

**Sprout:** Wow! That makes me happy! I'm so glad that Jesus died to pay for my sins and came to life again on Easter. That means Jesus paid for my sin of being mean to Lily too! (*Teacher nods in agreement.*) I'm so glad Jesus forgives me. I'm going to go tell Lily that I'm sorry and ask her to forgive me too. I want to tell her "Happy Easter! Jesus is alive" so she knows Jesus loves her too!

### Craft Time

**What you do:** Make butterflies. For each one, you will need tissue paper, small zipper bags, scissors, and pipe cleaners. Fill the bag about  $\frac{2}{3}$  full with small tissue paper pieces, crumpled or flat. Squeeze the air out of the bag and seal it. Fold the zipper top to the back. Gather the bag in the middle and twist the pipe cleaner around the center. Curl the ends to make the butterfly's antennae.

Talk about the life cycle of butterflies and how they can remind us of Jesus. Introduce the craft by showing pictures of a caterpillar wrapped up in a chrysalis and then emerging as a butterfly (e.g., use pictures from *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, or search online for pictures of a caterpillar emerging from a chrysalis).

**Say** A caterpillar wraps itself up inside a chrysalis. At just the right time, it comes out as a butterfly. When Jesus died, His friends wrapped His body and put Him in a tomb. But surprise! Jesus didn't stay dead. Three days later, Jesus came out of the tomb. He is alive! Let's make a beautiful butterfly to remind us that Jesus rose from the dead. Someday, Jesus will make us alive when we die, and He will take everyone who believes in Him to live with Him in heaven.

*Paper Plus option:* Decorate and fill plastic Easter eggs. Give each child two plastic Easter eggs, purchased Easter or spring stickers, or stick-on jewels. Have the children decorate their eggs. Then give them Easter candy and a pocket cross or sticker of Jesus to put inside each egg. Suggest that they give one egg to a friend and tell him or her the Easter story.

## Snack Time

**What you do:** Serve finger Jell-O in the shape of crosses and butterflies.

## Live It Out

**What you do:** Walk to the church sanctuary and look for things that remind us to be happy because Jesus is alive—the Easter lilies, the cross with flowers or an Easter cloth on it, the colorful banners, the white paraments used at Easter, the stained glass windows that show Jesus as our Savior, and so forth.

**Say** We go to church on Easter to celebrate that Jesus is alive. The angel in today's Bible story told the women, "Jesus is risen. Go and tell." You can use the craft you made today to go and tell others what happened on the first Easter.



Faith in Action!

