

Experience Easter script and Teacher's notes

Thank you for signing up to our new virtual version of Experience Easter. All the videos for the workshops are available at <https://trinitylearning.org.uk/experience-easter-2021/>. These notes contain some useful information on equipment, timing and practical details to help you to present the workshops effectively. We have also included a full copy of the workshop scripts as a backup in case you need a non-video based alternative.

Equipment

If you have booked our accompanying packs then each child will need a pack and a pen or pencil.

Teachers or group leaders might want some large paper and a pen to record kind ideas in the Servant King Workshop.

You might want to choose some calming music to play as the children come in, and for stretch breaks. Alternatively, a shaker or rainstick is useful to mark the end of each workshop in order to refocus attention ready for the next one.



The packs contain:

- a palm cross (instructions on how to make these from paper are available on the Servant King section of the website)
- a small towel
- a ball of plasticine
- a bead tied to a short piece (22 cm) of thread or string. 2 additional beads
- 3 post-it notes
- a set of stickers and a sticker card for sequencing and reflecting on the Easter Story

Some additional 'staging' ideas are listed below for each workshop. These are non-essential but might help to add atmosphere, especially if you are working with small groups.

Hopes and Dreams - make a path of jumpers or coats.

Servant King - have water available for hand washing (if this can be done safely).



The Last Supper - set out a table with plates and cups.

The Garden of Gethsemane - use pot plants to make a mini garden.

Good Friday - draw a hill with 3 crosses, 1 large and 2 smaller, on a big piece of paper.



Easter Sunday - cover a table with a sheet to make a cave, put some rolled bandages, or rolled paper or cloth to represent bandages in the bottom.

Timings and organisation

Experience Easter works best in a calming, peaceful environment. It is worth taking some time to settle your class and ensure they are all ready before you begin. If using the packs, give children a moment to look at them but encourage them not to open them until you are ready to begin. Make sure each child has a pen or pencil before you start (pencils work fine, even on the palm crosses).

At Experience Easter in Trinity Church, the children physically move from one workshop to the next. If you are delivering the workshops to children sitting at desks, it might be worth planning a calm stretch break between each workshop.

In total, Experience Easter will take between 1 and a half and 2 hours to complete, with additional time for the sticker sequencing activity. We would recommend taking a whole morning or afternoon to complete the workshops and aiming to make it as calm an experience as possible. Perhaps having some calming music to play as the children come in, and for stretch breaks.

Calming activity and whole Easter Story: (10 -15 minutes) The video for this section lasts 6 minutes but it is worth allowing more time to ensure the children are really calm and quiet before you begin.

Workshops: Each workshop will take approximately 10 minutes. This includes a short video and time to complete the discussion and activity. The main video at the top of each workshop page gives you the story and related reflective activity. Below this, the story and activity are presented separately in case you need to recap either.

Hopes and Dreams: be mindful of children's feelings and emotions. We usually encourage the children to think of a hope they can achieve themselves. This year, I think we all have simple hopes we can look forward to such as meeting a friend, playing

a sport we love etc. Some children might have larger scale or longer term hopes and that's fine too! Once completed, the palm crosses could be placed together to create a hopes and dreams display which could be photographed, and/or children could take their palm crosses home in their packs.

Servant King: handwashing or miming drying hands. It might be worth recording some ideas for kind things children suggest on large paper for display in the classroom. Children can take their towels home in their packs.

The Last Supper: Children might want to share information about celebration meals they eat with their families or they could share something they remember about Jesus.

The 'What did they Eat?' video adds extra information about the Seder Plate at the Passover meal.

The Garden of Gethsemane: plasticine models could be used to create a central Garden of Gethsemane display which could be photographed, and/or children could take their plasticine models home in their packs.

Good Friday: if children store their threaded beads back in their packs, they will be less likely to come loose! Usually, we would give quite a lot of support to secure the beads but as that is currently less practical, perhaps remind the children that if they keep the beads safe in their packs, they can always repeat the activity at home.

Easter Sunday: usually we would do a quick vocabulary check to ensure that everyone understands the meaning of the word tomb. This is worth discussing before you move on to the activity. The activity video can also be found as a stand-alone video beneath the main workshop video if you would like a recap. It is worth sticking up all the post-it notes in a place where everyone can see them. The range of feelings suggested by children is usually very wide, from sadness, fear, and anger to surprise and joy. If some children find it hard to think of, or write feelings, perhaps draw a set of emoji faces for them to choose from.

Conclusion: it is worth taking a moment to reflect on children's impressions of the workshops. The video is brief but offers lots of opportunities for discussion. The questions are given in the conclusion section of the script in case you would like to focus on any of them.

After the conclusion we recommend planning an active break, preferably outside.

