



# EASTER IDEAS

FOR KIDS + CHURCHES

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# GREATER LOVE

**We were created by a God of love. A God who loved us so much, He made the ultimate sacrifice. He sent his son, His one and only son, to die in our place so that anyone who believes in Him could live.**

**Easter, while commercialized, is a fantastic opportunity to start a conversation with your kids about true love, sacrifice, God's love and what that really means in your life and in theirs.**

*The Discipleship Ministry Team - Children*

South Pacific Division

# ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF EASTER

**What is Easter?** Easter is the celebration of Jesus Christ's rising from the dead (His Resurrection) after His crucifixion which took place on what we now term Good Friday.

There are **three facts about Easter legends**:

-  Back in 325 AD, the "church council of Nicaea" decided that Easter should be made a true holiday. They decided it should be held on the first Sunday after the full moon. This means that Easter can land anywhere between the 22nd of March to the 25th of April.
-  The holiday's name is actually derived from a "goddess" named Eastre. She was the symbol of the rabbit and the egg. This symbolism is fitting for a holiday that signifies rebirth.
-  The myth of the Easter Bunny dates back to an old German tale about a woman who used to decorate eggs and leave them for her children to find. This story was based in a time when a famine was plaguing the land; therefore the eggs were considered a valuable and surprising gift. It is reported that as her children found the eggs they saw a bunny rabbit hopping away. Naturally, the children thought the bunny had left the eggs for them!

# EASTER IDEAS



Kids naturally have questions about love, what it means, what it looks like, how to express and receive it. Easter, is a fantastic opportunity to start a conversation with your kids about true love, sacrifice and what that really means in your life and in theirs. It's also a fantastic opportunity to serve your community, create noteworthy memories together as a family or as a church.

We have put together the ideas below to help you get started:



### Easter scavenger hunt

As a family/leader walk through the Easter story. Pick out verses that mention specific items to draw or take pictures of. Create a scavenger hunt worksheet. Print one per child or group of children and have the kids go to work.

*Idea borrowed from <http://arabahjoy.com/easter-scamenger-hunt/>*



### Family worship week

The story of Easter is on that as a family you can work through all week. Aim to have worship each day and read through the Easter story together. Here's a rough plan to get you started:

**Sunday:** Jesus entry into Jerusalem. *Matthew 21:4-9*

**Monday:** Jesus clears the temple. *Matthew 21:2-17*

**Tuesday:** Leaders question Jesus authority. The greatest commandment is given. *Matthew 21:23-46*. Chapter 22-25.

**Wednesday:** The Bible didn't talk about Wednesday so as a family discuss one of Jesus many parables. or just talk about who Jesus was.

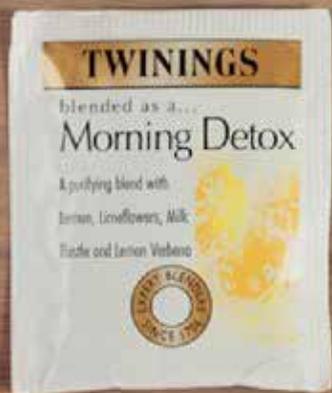
**Thursday:** The last supper and garden of gethsemane. *Matthew 26*

**Friday:** Trial, crucifixion and burial of Jesus. *Matthew 27*.

**Sabbath:** Rest. Sabbath.

**Sunday:** The empty tomb and resurrection. *Matthew 28*.

At the end of the week think about driving the family to a cave or watch a sunrise while you talk about the Easter story.





### A little sunshine service idea:

With the change of seasons comes the often unavoidable sickness that does the rounds. While being sick is never fun for those sick it provides a wonderful opportunity for those who are well to serve.

If a family member or a person in your community (neighbor, teacher, work colleague, church member) is sick consider as a family sharing God's love and the message of Easter by doing one of the following:

**Make and deliver a meal:** When you are sick the last thing you feel like doing is eating or cooking food. So be sure to make food that is easy to eat (soup, soft rolls etc.).

**Put together a get well soon package:** Include things like, tissues, tea (ginger, peppermint, chamomile are good options), cough lollies, a book, fresh lemonade, lemons or flowers.

Put it all together in a little package, write a get well soon note, print out a pretty tag and deliver.

*Cute printables free from here:*  
<http://www.theprettyblog.com/house/diy-serving-tray-a-little-sunshine-to-brighten-up-a-winters-day/>

### **Church community service ideas:**

Have the kids in the Sabbath school classes create something to give to all the adults in church or to their neighbours to tell them that they love them and appreciate them. For example:



#### **Autumn Cleanup**

The week before Easter, host a huge, community-wide garage sale to benefit a local charity or cause. Make it a fun community event by providing food, music and fliers promoting your church's Easter week activities. Or in the community around your church, post flyers and offer to do simple gardening chores for those in your community for free.



