

April Parent Guide

Pray: Dear God, please help my heart so that I can trust you with everything! Amen

Easter is one of my most favorite days of the year. And it's not because of Easter egg hunts, or candy, or crafts. It's because of miracles! Do you know what a miracle is? A miracle is when something completely impossible happens. When there is absolutely NO WAY for it to be true, yet it is! And at Easter, there are a lot of miracles for us to celebrate.

Can you guess the biggest one? Jesus rose from the dead! After 3 whole days of being dead, Jesus was alive again! I can't imagine a bigger miracle than that. When He took our place on the cross, He was whipped, beaten, and had huge nails placed through His hands and feet. And then, carrying all of our sins for 3 days. So much suffering for an innocent man.

But Jesus chose to suffer so that we wouldn't have to. So that we might be able to join Him in heaven. I think that amount of love is a miracle. For someone to love YOU SO much more than they love themselves, and to willingly suffer through so much pain; it's another miracle.

After Jesus rose from the dead there was another miracle. Jesus was buried in a small cave dug out of a rock, and to close it up they would roll a HUGE rock in the opening. It would take tons of men pushing together to get that rock to move. But when Jesus rose from the dead, that rock moved. With no one touching it, that HUGE rock moved out of the way. Do you think that's everything? Of course not!

Later that very day Mary Magdalene went to visit the tomb. When they saw the rock had been moved and Jesus was gone, she got very upset. She thought someone had stolen Jesus! But the next time she looked, it wasn't empty at all. There were two angels sitting right where Jesus had been. Angels! Can you imagine?

At first Mary didn't understand. She thought those angels had stolen Jesus, and she started to cry. Mary turned around and was shocked to see someone right behind her. She didn't know who it was, and asked if they were the one who stole Jesus. But as soon as Jesus said her name, Mary could tell it was Jesus. All with one word, this man went from total stranger, to close friend. Then Jesus sent Mary back to the disciples so she could tell them what she had seen.

Jesus suffered out of love. Jesus rose from the dead. The rock was moved and the tomb was opened. Angels appeared and spoke to Mary. Jesus appeared, looking first like a stranger, then as beloved friend. Those are the things that make Easter so special. Miracles are so much better than candy. Jesus is so much better than the Easter Bunny. Angels are so much better than hunting eggs. And Jesus is so much better than it all. Happy Easter! HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

Throughout the week take 2" strips of paper to make a praise chain. Write one word of praise on each strip, staple the strips into loops to make praise chains. Add to the chain each day of the week.

Make the chains about 8- to 10-feet long. On Easter Sunday, gather together and hold the praise chains in a way that surrounds your family. Explain that the chains are comprised of praise for Jesus, then lead your family in a prayer that says, "He is risen!" as a refrain. Go around the circle and give each person a chance to say, "He is risen!" then raise the praise chains high in the air.

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Talk About It Game for Families

Prep:

- Cut out the strips in the grid and fold them to hide the print.
- Drop all the slips into a bowl.
- Gather blank paper, markers, and playdough.

Play:

- Gather around a table with the game slips, paper, markers, and playdough.
- Start with the person whose birthday is closest to Christmas.
- Draw a slip from the bowl and read it aloud. Have everyone follow the directions.
- Replace the slip when done and let the next person choose a slip to read.

Slips of paper:

Tell about one thing you're afraid of and why.

Tell about a time you had a good feeling. What happened?

Use the playdough to create something you love. Have the others guess, then tell why you chose that thing.

Use the playdough to create what you think your house will look like in the future and tell about it.

Use the markers to draw something that makes you happy, then tell about it.

Tell about one thing that makes you feel safe and why.

Tell about one worry you have and why you worry about it.

Use the markers to draw one thing that's different now than it used to be and tell about it.

Choose one person and describe one reason you love that person.

Use the playdough to build something you're looking forward to in the future and tell about it.

Use the playdough to build your house, then tell your family about it.

Tell what you love about your family.

Use the markers to draw something that makes you laugh and tell about it.

Tell about one thing you wish you could change and why.

Tell about a time you had a bad feeling. What happened?

Use the playdough to build your family and describe each person.

Squeezegee Easter Egg Art
Materials:
Squeezegee
Watercolor paper
Paints in various colors (we
used tempera paints in
squeeze bottles to make it
easier for little hands to apply)
Drop cloth or butcher paper
Egg Pattern

