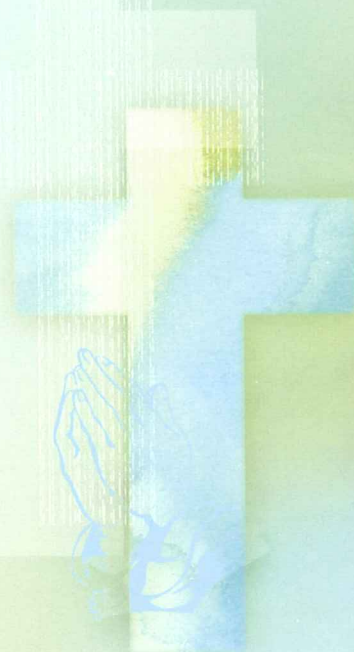


# JUST JESUS!

*“...a little child shall lead them.”*

Come  
Meet  
Jesus



*...a little child will lead them*

*Just Jesus...Come Meet Jesus*

# Just

# Jesus!

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PLEA



*...a little child will lead them*

*Just Jesus...Come Meet Jesus*

**"...a little child shall lead them."**



**"I tell you the truth,  
you must change  
and become  
like little children.**

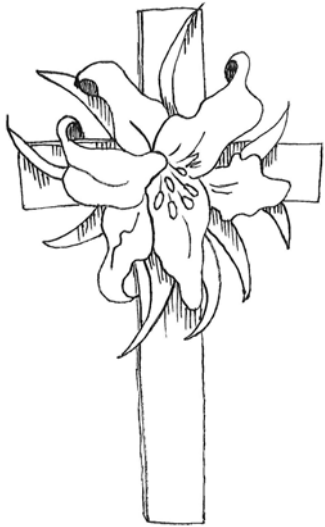
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**...The greatest person  
in the kingdom of heaven  
is the one  
who makes himself humble  
like this child."**

*— Jesus*

Matthew 18:3, 4





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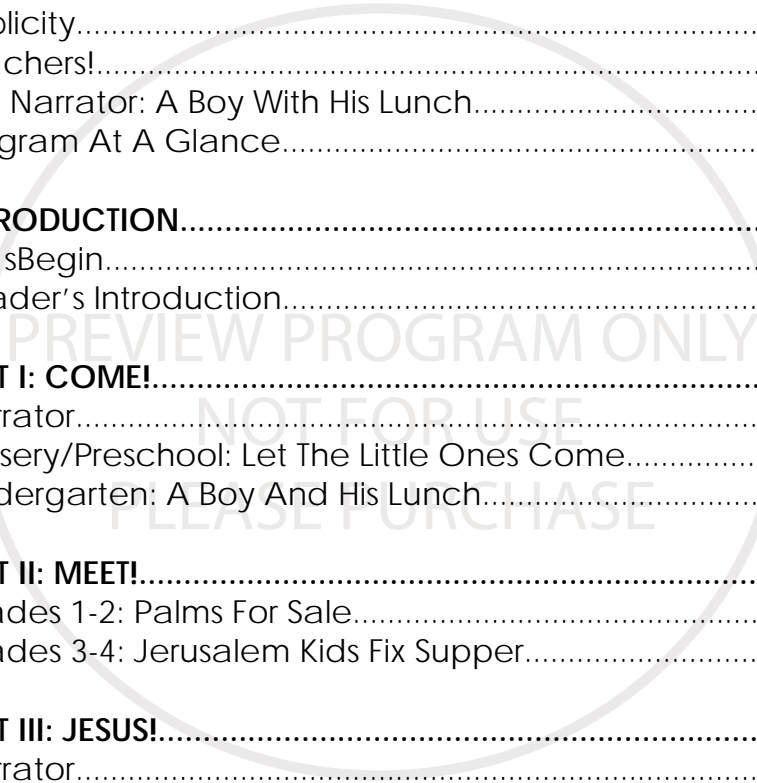
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*...a little child will lead them*

*Just Jesus...Come Meet Jesus*

# Just Jesus!

## Come Meet Jesus

*"...a little child shall lead them."*

*"I was just a kid. He was Just Jesus."*

So begins a delightful re-telling of events leading to Jesus' Resurrection. Easy to plan and stage, this Easter presentation is filled with touches of inspiration and humor. The audience joins the fun, singing familiar Easter carols or Easter praise songs. Add special music using the talent in your own church to make this Easter presentation sparkle!

**No Memorization ~ Unless You Want To Memorize!**

**Just Jesus** is told by a boy who shares his lunch and is never the same.

Your children, teens and grown ups thrill again to the old, old story through fresh eyes. From the sweet sounds of children gathering around the feet of Jesus, to the Palm Parade and serving the Last Supper, take your audience on a journey of surprise and faith.

See the Cross through Simon of Cyrene's boys' eyes. Gather at the open tomb and walk the Emmaus Road. Like the boy with his lunch, you will never be the same!

## Experience again the joy of "He Is Risen"!





# Just Jesus!

## Come Meet Jesus!

### "...a little child shall lead them".

**Just Jesus!** The story surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection is seen through the eyes of a young person...the very boy who shared his simple lunch with 5000 people. How he sees Jesus is inspirational.

**Just Jesus!** Age doesn't matter! Young and old participate and then return to the audience to enjoy the full program. Choose a lively young person to become our famous boy with his lunch. Add small groups of children, teens and grown ups who dress in Holy Land costume. Assign segment parts as desired. Gather the whole group for a final dress rehearsal and this simple Easter program is set to go.

**REMEMBER--NO MEMORIZATION!**

**Just Jesus!** Sprinkled with humor, this delightful program tells the inspirational story of how believers experienced Jesus and were challenged to move into lives of faith because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

**Just Jesus!** Add special music as desired to complete the program's musical portion. Adapt to fit talents of your group.

