

**Jesus Is Alive**

(based on John 20:1-18)

It was very early on Sunday morning. A woman called Mary Magdalene walked along the road. She was crying.

Mary was one of Jesus' friends. Three days earlier, she had watched soldiers kill Jesus on the cross. Now he was dead and buried.

Mary wanted to go to the tomb where they had put Jesus' body. When she arrived, she saw that the tomb was open and empty.

Mary was very upset. What was going on? She ran to tell Jesus' disciples. They came back to the tomb as fast as they could. It was definitely empty. The disciples didn't know what to do, so they went back home.

Mary didn't want to go home. She stayed by the tomb, crying. First Jesus had died and now his body was gone. She didn't know what to do.

Suddenly, Mary heard a noise. She turned around and saw a man standing behind her. Mary was crying so hard that the tears made it difficult for her to see.

"Why are you crying?" the man asked. "Who are you looking for?"

Mary thought it was the gardener. "Sir," she sobbed, "If you have taken Jesus away, please tell me where his body is."

"Mary," the figure said.

As soon as Mary heard her name, she knew who he was. It was Jesus! He was alive!

"Go and tell the other disciples what has happened," instructed Jesus. "Tell them that I am going to be with God."

Mary ran as fast as she could to tell the other disciples. She had a wonderful message to deliver.

"I have seen Jesus! He is alive!"



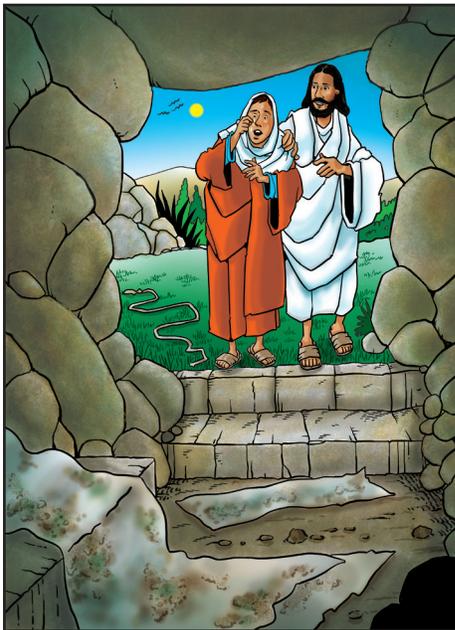
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Brainstorm everything your family thinks of when you think of Easter. Help each other think of things beyond candy, gifts, and dinner: for example, new life in Christ, victory over sin and death, and the power of God's love.
- How does your family celebrate Easter? Search for the meaning behind common Easter symbols and their connections to our annual celebration of new life.



Responding to God's Grace

- We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus every Sunday—the Lord's Day. What do you do to set Sunday apart?
- God loves us and wants to be where we are. Read *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown (Harper & Row Publishers, 1942) or watch the YouTube video "The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown. Grandma Anni's Storytime" (bit.ly/RunawayBunny, 6:00). Enjoy thinking about how God is present in your life.
- Take a few minutes to reach out to your friends or family members who live far away by sending them Easter greetings.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Do an internet search for "resurrection cookies recipe." Make, bake, and be surprised at the result!
- Watch and listen to the voices singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" on the YouTube video "Quarantine Easter—Hallelujah Chorus (Eastern)—Virtual Choir—The Common People" (bit.ly/HallelujahChorusEastern, 4:32).
- Pray this prayer:

Jesus, we know that you are alive. Thank you for your love for us. Amen.

Note: bit.ly web addresses are case sensitive.