## 4 Closing (5 minutes)

### Going Home

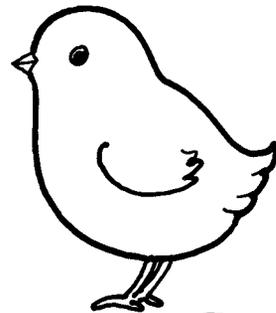
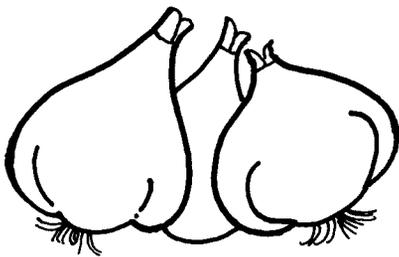
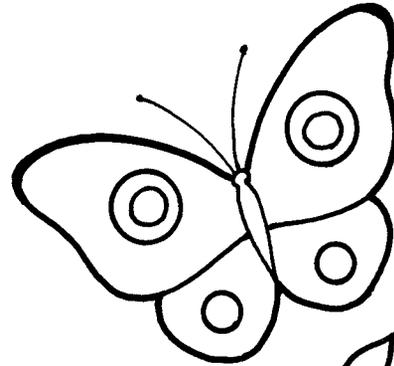
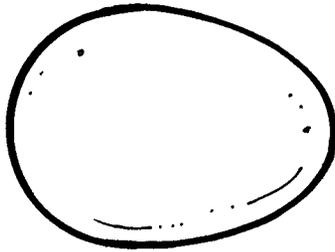
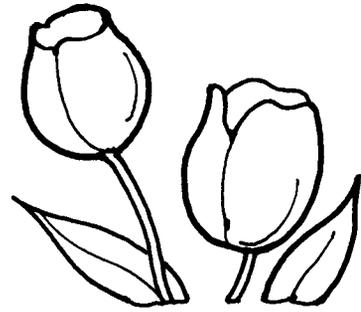
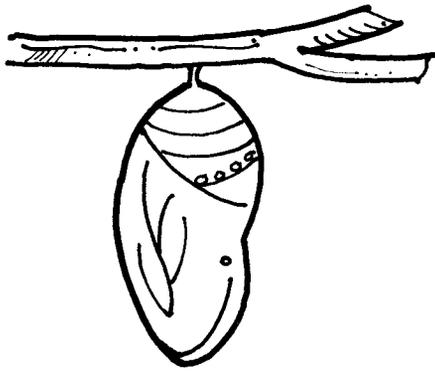
**What you do:** Give the children scarves, pieces of ribbon tied together, or rhythm instruments. Lead them in an Easter parade around your room. Play "God Loves Me Dearly" (*LSB* 392; *LOSP*, p. 85) or other happy Easter songs. Begin and end your parade by saying, "He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia."

**Say** We're so happy that Jesus died and came alive again for us. Let's say together: "Jesus died and came alive again for me." Now let's say thank You to Jesus in a special way. Have the children wave a colorful scarf or some pieces of ribbon tied together and say "Alleluia" in response to each thing you pray.

**Pray** Dear Jesus, You are alive! Alleluia!  
 Thank You for dying on the cross to pay for our sins. Alleluia!  
 Thank You for making us Your children in Baptism. Alleluia!  
 Thank You for being with us always. Alleluia!  
 Thank You for promising to take us to heaven someday. Alleluia!  
 Thank You for loving us. Alleluia!  
 We love You, too, Jesus. Alleluia!

### Reflection

Did the children receive the central message of the Bible—that Jesus died to take away our sin and rose for us so that someday we'll live forever with Him in heaven? Did today's activities help convey the sense of joy Christians have at Easter and every day?



Draw a line to match the pictures with the ones that show "new life."

# Preparing the Lesson

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**Date of Use**

## Easter

Mark 15:1–16:8

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### Key Point

Jesus' death and resurrection grants us eternal life in heaven with Him.

### Law/Gospel

The cost of my sin is death. **Jesus died for me and rose again in payment for my sin, fulfilling God's demands and securing my forgiveness and eternal life with Him in heaven.**

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Our Holy Week was for the Jews the week of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In Jerusalem, it was standing room only. Because the Jews were under Roman rule, the death penalty could be pronounced only by a Roman official—thus Pilate's involvement.

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### Commentary

Nothing happened to Jesus by chance. It was all predicted and foreshadowed in the sermons of Moses and the prophets. The enmity between the seed of Satan and the Seed of Eve culminates in this death scene, where the hellish snake sinks his fangs into the heel of the woman's Seed, while simultaneously that heel comes crashing down on the serpentine skull (Genesis 3:15). Death is slain, as is Jesus, the slayer Himself.

As Isaac carried the wood of sacrifice on his back, so this promised Son carries the wood of crucifixion on which He will be offered in the stead of all of us Isaacs (Genesis 22). Here is the Suffering Servant, whom Isaiah foresaw "stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted . . . pierced for our transgressions . . . crushed for our iniquities; . . . with His wounds we are healed" (53:4–5). As He Himself chanted in Psalm 22, Christ is forsaken by His Father because He became the sinner—indeed, sin itself—on the accursed tree. He is buried in the heart of the earth, as Jonah was buried in the belly of the fish, for three days and three nights. Yet His body is preserved, and He saw no decay (Acts 2:26–27), as David had prophesied (Psalm 16:9–10).