**Just Jesus!** Conclude with **The Easter Party**. This informal gathering features fun food and fellowship.



## Directing The Director



### Lead With Love!

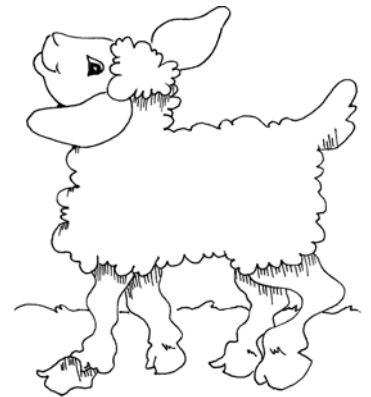
Mold various ages into a well organized Easter team. Print copies of individual segments. Assign parts to children, teens and adults who agree to become part of the event. Adapt **Just Jesus!** to fit the number of participants available in your church.

### Lead With Preparation!

Assign short segments to hand picked people. Even young readers can become part of the fun. The result will be an inspiring presentation featuring the story of the Resurrection of God's Son, Jesus!

### Lead With Enthusiasm!

As you read this you may be thinking, "Why me? I cannot do this?" Put those feelings aside and dive into this charming Easter presentation with a minimum of hassles. Bless your church with this special touch to remind everyone of God's gift through Jesus.



## Delegate!

Leaders prepare individual classes/groups. Trust the staff to carry out their assigned tasks. Never apologize when asking people to help.

## Be Positive!

Easter season is busy but also exciting and meaningful. It is worth extra effort in the midst of family preparations and travel plans.

## Pray!

Pray for staff, students and set up. Take details before the Lord and then-RELAX! God is in control. Carry out individual tasks at hand.

## Plan!

Think about how to organize the program and Easter celebration. Read it carefully, make adjustments, add music and choose the very best children and adults to make this a memory maker.

## Prepare!

Hopefully you have ordered and received **Just Jesus!** With more than one month lead time. We provide one printed master copy with permission to make as many printed copies using your copier as needed for your church. Copy segments for individual groups and assign responsibility for small group practice to teacher/leaders.





# Very Important!

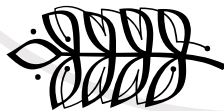
IF PURCHASING **Just Jesus!** AS AN INSTANT DOWNLOAD,  
PLEASE NOTE ~  
YOU WILL DOWNLOAD **ONE PRINTED COPY**  
OF THE PROGRAM.

THE FILE DOES NOT SAVE TO YOUR HARD DRIVE.

DO **NOT** WRITE ON THE ORIGINAL MASTER COPY!!!!  
MAKE ALL PRINTED COPIES  
FROM THE DOWNLOADED MASTER COPY.

This is a ONE TIME ONLY Instant Download.

Some churches enjoy memorization and others avoid it. Except for young non readers, read all parts. If your church is fond of memorization, lead time must be longer and more intense rehearsal is necessary.



## COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Print all pages needed for your local church using your local copier. Make as many copies of each page as needed for personal use. Do NOT give this program to any other church or group. Instead, give interested folks our order form, address and toll free telephone number (1-888-236-5433). This allows CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MINISTRIES to continue production of exciting, inspiring Christian programs at low cost to churches across the USA and Canada. All Rights Reserved-Copyright protected.



## Adaptations .... Make It Work!



Adapt **Just Jesus!** To fit your church group. Segments specified for individual age groups may be assigned to older or younger participants, combined or even eliminated. Your goal is to present the Easter story with available people.

**Just Jesus!** Is designed to be presented in about 45 minutes depending upon added music. **The Easter Party** is not included in this time frame.

## When Should We Present 'Just Jesus'?

Sunrise Service, Sunday School Hour, Palm Sunday or even Easter Morning worship is perfect. You may need to arrange another presentation time in your church schedule.

## Is This Possible For Our Group?

### Small Church

10-20 Participants

1. Eliminate segments requiring more people than available.
2. Combine speaking parts/classes/segments.
3. Ask groups/classes to present two or more segments.
4. Include teens and adults.

### Medium Church

20-50 Participants

1. Eliminate segments requiring more groups than available.
2. Combine speaking parts as needed.
3. Include teens and adults.
4. Ask musicians to sing/play special musical pieces.

### Large Church

50 + Participants

1. Organize speakers, servers, sound and lighting staff.
2. Include as many people as possible.
3. Ask church choirs, musicians to participate.
4. Divide parts to include as many speakers as possible.



## Music!



**Just Jesus!** Is a traditional program with music added as desired. Use talent from all age groups and music we suggest or prepare your own music choices.

*Coordinate music with the music team. Easter Hymns/Praise choruses are sung by the audience. Include hymn book numbers in a printed program or use a projection system to illuminate the words. Choose music spots within the program as desired.*

### Absolute Modern Worship For Kids

Arranger: Various Arrangers

*12 Songs: Blessed Be Your Name, Beautiful One, Who Am I?, In Christ, Your Love Oh Lord, I Can Only Imagine, Audience of One, Majesty, Above All, Trading My Sorrows, Sing Alleluia, God of Wonders*

We found this delightful collection of songs you will enjoy using with **Just Jesus!** Do not teach every song, Choose a few you know your children can learn to add to the spoken words.

**This is a suggestion!**

**You may have music that is perfect for your participants.**

Purchase this separately from **Brentwood-Benson Music Publications** at [www.brentwoodbenson.com](http://www.brentwoodbenson.com) Find it in their online catalog at: Kids Music-Non Seasonal-Collections. Listen to all songs online!