The sequencing sticker activity could be done after your active break or on the following day. If you choose, it could provide a useful preparation to a writing or drawing activity linked to the workshops.

Photographs: if you do photograph collections of palm crosses, plasticine models or post-it notes please could you send us a copy? Usually, an informal gallery of these

builds up in the church as the Experience Easter week progresses. It would be lovely to replicate this on our website if possible. Please send any photographs to nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com

Feedback: this is a completely new way of working for us so it would be extremely useful to know what works well and what we could improve! Please could you fill in and send back the feedback form from your pack, we have included a stamped addressed envelope.

Safeguarding

Experience Easter both recounts the Easter Story and encourages children to reflect upon it in terms of their own feelings and experiences. As with any Circle Time type activity this could result in children discussing or sharing personal feelings or situations. It is worth class teachers being aware of this possibility and, where possible, arranging to have an additional adult available for support.

The dynamic in delivering Experience Easter to a whole class, in a classroom, is likely to be very different than it is in working with small groups in Trinity Church; however, in our experience, children are most likely to share their worries or concerns during the Hopes and Dreams, Garden of Gethsemane, and Good Friday workshops.

Experience Easter Script

Calming activity

Welcome to Experience Easter. We are going on a journey, to a place far away and long ago. Before you go on any journey you have to get ready – to get things together and pack. Now we're going to prepare for *our* journey:

Shut your eyes... and listen to all the noises around you...

Imagine you are travelling far away, leaving all those noises behind...

Now listen to all the sounds inside you - your breathing, your heart beating...

Quietly take a deep breath...

Let it out very slowly.

As you let it out, imagine you're travelling on, through time and space, leaving everything behind.

You've arrived. You can hear people talking in a strange language, animals, carts rolling over cobbles. Everything is new, different. Now quietly open your eyes.

Jerusalem was busy with people, who had come for the Passover festival. Jesus and his friends were going there, too. When they reached the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his followers off to the next village, to find a donkey for him to ride. They threw their coats on its back and helped Jesus get on. As he rode down the hill into town, the people gave him a royal welcome, shouting

"Blessed is the king who comes in God's name! Glory to God!"

Now all this fuss made the Jewish leaders angry. Jesus was far too popular, and his wise words made Jesus a threat to their authority. So, they hatched a plot to have him killed. In the meantime, Jesus just went on doing the work he felt God had given him - telling people about God's love and the way they could live. One mealtime, Jesus got up from the supper table, set aside his coat, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with his apron. "I have given you an example" he said. "Live humbly, as God wants".

Their Passover meal together was very special "You've no idea how much I've looked forward to eating this with you", Jesus said, "before I enter my time of suffering. It's the last meal I'll eat until we all eat together in Heaven." Then, taking the cup, he said a prayer over it. "Take this and pass it around." Then Jesus picked up the bread, thanked God, broke it up, and gave it to his friends, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Eat it in my memory."

After supper, Jesus and his friends walked to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus told his disciples, "Stay here and pray." Then he walked a little way off, knelt down and prayed. "Father, if there is any way, please get me out of this. But it's not what I want that

counts." When he went back to his friends, Jesus found them asleep. As he was waking them up, Judas arrived with a group of Roman soldiers, all fully armed. The disciples tried to stop them arresting Jesus, but he insisted on handing himself over without a struggle.

Jesus was sent to the Jewish leaders for questioning, then to the Roman Governor. The Jews wanted Jesus to be executed for claiming he was God's Son. Jesus was whipped and led out of the city, to the hill where people were executed. There they crucified him. The soldiers came up and poked fun at him, making a game of it. They hung a sign over his head: "this is the king of the Jews." It was several long hours before Jesus cried out in agony and died. It seemed to his friends that the whole world had gone dark.

Jesus' friends asked the Romans if they could take his body away for burial. They wrapped it up in cotton sheets and left it in a tomb dug out of the rocky cliffs. They rolled a huge stone over the entrance, so nothing could disturb it.

The next day was the Passover Festival, but none of Jesus' friends felt like celebrating. They waited until dawn on Sunday, when some of them returned to the tomb. They found the entrance stone rolled back and their Master's body missing. Then, suddenly it seemed like two men appeared from nowhere, with light all around them. The men said, "Why are you looking for the Living One in a cemetery? He's not here. Don't you remember how, when you were still back home in Galilee, Jesus told you that he had to be handed over to be killed on a cross, and in three days live again?" Then they remembered – yes, that was what Jesus had said.

Palm Sunday – Hopes and Dreams

What you will need for this workshop

- 1 palm or paper cross
- A felt tip pen or biro

You could make a path on the floor from coats or jumpers

Introduction

The country where Jesus lived was occupied by Roman soldiers. The people there were dreaming of a king to come and free them from their enemies. This is the story of what happened when Jesus came into the city.