Even as Daniel was protected from the lions' jaws behind the sealed stone, so the roaring lion of hell could do no more damage to Jesus behind that sealed tomb. Both emerge alive, triumphant over their enemies. As Jonah was vomited forth from the fish to preach repentance to Nineveh, so Jesus is cast from the earth, alive again, to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins to all the world via His disciples. All is sketched beforehand in the Scriptures so that we might see this as the plan of the Father from Genesis onward.

Good Friday is the best of days and the worst of days. It is the worst because it reveals the gravity of our sin and the divine wrath sin arouses—a wrath so immense that only the sacrifice of God's Son could quench its flames. But more important, it is the best of days, for on it, the Father reveals His heart to us. How much God loves us is forever portrayed in the crucifixion and resurrection of His Son. He demonstrates the extent of His great love for us. He stopped at nothing—even sacrificing His own Son—to assure that we could live with Him in heaven eternally.

Level B

# Easter

Mark 15:1–16:8

## Connections

### Bible Words

Christ has been raised from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:20

### Faith Word

alleluia

### Hymn

He's Risen, He's Risen  
(LSB 480)

### Catechism

The Ten Commandments

### Liturgy

Sabbath

### Take-Home Point

Jesus died and came alive again for me.

## Prepare to Teach

Before class, post the attendance chart, and set out the attendance stickers or markers. Set out the offering basket. Make copies of the reproducible page at the end of the lesson. Have on hand scissors, markers, tape, and construction paper.

## 1 Opening (5 minutes)

Welcome the children and take attendance. As students arrive, engage them in a discussion.

**Say** **Sometimes we have good days, and sometimes we have bad days. How are they alike or different?** Allow students to ponder this and have them write or draw a picture about a good day and a bad day on a piece of blank paper folded in half—one half for each picture. After a few minutes, allow willing students to tell about their experiences.

**Say** **Today, we will see that one day in Jesus' life on earth was not only the worst of days but also the best of days. To what day do you think I'm referring?** Allow for responses. (Good Friday) **What happened on Good Friday?** Give ample time for students to tell all they know about the events of that day. **If all of those bad-sounding things happened, why is the day called Good Friday?** Allow students to explain, affirming all appropriate responses.

**Say** **We will see why Good Friday was the worst of days for us, but also the best of days too. As we study our Bible text today, we will discover some important details to help us understand the good and bad of Good Friday. Some surprises await us! Good Friday is not the end of the story!**

## MATERIALS NEEDED

1 Opening	2 God Speaks	3 We Live	4 Closing
<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Hymnals Paper Pencils or crayons	<b>Student Material</b> Lesson Leaflets	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Gray construction paper Transparent tape Level B Activity Page (TG) Wire coat hangers Yarn Scissors Snack supplies (optional) Songbook (optional) Black markers <b>Student Material</b> Lesson Leaflets	<b>Teacher Supplies</b> Hymnals

## Worship

Light the candles on the altar and begin with the Invocation. Make the sign of the cross in remembrance of Baptism.

**Say** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Gather offerings and celebrate any special occasions.

**Sing** “He’s Risen, He’s Risen” (LSB 480).

**Say** Christ is risen!

Encourage or prompt the students to respond: “He is risen indeed! Alleluia!” This traditional Easter greeting among Christians dates back to the Early Christian Church. Discuss the words, asking students if they can identify the connection to today’s victorious celebration over sin, death, and the devil. Explain that *alleluia* means “praise the Lord.” The phrase “He is risen” echoes the words of the angel to the women as they entered the tomb early on Easter morning (Mark 16:6).