Check the Benson-Brentwood website to place an order, check product availability and find more information about the product. Speak with one of their friendly sales representatives by calling:

**1-800-846-7664 Ext 1**

**PURCHASE SEPARATELY**

Choose the items from **ABSOLUTE MODERN WORSHIP FOR KIDS** that best suit your budget and needs:

**Listening CD**

(Product #75610024) \$7.99

**CD Preview Pak-Limit one per title**

(Product #75710741) \$10.00

**Split Track Accompaniment CD (Musical)**

(Product #75710743) \$90.00

**Choral Book**

(Product #75710747) \$7.99

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**Easter Hymns**

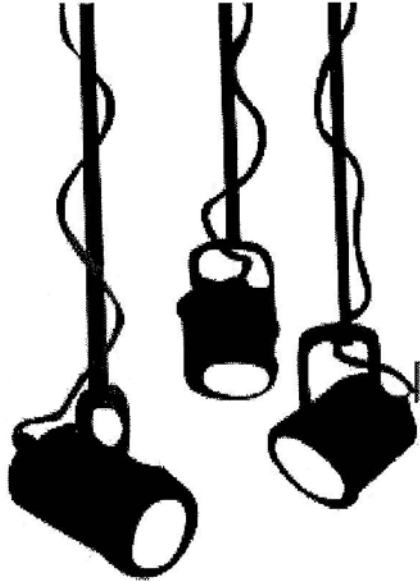
Sing traditional Easter Hymns at appropriate spots. Choose songs that fit the tradition of your local group. There are many contemporary Easter songs available and may be exactly what you need.

**Optional Special Music**

Choose people to perform personal choices of solos, duets, trios, instrumentals. Place special music anywhere desired.



## Stage And Props



**Just Jesus!** Is a simple re-telling of the Resurrection Story told through the fresh eyes of a young person. Staging and props are casual.

### Set Up

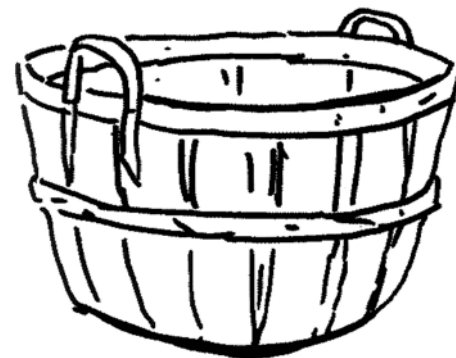
The church sanctuary will be decorated for Easter. Displays of Easter lilies, crosses and other items may remain in place.

### Staging

Full stage is set up to look like a general Holy Land scene. Traveling back in time to see and hear the story of Jesus is effective with a minimum of items on stage.

**PROPS:** Place a palm tree, wooden bench with pottery and baskets or any items that look like Holy Land times across the stage. Place colorful pillows on the floor and drape blankets on the floor or on the backs of wooden chairs.

**LIGHTING:** Place small spot lights on the floor across the stage. Wherever possible place lighting behind items for a dramatic flair. Turn off overhead sanctuary lights. Create dramatic lighting with light and dark shadows.



## Speaking Parts

Since no memorization is required, consider backing the speaking segments with crinkled brown paper bags. This gives an ancient parchment feeling to the modern script.

## Seating

Reserve seating for classes, small groups and individual participants before the audience arrives. Consider assigning teens/adults to sit on stage with younger children during the program.

## Sound System

Use the existing sound system to it's best advantage. Place one or more microphones within easy reach of participants. Speakers must be heard clearly. It makes the difference between a frustrating experience and a delightful event for the audience.





## Costumes

Ask each participant to design their personal attire. Parents may be willing to provide bathrobes, caftans and head gear.

*Bible people may need costume assistance. Props such as donkeys, palm branches, shepherd staff, etc. can be made from cardboard and carried as if they are "real" items. Prepare bathrobes, sandals, sheets, long t-shirts with rope belts, bare feet, simple caftans and head wraps. Some jewelry may be worn.*

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**PILLOW CASES:** Cut a neck hold in the top of the pillow case. Cut up the front to the neck hole. Cut armholes in the sides. This makes a long, vest type costume for small children. Plaid or striped flannel pillow cases are available and work great!

**FABRIC:** Two wide strips of fabric, one over each shoulder, crossed across the back and front of the child, tied with a sash makes a good costume too. Use striped or colorful fabric.

A square of fabric over the head with a wide ribbon or piece of cloth around the tope of the head makes a headpiece. Make large scrunchies (*like girls wear around ponytails*) and put them over the square fabric around the head. It holds the fabric on quite well.

**BATHROBES:** Purchase bathrobes at garage sales and resale shops or borrow robes. Wrap in front and use contrasting fabric for head dresses and sashes to complete the costume.



**ANGELS:** Dress Easter angels in white cotton or silver lame' fabric found in most textile stores. Angels may wear cardboard, feather wings or remain wingless. Place gold or silver tinsel taped in a circle halo on each angel head. Tie tinsel around the waist for a sparkling angel belt. Face and hair glitter add "extra sparkle".

## Child Ushers

Consider assigning a few Easter angels and costumed children to serve as ushers handing out programs and seating people before the performance. Employ a variety of ages.

Place children at each entrance and coach them:

*"Welcome to 'Just Jesus'!  
May I show you to your seat?  
Where would you like to sit?"*

The friendly greeting is an added personal touch that is much appreciated by older members of the audience.

Ask participants to remain in costume at The Easter Party. They serve beverages, greet guests and wander through the serving area while people eat and talk.





## Publicity

### Publicize 'Just Jesus!'

through church communication channels.  
Announce it in the church newsletter,  
weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit.

### Church Bulletin/Newsletter

Print an announcement in the newsletter. If you plan the **Easter Party**, let people know there will be fellowship and food following the performance.

### Local Newspaper

Include a news announcement with church Easter publicity. Talk to a news reporter and photographer to see if a feature article is possible. Don't laugh! It could happen!

### Television and Radio

Advertise on your local cable channel. Check it out! It may be one more avenue of great publicity!

### Invitations

Send family invitations home with Sunday School students. This is effective for families who send children to your children's ministry but are not personally involved. Send real Easter cards with invitations tucked inside.