Story

When they reached the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his followers off to the next village, to find a donkey for him to ride. They brought it to Jesus, threw their coats on its back and helped Jesus get on. As he rode down the hill into town, the people gave him a royal welcome. Some threw their clothes down on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and threw them down as a welcome carpet. Crowds ran ahead and crowds followed, all of them shouting:

“Blessed is the king who comes in God’s name! Glory to God!”

Reflective Activity

Sometimes we dream of wonderful things happening and then feel disappointed. Hopes are a bit different, they’re things that could really happen or maybe even things we can help happen. I’d like you to think now what you’d like to happen that would help make the world a better place – perhaps something you could help happen. Take your palm cross and write something on your cross to show your hope.

Servant King – Helping each other

What you will need for this workshop

- a small towel for each child

You could have some water for each child to wash their hands safely, or have some large paper and a pen to write down children's ideas for helping. If it is not safe for children to wash their hands whilst they think of an idea for helping someone, perhaps they could mime drying their hands on their small towel whilst they think.

Introduction

We all know how important washing is now! Jesus lived in a hot, dry country, where people walked from place to place in open sandals, or even with bare feet. When guests came to your house, you made them welcome by washing their feet. If you were someone important, your servant did it for you. Listen to the story and see if you can work out why Jesus' friends were so surprised at what He did.

Story

One meal-time, Jesus got up from the supper-table, set aside his coat, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with his apron. After he had finished, he took his coat, put it back on, and went back to his place at the table. Then he said, "I am your Master and Teacher. I've given you an example. If I, the Master and Teacher, can wash your feet, you can do the same for others. No-one is better than anyone else – live humbly, as God wants.

Reflective Activity

Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show that they should always try to help other people.

At this part of Experience Easter, we usually show how we care for each other by dipping our hands into water and then drying each other's hands.

However, due to the current situation it is more thoughtful not to share towels. Instead, we will think of a way we could help somebody in our lives right now. You could do this whilst washing your hands*.

Hmm, I'll have a think, I could offer to make a drink for someone I live with, I could tidy up the house, phone someone who may be on their own or make and send a card to someone telling them some news.

Jesus set us an example of how to live well. It feels good when you help others – so that helps us too... Jesus said, "Love others as much as you love yourself".

*You can choose to have a washing up bowl of water and soap and to wash your hands at this point or you can do it without, it is entirely up to you.

The Last Supper – remembering Jesus

You don't need any extra resources for this workshop.

You could lay out some plates and cups and have some bread and water or juice. If completing the workshop at home you could share with your family.

Introduction

We often have special meals at special times. I'd like you now to imagine you're at a special celebration meal, like Christmas dinner or a birthday tea. Every Springtime, even now, the Jews remember how they escaped from slavery in Egypt at the festival they call The Passover. As part of the festival, they eat a special meal called the Seder plate(point). All the foods on the Seder plate remind Jewish people of how good it was to escape from slavery (demonstrate). Jesus and his friends met for this meal just before he was arrested.

Story

Jesus sat down with all his friends and said, "You've no idea how much I've looked forward to eating this meal with you, before I enter my time of suffering. It's the last meal I'll eat until we all eat together in Heaven."

(Slowly lift the jug and break bread into two pieces as you speak). Taking the cup, he said a prayer over it, then said, "Take this and pass it around. As for me, I'll not drink wine again until the kingdom of God arrives."

Then Jesus picked up the bread, thanked God, broke it up, and gave it to his friends, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Eat it in my memory."

Reflective Activity

Christians remember Jesus in a special service, called Holy Communion, where we share bread and wine. Normally we would share bread together, but it is difficult to do that at this time. Perhaps you could share some food together with your family and as you do that, try to think of something you remember about Jesus.

More Information - What did they eat?



Here we have

- Bitter herbs - these don't taste nice and represent slavery
- Parsley dipped into salt water to signify tears and pain as slaves
- Apple sauce – the sweetness and plenty of the Promised Land they were heading for
- Lamb – a sacrifice in the Temple
- Egg – to the Jews, this represented sadness (a tomb)

Gethsemane – being afraid

What you will need for this workshop

- Ball of plasticine, playdough or modelling clay

You could make a pretend garden using pot plants or drawings of plants, or sit where you can see plants or a garden.

Introduction

We all feel afraid sometimes – many people have felt frightened or worried recently as everything is so different. This story tells us about a time when Jesus felt like that.

Story

After supper, Jesus and his friends walked up the hill they called the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus told his disciples, "Stay here and pray. Then he walked a little way off, knelt down and prayed. Jesus prayed "Father, if there is any way, please get me out of this. But it's not what I want that counts. I'll do whatever you want." When he went back to his friends, Jesus found them all asleep.

Reflective Activity

You will have a piece of clay, hold it and think how it feels. You may even want to close your eyes. It may feel hard, cold or rough and difficult to manage.