**Pray** Dear heavenly Father, Your Word is truth. Because You are God, we believe all You have said, from the very first announcement of death in Eden to today’s joyful announcement that Your Son, Jesus Christ, has risen from the dead for our salvation. Be among us through Your Holy Spirit now so that as we hear Your Word, we may see Jesus where He has promised to be found—in Your Word and the Sacraments. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

## 2 God Speaks (20 minutes)

### Surprises on Good Friday

Have students open their Bibles to Mark 15. Today’s lengthy reading covers more than one chapter, so you may wish to read the text aloud yourself as students follow along, or you may ask volunteers to read several verses at a time. Follow the suggested divisions in the discussion guide that follows. Stop after each section to discuss.

Visual learners will benefit from following along in the text. Auditory learners will prefer to simply listen. Others will benefit most by reading aloud. Choose the method that is best for your students.

Divide the board or a large piece of poster paper into two columns by drawing a vertical line down the center. Make it into a cross with a horizontal line near the top of the board.

**Say** The cross was an instrument of torture and death in Jesus’ day. Today it is a symbol of hope and comfort because of what Jesus did for us on the altar of the cross. We will use this large cross chart for today’s discussion.

As you discuss the following questions, write a brief phrase in each column to show the contrasts in this text. Allow students to take turns writing responses on the chart. Suggestions are given at the end of each numbered section. If time is short, summarize the first three sections of the reading. Use the chart to provide context for the story, but focus your time on the last sections of the reading, starting with the crucifixion.

## Key Point

Jesus’ death and resurrection grants us eternal life in heaven with Him.

A Great Idea!

1. Have students look first at Mark 15:1–15. **Who wanted Jesus put to death, and who would rather have seen Him released? Why is that surprising?** (The chief priests, elders, scribes, and council—the religious leaders of the day—wanted Jesus put to death. It was not within their power to do so, though, so they turned Jesus over to Pilate, a secular, nonchurch leader, who saw no reason for Jesus to die and wanted to release Him. Those who should have understood and supported Jesus refused to believe Him.)

In the left column on the chart, write, “Religious leaders wanted Jesus dead”; in the right column, write, “Pilate wanted Jesus released.”

2. Mark 15:6–15 describes the custom of releasing a prisoner during Passover. **Why was the release of Barabbas surprising?** (Barabbas, a criminal responsible for a murder during a political uprising, was released. Sinless Jesus was condemned to die in his place.)

In the left column, write, “Sinless Jesus died”; in the right column, write, “Condemned sinners live.” Jesus died for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

3. Mark 15:16–20 describes the mockery and degradation Jesus suffered at the hands of the Roman soldiers, who thought Jesus was supposed to be an earthly king. They did not understand how true were their words, “Hail, King of the Jews!” (v. 18). **On Palm Sunday, five days earlier, Jesus’ followers hailed Jesus as their king** (Luke 19:37–38). **Why is this surprising?** (How surprising that after Jesus’ followers hailed Him as their King, there were many who wanted Him killed. They had been waiting for a king who would free them from the burden of being ruled by the Roman government.) We know that Jesus is the King of kings, and His kingdom is heaven.

In the left column, write, “Earthly king”; in the right column, write, “Heavenly King.”

*If time is short, start here with the Bible story.*

4. Read Mark 15:21–28. **Why is it surprising that Jesus didn’t take the myrrh, a painkiller?** (Jesus had a job to do on the cross. By not taking the painkiller, Jesus suffered completely and willingly for our sins.) **When was myrrh mentioned another time during Jesus’ life on earth?** (Myrrh was one of the gifts of the Magi [Matthew 2:11], received because He was a king. Here the precious gift from the Magi compares with the precious gift of Jesus’ own life for our salvation.)

In the left column, write, “Gift for King”; in the right column, write, “King gives gift of salvation.”

5. Have students read Mark 15:29–32 and John 10:17–18. **People who saw Jesus on the cross remembered that He had said He would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days** (John 2:19). **Why did Jesus stay on the cross?** (Jesus came to save sinners. This could only be accomplished by dying for their sins. Jesus chose to stay on the cross for us.)