## Teachers!

### Involve People Of All Ages

If there are more students than speaking parts, divide parts or decide how to involve extra students. If there are less students than parts, assign two or three parts to each student. Be specific when assigning jobs holding visuals, carrying props and dressing in costume. Some people may participate with special music.



### Highlight Individual Parts

Back copies with crinkled brown paper. Performance copies must be in good shape.

### Practice!

Practice and plan costuming and props during the first few minutes of Sunday School. Adjust the program to fit your group. Reserve several Sundays for this purpose.

### Communicate!

Let parents know when to have their children at rehearsals and the performance. Invite them to attend and be sure they know what props or costuming their child is responsible to bring.



## **Attend Rehearsal/Performance**

Put on costumes in a back room, line up according to specific instructions and enter the sanctuary as directed. Sit in the designated area. Lead students on and off stage. Coach students quietly if they have problems speaking their parts.

**...Stage fright is not uncommon!**

### **Need Help?**

The program comes together at the last moment with little formal large group rehearsal. Work out staging issues during rehearsal with the Director and music team. Be sure musicians and singers know what music is to be performed and when that will happen.

### **The Easter Party**

Stay for the fun, fellowship and food! Collect props before the party. Mingle with guests. Enjoy students and their families. Eat something delicious to reward yourself for the great performance!

## **Enjoy The Easter Experience!**

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to touch lives. Enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. The story of Jesus' Resurrection is classic. Our children should hear it and our adults should hear it again. The spiritual experience is amazing! Have fun with the production.



## The Narrator: A Boy With His Lunch



*The person who holds the story and group segments together, is a young person portraying the young man who shared his lunch the day Jesus fed five thousand people.*

DIRECTOR: Choose someone who is older (a mature pre teen, teen or young adult) who reads well and who is comfortable speaking in front of a group.

*Dress simply in Holy Land costume. Carry the script and read from it. Rehearse before the program to be familiar with the words and order of program segments.*

Be bright and cheerful. If group issues arise with children, go with the flow and assist with the impromptu malfunction with grace and humor.

*Be involved with the story line at all times. When not required to speak, stand quietly at one side of the stage, watching and listening with interest.*

This Narrator is the 'glue' that holds the telling of **Just Jesus** together. Highlights of the Resurrection story are told from the innocent perspective of young people filled with everlasting hope in the midst of what grown ups know was a horrible situation.

**Have fun being this amazing young person.  
Draw the audience into the story of Jesus'  
death and resurrection!**



# Just Jesus! At A Glance

Prelude  
Processional

## INTRODUCTION

Music:  
Readers Introduction

## ACT I: COME!

Narrator  
Nursery/Preschool: Let The Little Ones Come!  
Kindergarten: A Boy and His Lunch W/Narrator  
Music:

## ACT II: MEET!

Narrator  
Grades 1-2: Palms For Sale!  
Grades 3-4: Jerusalem Kids Fix Supper!  
Music:

## ACT III: JESUS!

Narrator  
Grades 5-6: Simon's Boys-At The Cross  
Grades 7-9: He Is God's Yes! -At The Tomb  
Music:

## CONCLUSION

Narrator  
Grades 10-12: Walk This Way! -Emmaus Travelers  
Adults: The Great I AM  
Music:

## THE EASTER PARTY



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## Let's Begin!

Choose a comfortable, respectful way to begin the program. Music should be playing as the audience enters. Seat the audience as the music plays. Greet everyone cordially. Participants enter near the end of the prelude.



## The Prelude

Church musicians (*organ, piano, keyboard*) play Easter music as the audience gathers.

Feature children who play various musical instruments. Allow them to play pieces at their skill level during the Prelude. Include church musicians as needed.

## The Processional

Gather **Just Jesus!** participants in an outer room. Dim sanctuary lights. Existing candles or spotlights remain lit so people can read their speaking parts.

Light all stage lights on the floor and general area before the program begins.

Participants walk to their seats in the audience. Classes and small groups should sit together.



# Just Jesus! Introduction

## Music

**YOUR CHOICE:** Feature one Easter Carol sung by the audience or plan a special musical piece by individuals.



## Reader's Introduction

*Readers are in modern dress and can be a variety of ages from teens to adults as available. Stand across the stage holding props as suggested.*

**Reader #1:** We invite you to COME! 'Come, Meet Jesus'! That's what Jesus did throughout His entire ministry. He kept inviting people to 'come' and 'come' they did! They came from the towns and villages. They came from the hillsides and pathways. They thought they were coming to hear a man who was 'Just Jesus' but He was so much more!

*(Hold ragged fabric wrapped 'lunch', perhaps in a basket.)* This might not look like much to you but what I hold in my hand is very important to a certain lad living in Galilee.

One full year before Jesus was crucified, a crowd of people gathered on a hillside delighted to hear the Messiah speak words of joy and wisdom. Among them was a young man, we don't know his name or his age, who had a simple yet generous heart.

Without knowing how God would use his little lunch of bread and fish, he handed it to the disciples. Jesus blessed it, broke it and fed over 5000 hungry people.





**Reader #2:** We invite you to MEET! 'Come, MEET Jesus'. He was more than Just a common man. Jesus was Immanuel, 'God With Us'. The people just didn't know it yet. They looked for a king who would help them. They got God, Who loved them enough to die for them.

**(Hold a palm branch)** For people living in a modern society, it's easy to miss the meaning of waving palm leaves. In the ancient Middle East, palm leaves were associated with triumph and victory. Think of palm waving as an ancient version of the high-five and you'll get the idea.

If you're not wild about palm trees, think again. It's a tree with heavenly roots. Apostle John writes about a scene in Heaven: "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands." (Revelation 7:9)

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**Reader #3:** We invite you to JESUS! 'Come, Meet JESUS'. By the time Easter week arrived, the name 'Jesus' was on the lips of every person in the land. They were thrilled with His message and humbled by His gracious acts of kindness and miracles of healing.

