



SESSION **1** OF 4

# Easter Sunday



**MEETING AIM**

To give children the opportunity to explore this well-known story afresh and discover how it applies to their lives today.



**BIBLE PASSAGE**

John 20:1-18



**BACKGROUND**

If you have a churchgoer for any amount of time, this story will be very familiar. However, we would do well not to get too used to the incredible truth it holds and the life-changing difference it still makes for us today. Take the opportunity during this session to allow the truth to become fresh again and communicate this 'alive truth' to the children. For more sessions on the events of Easter week, go to [youthandchildrens.work/together](http://youthandchildrens.work/together)

**CIRCLE TIME**



Welcome the children by name as they arrive and invite them to join your circle. Provide some Easter-related refreshments such as hot-cross buns for the children to eat while you chat. Invite the children to share something about their week. Then go on to ask what the children know about Easter. If you have already looked at some of the other events of Easter week, chat through what they remember. Ask the children about their favourite Easter eggs. You could do a survey to find the most popular one!

**LEGENDS: REAL OR FAKE?**



**You will need: coins; a prepared coin magic trick**

Beforehand, search for a 'disappearing coin' trick on YouTube. Alternatively, find some instructions online explaining how to make a coin disappear (you might find this in a children's magic set). Provide a coin and instructions for each child and teach them this simple 'magic trick'. Give them time to practise and then perform to the rest of the group, or in pairs if preferred. Encourage them to add in some show business to make the trick as entertaining as possible!

**BIBLE STORY**



**You will need: leaders dressed as Peter and Mary Magdalene; white material for 'burial linens'; a photograph of a stone rolled away from a tomb; a 'selfie' of Mary Magdalene with the 'gardener'; pens and paper**

Before the session, brief the leaders who have agreed to be Peter and Mary Magdalene about what they will need to do. Encourage them to read the Bible story thoroughly so they are ready to answer any questions the children may ask them about the story. Take a selfie of Mary Magdalene and another leader who is pretending to be Jesus, then print it out.

Divide the children into 'detective teams'. Provide each team with their brief, access to the witnesses and evidence. They must come up with questions to interview the witnesses, inspect the evidence and come to a conclusion about what has happened to the body. When they have reached their conclusions, they can present their findings to the rest of the group.

**Brief:**

A body has gone missing from a tomb in Jerusalem. Using the evidence and witnesses provided, your detective team must work out what has happened to it.

**Witnesses:**

- Mary Magdalene
- Peter the fisherman

Produce a set of your own questions and interview the witnesses.

**Evidence:**

- Set of worn burial linens
- Photograph of the scene
- Photograph of Mary Magdalene with the gardener

When you have solved the mystery, write some notes and present your findings to your fellow detectives.

Give the children time to look at the evidence and question the two witnesses. You could send half the children to look at the evidence while the other half interview Peter and Mary, and then swap. If you have a smaller group, stay together to do this.

Once they have examined everything, give the children Bibles and direct them to John 20. After a few minutes of chatting and making notes, invite the detective teams to present their ideas to the rest of the group. Make sure they have enough help and support from leaders, but let the children lead their own investigations. Don't be tempted to take over!

**CHATTING TOGETHER**



Chat about the story and the children's responses using these questions:

- How do you think Mary felt when she realised the body was missing?
- What would you have done?
- Why do you think Jesus waited for Mary to recognise him instead of telling her who he was?
- What does this story tell us about God?
- What difference does it make for us today?

**CREATIVE RESPONSE**



**You will need: bowls; wooden spoons; ingredients (one cup of salt, two cups of flour, three-quarter cup of water per pair); clean-up and cover-up equipment**

Divide the children into pairs with the equipment and ingredients. Show the group how to mix together the salt and the flour, adding the water gradually until the mixture forms a dough. Help any pairs who might need a bit of assistance.

Halve the dough between the pair and invite each child to make their own version of the story, or one aspect that stood out for them. Ask them to explain their choice either in their pair or to the whole group. They can take these models home to bake them in the oven or leave them to air-dry.

**PRAYER**



**You will need: pens and paper**

Invite the children to write a prayer on a small piece of paper. This can be thanksgiving, praise or even a repentance prayer. Using the principles from the coin disappearing trick, encourage them, one at a time, to say their prayer aloud while 'disappearing' the paper.

At the end of the session, some of the children might want to chat about the story and what Jesus means to them. Make sure that you allow time and space for this to happen. If you would like any resources to help, try [scriptureunion.org.uk/resources](http://scriptureunion.org.uk/resources)

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