In the left column, write, “Killed”; in the right column, write, “Laid down life.”

6. Read Mark 15:33–38. **From noon until 3:00 p.m. that day, it was dark like nighttime. Why is that surprising?** (The darkness was not a solar eclipse but a miracle of God. Jesus is the light of the world.) **Why is Jesus' loud cry surprising?** (When Jesus cried out in a loud voice, it was not a voice of someone who hadn't eaten or slept for more than a day, been tortured severely, and hung on the cross for six hours. Jesus' loud cry was a shout of triumph or victory.)

In the left column, write, "World is darkness"; in the right column, write, "Jesus is light."

7. **The tearing of the curtain in the temple is significant. What was the purpose of the curtain?** (The very thick curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. On the Day of Atonement, only one priest could enter the Most Holy Place to make sacrifices for the sins of the people.) **Why was the torn curtain surprising?** (God Himself tore the curtain when Jesus died because Jesus had fulfilled the Law. God's people would no longer need to make sacrifices for their sins because Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice. All of the sins that separated sinners from God had been taken away.)

In the left column, write, "Law separates humans from God"; in the right column, write, "Jesus fulfills the Law."

8. Ask a student volunteer to read Mark 15:39. **Why is the centurion's confession of faith surprising?** (The centurion believed in Jesus as the Son of God. The centurion was not a Jew but a Gentile. He may have heard that Jesus was the Messiah of the Jews, the Son of God who would bring salvation to God's people. After everything he witnessed at the cross, he was convinced that Jesus was innocent. He saw the victory obtained in Jesus' death. God opened the centurion's eyes, and he confessed his faith in Jesus.)

9. Complete the reading of Mark 15:40–47 and John 19:39. **Who buried Jesus?** (Joseph of Arimathea) **Who brought myrrh and other spices?** (Nicodemus) **Why is it surprising that these two people cared for Jesus' body?** (They were both members of the same Jewish Council that condemned Jesus.)

In the left column, write, "Disciples ran away"; in the right column, write, "Joseph and Nicodemus buried Jesus."

## Surprise on Easter

10. Read Mark 16:1–4. **Why is what the women found outside of the tomb surprising?** (The women were wondering how the large stone would be rolled away so that they could anoint Jesus' body with spices, but the stone had already been rolled away.)

11. Complete the reading of Mark 16:5–8. **Why is what they found inside the tomb surprising?** (Jesus was dead and buried. The women knew where He was buried, but Jesus was not in the tomb. The women were told that Jesus had risen from the dead as He had said.)

In the left column, write, "Jesus was buried"; in the right column, write, "Jesus rose."

## 3 We Live (10 minutes)

### Snack

#### Black and White Cookies

To make the dough, simply cream 1 cup of butter with ½ cup powdered sugar, then mix in 2 cups flour.

Add 3 Tbsp. cocoa powder to half the dough. Make each half into a ball.

Roll out dough into circle (stone) shapes. Press a chocolate and plain circle together and bake for at least 15 minutes to create a cookie with contrasting sides, like our worst and best day.

### Review

Distribute the Lesson Leaflets. Have your students do the Search & Know activity on page 4 together as a class, to review the lesson. Students color the crosses in front of all but the last statement. Ask them to tell why the last statement is false. Discuss why we try to keep God's Commandments and why we want to live Christian lives, always emphasizing the work God has done in our lives to bring us from the worst situation to the best—life with Him in heaven.

The Law shows us our sins and our need for a Savior; the Gospel shows us that our Savior has forgiven us and taken away all condemnation. We are now free to delight in His will and walk in His ways to the glory of His holy name! We follow the Law in response to Jesus' death and resurrection, which earns our salvation; we don't do it to try to earn salvation through our own actions.

### Bible Words

*Christ has been raised from the dead.* 1 Corinthians 15:20

**Ask** **What was the surprise the women encountered at the tomb on Easter morning?** Say the Bible Words together.

Provide gray construction paper. Have the students draw a three-inch circle to represent the stone that was rolled away. In the remaining space, have them draw a dome-shaped cave on their paper by drawing an arc from the straight edge. Cut out each.