**(Hold leather strap, belt, halter or small horse style blanket)** Easter week began when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a lowly donkey. Religious leaders were not happy with his ministry. By riding a donkey into a crowd of waving palm branches and shouts of "Hosanna to the son of David," Jesus caused those religious leaders to take action.

The donkey was the usual animal for traveling in Palestine because it could travel the steep, rocky roads. Kings usually rode in chariots. But the scriptures said the Messiah, the King of kings, would arrive on a lowly donkey.







**Reader #4:** We invite you to 'Come Meet Jesus' in a new way—with fresh eyes. The crowd who greeted Just Jesus at the gates of the city said it correctly, "Hosanna, to the son of David!" He was about to change history and they were part of it.

*(Hold a brick.)* As Jesus rode that donkey into Jerusalem, He had a magnificent view of the gleaming white marble and golden dome of the temple. Herod's beautiful temple (which Jesus predicted would be destroyed brick by brick and stone by stone) was almost an exact replica of Solomon's temple. Here was Messiah, crossing the bridge and entering the Golden Gate just as the Old Testament prophets said. Little did the people know that within a generation, Jesus' words would be true and their beloved temple was destroyed.



**Reader #5:** We invite you to 'Come Meet Jesus' and stay for eternity. That's the glory of Easter!

*(Hold folded white bed sheet)* Jesus didn't come to win a popularity contest. He came to fulfill the prophecies of his birth, suffering and triumph over death. Empty grave clothes heralded His resurrection.

This simple white sheet reminds us of how Christ died for us and how He rose from the dead! That is exactly what we have come to celebrate! So...let the children sing! Let the music ring! Let the words be told yet again, "Christ is risen from the dead! Hallelujah!"



# Just Jesus!

“...a little child shall lead them”.



**Act I:**

**COME!**

## Narrator

*A young man in simple Holy Land costume enters from the rear and walks halfway down the center aisle to read/speak the narrator's part.*

*(Bowing low...)* Shalom! I have come from the East and I have no idea how I got here. It seems like just a moment ago I was walking near my hometown in Galilee.

My mother knew I was determined to follow the crowd to hear Jesus speak. She tossed my favorite lunch at me as an afterthought when I left the courtyard. Then she returned to grinding the meal for our evening meal. Mmm, I love her homemade barley bread and those little fish are delicious even if they *are* small!

There were so many people. We walked all morning and, well....you can hear my story later. For now, all you need to know is that I was just a kid and He was Just Jesus! And that made all the difference in the world.

*Walk to the front and gather the Nursery and Preschool children and leaders and accompany them on stage. Stand quietly in the background or sit with them as they perform their segment.*



## Nursery/Preschool

### Let the Little Ones Come!

*Birth-Preschool children dress in Holy Land costume and are accompanied on stage by parents, teachers and helpers also dressed in costume.*

*When the Nursery/Preschool children finish their segment, they may return to their seats or may return to their classroom for a small craft and snack. Decide if your children can sit through the entire program.*



**Leader:** Come with me, children! Let's look for Jesus. Do you see Him anywhere? *(Hold hand over eyes and look into the distance. Encourage children to look with their hands too.)*

I think it's great that someone loves you and brought you to the Easter program today. That tells me they want to be sure you learn about Jesus and his love for you.

One day, Jesus was talking to lots of grown ups. He told them how God wanted them to have happy homes and happy children.

People brought their children to Him so He could touch them. Friends of Jesus saw what they were doing and told the people to get the children away. They didn't like these noisy children interrupting Jesus. When Jesus saw what they were doing, He was very upset.

"Let the children come to me, and do not stop them" Jesus said. "The kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these little ones." Jesus took the children in His arms and hugged them and blessed them.

Let's always remember that Jesus love the children and took them into His loving arms. We are thankful for each of you children! Say this poem with me! Don't forget to smile!



## **Come!**

Jesus called the children near.  
*(Make 'come' motion with arm.)*

He hugged them  
*(hug self)*

And He brought them cheer!  
*(Shout: 'yay' with arm in air)*

Let the children come to Me,  
*(Make 'come motion with arm.)*  
and do not stop them,  
*(Shake head and put palm out like a stop sign motion)*  
they should see...  
*(Hand over eyes, looking out)*

That all God's children need to come,  
*(Make 'come motion with arm.)*  
To Jesus, who is God's own Son!  
*(Point to nail marks in each palm)*

So come, dear children!  
*(Make 'come' motion with arm.)*  
Come and meet,  
Our Jesus  
*(Point to nail marks in each palm)*  
who is loved and sweet.  
*(Hands together in prayer/placed against cheek)*

Don't wait! Come now!  
*(Make 'come' motion with arm.)*  
The time is now!  
*(Point to pretend wrist watch)*

To come before Him  
*(Make 'come' motion with arm.)*  
Humbly bow.  
*(Bow low at the waist.)*

## **EXIT**



## Kindergarten A Boy and His Lunch

Kindergarten children dress in Holy Land costume and are accompanied on stage by teachers and helpers also dressed in costume. Seat the children on stage around the Boy and His Lunch Narrator who becomes a light hearted story teller.

Narrator: Move over! Coming through! My turn! The Easter story cannot begin until you hear what happened to me!

Kindergarten Children: *(In unison)* Shalom!

Narrator: Shalom back at you! You won't believe what happened to me. It was such a big deal that I wrote it down so I would never forget.

*(Read from a tattered, crumpled piece of paper.)*

It was a dark and stormy night....no, that's not right. It was a bright, sunny day....yes, that's better! It was a bright, sunny day when mother tossed lunch at me. Five of her delicious little barley loaves and two fish. Mmm, perfection! I headed out with a large group of villagers for a day in the country. We ended up in big trouble.

I was determined to hear what Jesus had to say. Rumor had it that He was a great speaker and everyone in town was buzzing. It seems the only folks who didn't like Jesus were our religious leaders. Everyone else loved Him!

It was hot and dry and Jesus talked a long time. When it was close to evening meal, everyone looked around and realized no one had food—except ME! And I was HUNGRY!