#### **Invitations**

A before Easter plan a special service. Send out invitations to people in the community to join you on sabbath to celebrate. You can also create cards that kids can take home and give to their family, friends, neighbours and people they know.



#### **Big picnic**

A before Easter plan a big church picnic. Invite the community. Have activities (scavenger hunts, photo booth, sports, crafts etc.). Use this a opportunity to get to now the people in your neighborhood.

*Idea here <http://www.theprettyblog.com/house/4-free-easter-printables/>*



### **Donation drive**

Many different organizations are looking for donations the year round. Simple things like:

- Clothes, blankets to your local women's/men's shelter
- Blankets to the animal shelter
- Canned food to the food kitchen or international aid agency
- Money to aid agencies such as ADRA



### **Easter card letter drop**

Most communities around church's don't even know your church exists. This Easter make up Easter cards and or invitations to your Easter service. Then in the week leading up to Easter, drop them in your local community letterboxes.

As a church look at your community. What do they need? Together decide to support one organization and donate what they are asking for.



### **Easter Agape feast:**

An Agape Meal involves a meal, fellowship, praise and worship opportunities. It builds on the experience of those early Christians who met often for fellowship, to share the Lord's Supper and to worship God in praise and awe (Acts 2:42-47). This could be anytime during the weekend.

There are a number of things you can include in an Agape Meal. It can be as simple as a meal and Bible reading or you can include some of the following.

**A fellowship meal:** With an array of fresh fruit, finger food, nuts, dried fruit, dips with crackers or vegetables, cheeses, a variety of breads, fruit drinks, soups, etc. The meal should be simple, colorful and attractive.

**Worship and praise:** Integrate into a relaxed time of fellowship.

**Foot-washing:** Just as Jesus did with His disciples (John 13). Make sure to include a brief explanation of what Jesus did would lead into the time of "washing each other's feet."

**Prayer:** Include a time of prayer. Do it individually or as a group.

*Idea modified from <http://www.newchurchlife.com/agape-meal-ideas/>*



### **Gifts and craft's for kids to create for others:**

Have the kids in the Sabbath school classes create something to give to all the adults in church or to their neighbours to tell them that they love them and appreciate them. For example:



#### **Jelly Bean Prayers**

Have the Jelly Bean Prayer printed on nice paper and have the kids attach it to small bags of jellybeans or any other lollies that have red, green, yellow, orange, black, white, purple and pink.

*Instructions here* <http://www.notconsumed.com/jelly-bean-prayer-printables/>



#### **The ABC's of love.**

Use this free printable to make a card and talk about the ABC's of Jesus' love for us. If you want you could attach a heart shaped chocolate where the heart is printed.

*Free printable here* <http://www.oopseydaisyblog.com/2012/01/abc-valentine-easy-peasy-valentine.html>



### Secret love messages from Jesus

Print out messages from Jesus and hide them inside this fortune cookie like origami. Place them in baskets for kids to hand out or take home.

Idea here

<http://bunchesandbits.blogspot.com.au/2010/02/fortune-cookie-class-valentines.html>



### Printed message/Bible verse with gift attached

Print a little card (the size of a business card) and attach a chocolate, packaged cookie, candy or anything else that is economical and message appropriate.

Ideas here

<http://fellowfellow.com/freebie-easter-egg-stickers/>

<http://www.craftionary.net/100-great-easter-free-printables/>

<http://www.rd.com/home/decorating/5-adorable-easter-printables/>

<http://fellowfellow.com/free-printable-gift-tags/>

<http://www.theprettyblog.com/house/a-nifty-egg-box-easter-tag-diy-printable/>





### Kids preach day

Easter is a perfect time the kids involved intergenerationally in your church service. Have kids organise and take the church service (with the mentorship of adults). There are a number of wonderful Easter church program outlines online or alternatively you could adapt one of the Kids Preach service out lines available at [children.adventist.org.au](http://children.adventist.org.au) .

When having kids take or play a significant role in the service keep in mind the following:

**Mentorship:** Kids often benefit from the support of church mentors. Mentors who are experienced in organising church services to help them with logistics and being realistic in what they plan to do.

**Be realistic:** Depending on the age's and abilities of the kids in your church you will need to be realistic in your expectation of the service and the role they can play in the organisation.

**Be creative:** It is easter. be creative, change up the service. Decorate the sanctuary, add in drama, special items, new songs (if appropriate), videos, photo montages. Create a special church bulletin or have kids create and give out special gifts to the church members.

**Enjoy the day. Remember what you are celebrating!**

LOVE IS PATIENCE  
DOES NOT ENVY, IT  
IS NOT PROUD. IT DOES NOT  
OTHERS, IT IS NOT  
IS NOT EASILY ANGRY  
RECORD OF WRONGS  
DELIGHT IN EVIL  
THE TRUTH. IT  
ALWAYS TRUSTS  
ALWAYS PERSEVERES  
BUT WHERE THERE IS  
THEY WILL CEASE  
TONGUES, THE