Life can feel like that at times, can't it – and then we get all sorts of strange feelings – fear, anger, jealousy.

Now I'd like you to think of all the horrible feelings you've had at times like that and imagine they're in this clay. Give 'em what for – squeeze them and squash them!"

What's happening to the clay? Mine is softer, smoother, warmer, and easier to manage.

Sometimes we have to work our way through difficult times – maybe with the help of friends. At the end, problems can seem easier than we thought.

I'd like you to turn your clay into something nice - a flower or animal to go in the garden or on a window ledge, make sure you put paper underneath to avoid staining!

Now you've left all your horrible feelings with Jesus in the garden, let's just be still a moment.

Jesus said "Remember all the things I have told you. Don't be upset or afraid. My parting gift is a feeling of peace deep inside you.

Good Friday – suffering

What you will need for this workshop

- a bead or button tied to a short piece of thread
- two additional beads or buttons

You could draw a hill with three crosses, 1 large and 2 smaller, on the biggest piece of paper you have.

Introduction

One of the most dreaded punishments that the Roman generals thought up was crucifixion, where people were hung up on a big wooden cross and left to die. That's how they dealt with Jesus. Listen carefully to the story.

Story

When they got to the place called Skull Hill, they crucified him, along with two criminals, one on his right, and the other on his left (indicate two small crosses). Jesus prayed "Father, forgive them – they don't realise what they're doing."

The soldiers came up and poked fun at him, making a game of it. They hung a sign over his head: 'this is the king of the Jews.' One of the criminals hanging alongside cursed him: "Some Messiah you are! Save yourself! Save us!" But the other one made him stop: "Have you no fear of God? You're getting the same punishment as him, but we deserve it. He did nothing to deserve this."

Reflective Activity

Sadly, a lot of people still suffer through no fault of their own and this current situation has caused many people to suffer. I'd like you to try and think of someone you know who's having problems. They might be ill, or lonely, or worried.

You have a bead on a string already, take another bead. As you slide the bead onto the cord, hold it tight and imagine you're giving them a hug.

Now we're going to think of someone far away, perhaps someone you've seen in the news – people having problems in another country or affected by natural disasters. Take another bead, give them a hug, slide them onto the cord, then loop the cord round and thread it through the bead again. As it comes out, pull the thread through the loop and it will keep your beads safely on the string.

You can keep your beads and use them to help you remember people who need our help.

Easter Day

What you will need for this workshop

- a post it note
- a pen or pencil

You could make a tomb by putting a sheet over a table. Leave some rolled bandages or paper or cloth to represent bandages in the bottom of the tomb.

Introduction

Jesus's friends felt sad. You may know someone who's died, or maybe had a pet that's died.

If so, you can guess how very sad Jesus' friends felt after he was executed. Then things changed.

Story

Early on Sunday morning, as soon as the sun started rising into the sky, some of them returned to the tomb. They found the entrance stone rolled back, so they walked in. But once inside, they couldn't find the body of their Master, Jesus. They were puzzled, wondering what to make of this. Then, suddenly it seemed like two men appeared from nowhere, with light all around them. They were frightened and looked away, but the men said, "Why are you looking for the Living One in a cemetery? He is not here. Don't you remember how, when you were still back home in Galilee, Jesus told you that he had to be handed over to be killed on a cross, and in three days live again?" Then they remembered – yes, that was what Jesus had said. They left the tomb and broke the news of all this to Jesus' friends.

Reflective Activity

"How do you think Jesus' friends felt after that?"

"Think how you might have felt. Put a few words onto a post-it note (spelling doesn't matter) Stick your post-it notes up somewhere you can see them. Have a look at the ideas other people have had. Do any of them surprise you?"

Christians believe that Jesus is with them every day.

The Easter message is that love lives on, even after death.

Conclusion for Experience Easter

Now we have come to the end of our journey, we hope you enjoyed listening to the Easter story and taking part in the activities.

I wonder which activities you enjoyed the most? Which parts of the story stick in your mind the most? What can you remember about the main events of the story?

Are there any activities that you will go away and try and do again this week?

Might you think of ways to help others whilst washing your hands? Or think about your hopes for the future? You might share a meal with your family and talk about some of the things you remember about Jesus or take some time to reflect on your own feelings.

Did you notice how peaceful it has been while we've been doing the workshops?

Jesus used the word peace a lot.

He didn't mean "peace and quiet" – he meant peace in peoples' hearts.

He wanted everyone to feel at peace.

We hope that Experience Easter has helped you to feel more peaceful and that you have a joyful Easter.

Format based on Experience Easter by Diocese of Gloucester

Bible passages based on "The Message"

These resources are Copyright of TrinityLearning – copying permitted for not-for-profit church and school use only.