I looked around the 5000 people and knew five loaves of bread and two little fish would never stretch, even if we made soup! I looked into the eyes of Jesus and everything changed!





I was just a kid and He was Just Jesus. He looked like my dad and my uncles but Jesus was different. He didn't see me as 'just a kid'. He took my lunch and prayed over it. Then He broke it into little pieces and...you won't believe this...when Jesus' disciples passed it through the crowd, everyone had bread and fish.

There was so much bread and so many pieces of fish left over that it was more than enough to feed the entire crowd. Twelve baskets were left over, more than they started with...and I should know!

When it was all over, I turned to walk down the hillside. I was still just a kid and He was still 'Just Jesus' but He looked right at me! And...He winked!

Kindergarten Teacher: It was an honor to help Jesus with your lunch! We're just little kids. There isn't much we can do.

Narrator: You could...say a poem!

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## Five Thousand Miracles!

*Divide the lines between available children. Give them two to four lines to learn. Practice their poem during the weeks before the program.*

Jesus came to earth,  
To show us how to live.

How to put others first,  
How to love and how to give.

Then He set about His work,  
That God sent Him to do;

He fed the people fish and bread.  
He made it fresh and new.

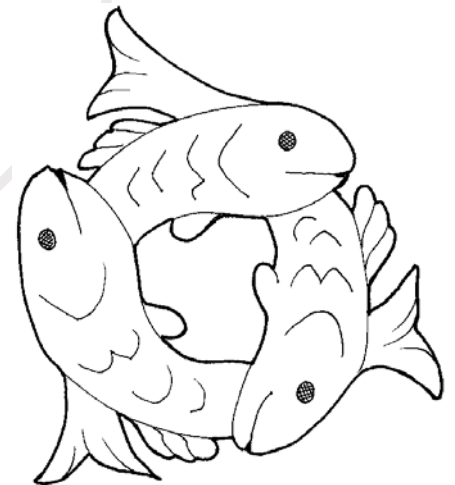
One young boy is all it took  
To feed the crowd that day.

Jesus took the gift he gave  
And gave it all away.

Five thousand voices raised in song  
Their praises were quite lyrical!

To Jesus they gave all their praise,  
Five thousand little miracles!

**EXIT**



## Music

YOUR CHOICE: Feature one Easter Carol sung by the audience or plan a special musical piece by individuals.



## Act II: MEET! Grades 1-2: Palms For Sale!

*Grade 1-2 children dress in Holy Land costume and are accompanied on stage by teachers and helpers also dressed in costume. They stand at the back of the room to enter. Use available children for speaking parts, repeating when necessary.*

**Leader:** *(Stand center stage)* Hey kids! It's time to tell everyone the story of Easter!

Are you ready? *(Yes!)*

Are you happy? *(Yes!)*

Are you ready to sell, sell, sell? *(Yes!)*

*The group answers from the back of the room and come to the front carrying palms, shouting, "Palms For Sale! Palms For Sale!"*

Student #1: I saw Jesus! He smiled at me and I'm just a kid!





Student #2: I saw Jesus! He was riding a donkey and waving at people! He waved at me and I'm just a kid!

Student #3: I saw Jesus! He said 'Thank you' as people put their coats on the road and waved the palm branches I sold them. They could have cut their own palms but I did it for them.

Student #4: So many grown ups are shouting Hosanna! It hurts my ears! They aren't paying any attention to the children. Let's see if we can sneak up to Jesus and get His attention!

Student #5: He looks normal. He's Just Jesus. Why the big fuss?

Student #6: Listen to the grown ups yell, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Student #7: We could shout Hosanna.

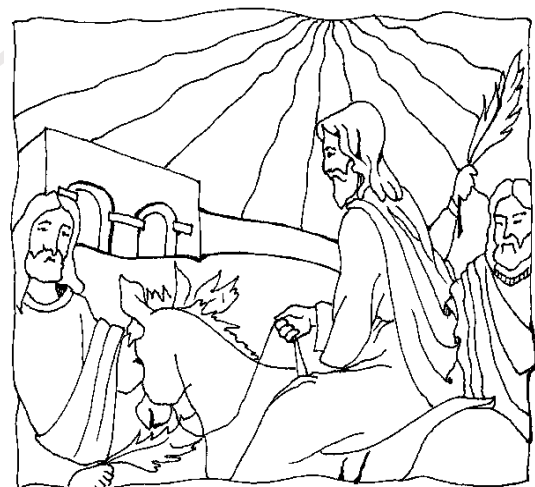
Student #8: Oh, we couldn't! That is only for grown ups.

Student #9: Let's try!

All students: *(In unison, waving palm branches)* Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

**Leader:** *(To audience....)* And that's how the children of Jerusalem welcomed the man they knew as Just Jesus. It made an impression on Jesus. When the chief priests and teachers of the law saw the miracles Jesus did, healing the blind and lame who came to Him, they were angry.

Jesus said, "Haven't you read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordered praise'?" That is how Easter Week began! There is so much more to come!



**EXIT**



## Grades 3-4: Jerusalem Kids Fix Supper

Grade 3-4 students dress in Holy Land costume. They carry trays, dishes, pottery, stacks of dish towels and kitchen utensils. Use available children for speaking parts, repeating when necessary. Students can read their parts.



Student #1: I've got the dishes!

Student #2: I've got the towels!

\*Student #3: I've got ...Nothing!

EVERYONE: *(In Unison...)* Nothing?

\*Student #3: Nothing!

Student #4: Well, it doesn't seem fair to me. We kids have been given the responsibility to get supper ready for Jesus and His disciples. The Upper Room is ready and all we have to do is set the tables.

\*Student #3: Don't get bent out of shape. It's 'Just Jesus'. He won't care. I was busy and I can't remember what I was supposed to bring for this Passover meal. Let me think...what was that thing I was supposed to bring?