Challenge the children to write the Bible Words around the entire edge of the circle, with the Bible reference in the middle. Students can use transparent tape on the left side of the stone to attach it to the tomb, creating a flap. Make sure the words are on the side of the circle that is not showing. When the stone flap is down, the tomb will look sealed. When the flap is lifted, the Bible Words should show on the inside of the stone. A black marker can be used to draw a circle on the tomb itself to represent an opening. Surprise! The tomb is empty. Christ has been raised! Jesus died and came alive for us.

### Worst and Best

**Ask** **Why was this day the worst of days for Jesus?** (He suffered shame, humiliation, torture, severe mistreatment, and an agonizing, horrible physical death. He received the treatment that we, as sinners, should have received. He was innocent and perfect.)

**Ask** **Why was this day the best of days for Jesus?** (He knew that He had to come to earth and endure all that sinners deserved, because of our sins, in order to make atonement for us and reconcile us to God, our heavenly Father. He knew the job He came to do was finished.)

**Ask** **Why is Good Friday the worst of days for us?** (Jesus died and came alive for me. We see how serious our sins are to God. Though we were not there physically at Jesus' crucifixion, we are among those who crucified Him by our sinfulness. We are condemned creatures, deserving God's wrath,

because we cannot keep the Law. Our sins made it necessary for God to send His Son to earth; Jesus had to die for our sins. It is the plan that God established already in Genesis 3:15, when Adam and Eve first sinned. Jesus became the final atonement, or sacrifice, for all sins of all people for all time.)

**Ask** **Why is Good Friday the best of days for us?** (Jesus died and came alive for *me*. We see how much God loves us. Willingly, Jesus suffered, died, and rose again for us. Jesus took God's wrath to save us from our sins so we would have life with Him forever. Good Friday is not the end of the story! It's the best day for us because of what happened three days later, Jesus' resurrection!)

**Ask** **What's so important about Sundays?** (Typically, Divine Service is held on Sundays, celebrating the day of Christ's resurrection from the dead, for on that day, Jesus won for us eternal life. In the Old Testament, the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week was the day of worship, but in the New Testament there is no divinely appointed day of rest.)

**Say** **The best surprise ever is God's grace to us. Though we don't deserve anything but punishment, through Christ we have forgiveness and life.**

*Option:* In response, sing "We Welcome Glad Easter" (SGL, p. 24). Record your students or ask a student to be the videographer. Use the following choreography for the refrain:

"Then raise [*cup hands at sides of mouth, then push them up at the word raise*] your glad voices, you children [*spin*], and sing [*curtsey*], Bring sweet [*touch heart*] Easter praises [*raise hands up and sway back and forth*] to Jesus, our King [*lower hands, bow*]."

## Craft—"Alleluia!" Mobiles

**Ask** **What is our response to the worst and best of days?**

**Shout** Alleluia!

Provide copies of the Level B Activity Page, found at the end of the lesson, along with markers or crayons, wire coat hangers, and yarn for the students to create "Alleluia!" mobiles. Display the mobiles in your classroom for several weeks, or have the students take them home as a reminder of God's love in sending His Son, Jesus, who willingly suffered, died, and rose again to give us the victory over sin, death, and the devil. Students will color the word and letters and cut them out. The word and letters may then be tied to the coat hanger as shown on the activity page to create a mobile.

## 4 Closing (10 minutes)

**Sing** "He's Risen, He's Risen" (LSB 480).

**Shout** Alleluia!

**Pray** **Precious Jesus, our Lord and our God, thank You that although we don't deserve it, You fulfilled God's plan of salvation by suffering and dying for us, purifying us from every sin. Amen.**

**Say** **Jesus died and came alive again for me. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

# Alleluia! Mobile

