

Easter (in your back garden)



Introduction: This resource was put together in March 2020 with the thought that Easter will need to be celebrated at home. There are a variety of resources available for use in our homes, but this simple session is designed to take us outside even if you only have a small garden. For more online resources or to contact the Go Team visit: www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/youth-children

Gathering: What does Easter mean to you?

Allow space to share with one another what Easter means to you. What does the word Easter make you think of? Are there things you remember about Easter celebrations in the past, things you did, things you ate or maybe a part of the Easter story itself that sticks with you?

A short prayer: invite a child or an adult in your household to lead you in a short prayer of thanks.

Briefly explain what's going to happen in the rest of the session.

Story: Good Friday and Easter Sunday

Share the story of Easter in two parts based on Luke chapters 23 and 24.

Part 1—Good Friday: Look around your garden to find something to make a simple cross (perhaps a couple of sticks, cuttings from a shrub or some long pieces of grass). Find a comfortable place to sit where you can see the cross you have made.

Read or re-tell the story of Jesus' death from Luke 23. Make sure you read it through yourself first. If you have young children you may want to adapt the story or simplify complicated words and phrases. Equally with older children it can be valuable to share the whole story and not just the familiar parts.

Reflection: Ask everyone to be quiet for a few moments and think about the story they've just heard. Then invite everyone to share 'How does this part of the story make you feel?' and invite any questions or wonderings.

Part 2—Easter Sunday: Have a go at making a simple 'empty tomb' with the stone rolled away from the entrance. Look around the garden for some useful some stones or pebbles and perhaps make a 'cave' in a mound of earth.

Read or re-tell the story from Luke 24. The first 12 verses may be enough and it may be good to have someone else from your household to read this part of the story. Again, read through beforehand and adapt to those in your household.

Reflection: Ask everyone to take a few moments to think about this part of the story. 'How does it make you feel?' Finish off by saying something about the hope this brings, that Jesus is alive! Using the last part of chapter 24 (verses 36-53) might help complete the story.



Exploring: New life and new hope

The Easter story has many parallels to the new life we see in Spring, and the hope that it brings. Have a look around your garden for at least three different things that demonstrate new life.

If you are confined to inside this could even be done by looking out of the window.

- Look for any new flowers or plants that have appeared?
- Look carefully at trees or shrubs for buds or new shoots.
- Notice how some plants die right back in the winter in order to come to life again in Spring.
- Think about what might be underground and yet to appear.
- Take a moment to watch and listen for butterflies, bees and birds—which ones can you identify?

Creating: Easter Garden

Create an Easter scene in a part of your garden, using the cross and tomb you used as a focus for the story, and adding to it other things (e.g. a path of small stones, some small flowers or moss).

Alternatively this could be done in a seed tray or other plastic container part filled with soil (ideally with a couple of small holes in the bottom).

Check out more Easter Garden ideas on Pinterest or at <https://godventure.co.uk/news/easter-gardens/>



Celebrating: He's not here, He has risen!

If possible light a fire and gather around it for the celebration (ensure the fire is contained and that all are aware of the dangers), alternatively light a candle to remind you of Jesus, Light of the World.

Use this simple outline to conclude your time together:

Read aloud Ephesians 2:4-5

Song – Story of the Cross (Rend Co Kids 2019)

Leave space to bring prayers for our world and for ourselves, thanking God for Jesus and all he has done for us through his death and resurrection.

Song – This is Amazing Grace (Phil Wickham 2012)

Closing prayer/blessing:

Lord Jesus, you suffered and died for us,
Winning the victory over death for our sakes.
Give us grace to lift you up as we follow the way of your
cross so that all people may be drawn to you. Amen.

Lord Jesus, you have risen! We praise you.
We worship you. We give you thanks. Alleluia!

(adapted from Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals)

Conclude the time with hot chocolate and hot cross buns,
or an Easter egg hunt.



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