Student #5: What do you mean 'Just Jesus'? Isn't Jesus the person who healed the blind man and made the young man on the corner walk again? Sounds like a very important person to me.

Student #6: Our parents own this business. If we don't get the Passover meals ready, our guests will go somewhere else and we'll be....

Student #7: *(Shouting....)* We'll be POOR! HOMELESS! OUT OF LUCK! HUNGRY!



Student #8: Oh calm down. We won't be any of those things. We're just kids. We'll be fine.

\*Student #3: I remember now. I was supposed to bring fresh bread. Jesus specifically asked for the best bread my mother bakes. He said He had a special ceremony planned for His friends.

Student #9: Great! No bread. No ceremony. You know how we love our ceremonies. What's a party in Jerusalem without a ceremony.

Student #10: No one will be hungry or thirsty. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (John 6:35)

\*Student #3: See? Jesus takes care of everyone even if kids like me forget stuff.

**LEADER:** Young kids were certainly watching the Last Supper even if they were in the background. They saw Jesus arrive at the door and heard the laughter of the disciples through the open windows.

They may have been listening on the steps as Jesus broke and blessed the bread (that eventually got to the table) and passed the wine. Could it be that they had to move out of the way when Judas rushed out the door after his evil trickery was revealed?

We'll never know but the presence of children is almost assured. How do I know that? Kids like to eat...a lot! Anywhere there is food, there is sure to be a kid's table. Jesus used His last Passover Meal to leave a gift to all of us. We celebrate Communion to remember His death and resurrection. Now that's a Last Supper!

**EXIT**

## Music

YOUR CHOICE: Feature one Easter Carol sung by the audience or plan a special musical piece by individuals.





## Act III:

## JESUS!

### Narrator

I saved the best part of the Easter story for last. It gets bad before it gets better. When Jesus 'borrowed' my lunch, everyone in town loved Him. He was 'Just Jesus' but He healed the sick, raised the dead ...and His sermons were the best I ever heard!

I don't know what happened to make the crowd turn on Him but one day the people grumbled, "Who does Jesus think he is? He says He's God! We can't have that kind of talk around here."

Words got meaner. Through it all, Jesus and His friends went about their business quietly. They seemed to be preparing for something big but at the time, I didn't understand what was about to happen. Hey! I was a kid, okay?

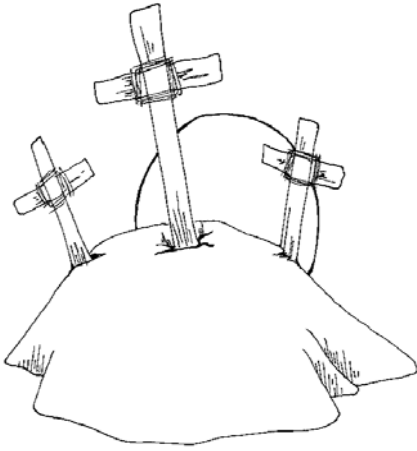
It was Passover and the streets were crowded. Vendors were selling their wares. The temple was filled with worshipers. Jesus made everybody mad when He knocked over the money tables in the Temple. Oh boy, talk about a ruckus!

Before anyone knew what was happening, Jesus was arrested, beaten, tried in a fake court and was led off to be crucified on a Roman cross. I heard the story later...from a couple of very interesting kids.

"And (the soldiers) compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross." (Mark 15:21)



## Grades 5-6: Simon's Boys



Grade 5-6 students dress in Holy Land costume. Use available children for speaking parts, repeating when necessary. Students can read their parts.

Choose two boys to portray Simon of Cyrene's sons, Alexander and Rufus. If necessary, choose two young men who are not in this class. Age won't matter.

Student #1: *(Running with group on stage from rear of room)* Hurry up! Get out of the way. If we don't hide, we'll run into the Roman soldiers. They are all over Jerusalem.

Student #2: It was awful! They took prisoners through the streets. The last I saw them, they were heading out of the city toward Golgotha. There was a huge crowd following them.

### Simon's Boys Run onto Stage

Alexander: *(Out of breath)* Rufus, hurry up. This is not the time to be a slow poke.

Rufus: *(Out of breath)* I'm here. We made it! Did you find Dad, Alexander? Where is he?

Student #3: What's going on? You guys look like you've seen a ghost.

Alexander: Our dad....our dad is Simon of Cyrene. Have you seen *him*? *You won't believe what happened on the Via Dolorosa. They grabbed him.*

Student #4: Who grabbed him? He's just a visitor for Passover.

Rufus: I'm afraid the Romans took my dad to kill him on a cross too! We must find him.



Student #5: Tell us what happened. We want to know.

Alexander: We had just come into Jerusalem from the country. My mother said, "Simon, you watch those boys. Don't let anything happen to Alexander and Rufus." Boy, is she gonna be mad!

Rufus: Wrong place, wrong time. The crowd was pushing past us and Dad is a big, strong guy so he pushed back. A soldier saw him and said, "Get over here. Carry this cross. I don't have time for nonsense."

Alexander: Dad had no choice. He looked at the most pathetic man trying to carry his own cross. Dad picked it up like a twig and looked back long enough to say, "Don't worry. God will take care of me." Boy, is my mom gonna be mad!

Rufus: Away they went. I don't know where to look for my father.

Student #6: It was the cross for Jesus, wasn't it? Did he look at you? Did you know him?

Rufus: I caught a glimpse but I couldn't look. It was awful!

Student #7: It was better you didn't look. That kind of thing could scar you forever. I'm sure you met Jesus. The kindest, most gentle man on earth was to be killed today.

Alexander: I heard the people say "Crucify him! Crucify Jesus!" It was Jesus alright. Why did the soldiers grab MY dad? I don't know how to get to the Temple. He said to meet him there later. Somebody on the street said the veil was ripped in the Temple after it got really dark.

Rufus: Maybe they'll crucify my dad! Boy, my mom is gonna be mad.

Student #8: Simon will be fine. They were looking for strong arms and strong back. He'll meet you at the Temple. We'll show you the way. We're Jerusalem kids. We go to the Temple all the time. Follow us!

**EXIT**



## Narrator

*Walk quietly to an empty center stage. Speak to the audience.*

I might be just a kid but I have a few grown up thoughts about what happened to my friend, Jesus. It's true that His death was terrible. His death was also necessary. It was the only way our sins could be washed away.



A "passerby" from Africa's Libya is commanded to carry Jesus' cross. We meet his boys, Alexander and Rufus. Alexander is a mysterious person. Rufus is mentioned in Romans 16:13 *"Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well."*

Their mother and the wife of Simon of Cyrene was like a mother to Paul! Sounds like that day at Calvary changed an entire family. You know moms. I bet she really WAS mad the day Simon carried Jesus' cross and her boys were left alone in an angry crowd.

Were they scared? Were they confused? They understood the cross meant death. Did they think their father was being punished? Alexander and Rufus, Simon's boys, watched their father bear a cross on his back for the Lord.

Jesus said to his friends, *"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."* (Matthew 16:24)

Later we hear of troubling problems Alexander caused the disciples. Was it the same Alexander? Only Rufus is said to be chosen in the Lord. Same childhood experiences, same family, same circumstances but different outcomes.



## Grades 7-9: He Is God's Yes! An Empty Tomb



*Grade 7-9 students dress as Easter angels. Use available students for speaking parts, repeat when necessary. Students read their parts. This segment can be performed by a mixture of ages depending upon available participants.*

*Place the costumed angels in a dramatic line spread out across the stage or standing in the aisles with the audience or standing on a pew in the midst of people. If there are balconies, consider placing a couple of angels high above the gathering to speak their parts.*

Student #1: The Heavens rang with joy when Jesus arose from the grave three days after He died on the Cross. We angels got to watch the whole thing happen!

Student #2: When people say No, God says Yes. That is the message of Easter. On Good Friday human beings said No. On Easter God overruled their No with His triumphant Yes! That is the earliest Christian understanding of Easter. Preachers at that time said, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner-stone." When we say No, God says Yes.

Student #3: On Good Friday all the friends of Jesus thought God said No. They thought evil had won. They were wrong. The most important 'but' in history is: "They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. BUT-God raised this Man on the third day." God said Yes!

Student #4: If God's triumphant Yes, first spoken on Easter morning, is to be heard in a modern world, it will be heard through the voice of God's people. Angels cannot shout God's Yes. God's human creation *is commissioned to tell the world and it's the only way His Yes can be heard.*





Student #5: A weary, discouraged, damaged world is waiting to hear your Yes. Talk is cheap. Be assured the 'No-sayers' will be watching the inner quality of your lives.

Student #6: We angels are witnesses to the risen Lord and to His power. We proclaim that Jesus Christ, risen triumphant from death today, is truly "the stone which the builders rejected, and has now become the cornerstone." We are proclaiming that Jesus Christ is not a blend of Yes and No, but that with Him it was and is, Yes! He is the Yes pronounced upon God's promises, every one of them!

Student #7: We angels of God love to hear God's Yes. We watch you. We watch over you! But we cannot possibly understand God's gift of salvation given to you by the death and resurrection of His Son.

Student #8: Jesus is much more than 'Just Jesus' to us. He is most beloved in Heaven and on earth. "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look." (1 Peter 1:12)

*All angels lift arms in praise and speak in unison:*

ALL ANGELS: Glorify God with us! He is Risen! Risen as He said! Hosanna to God in the highest! Peace on earth, good will to all people!

## EXIT

## Music

YOUR CHOICE: Feature one Easter Carol sung by the audience or plan a special musical piece by individuals.





## Conclusion

### Narrator

We have traveled a long way from the day I first saw Jesus and He borrowed my lunch to the day of His resurrection. I thought he was 'Just Jesus' and it turns out He is so much more.

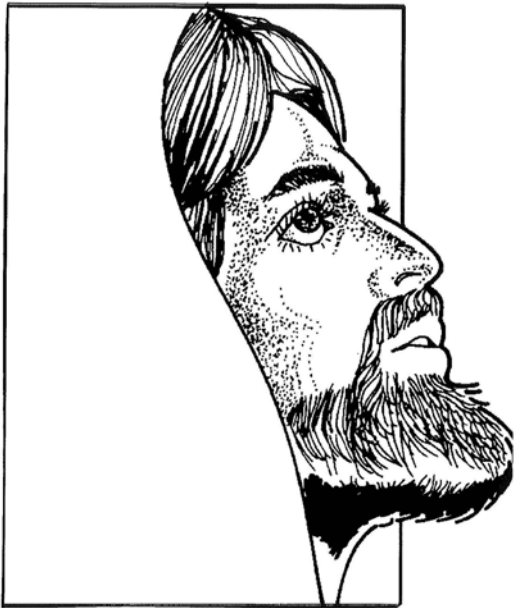
Why would Jesus take notice of a young boy and a little lunch? He always had a way of making big things small and small things big. Jesus made each person feel as if they were His personal friend.

I was just a kid and He was 'Just Jesus' but it didn't make any difference to me or to Him. I'll never forget the day I met Him and I'm guessing you will never forget the day you met Him.

There were about five hundred people who met Jesus. They met Him after He rose and before He went to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. These are the people who never again said He was 'Just Jesus'.



## Grades 10-12: Walk This Way! Emmaus Road



*Students dress in modern clothing. Use available students for speaking parts, repeat when necessary. Students read while standing on stage or around the edges of the audience.*

*This segment can be performed by any age group or a mixture of ages depending upon available participants. Be flexible.*

Student #1: After Jesus was crucified and rose from the grave, two of his followers were walking on the road that led to a town called Emmaus. They were sad and were talking about what had happened to Jesus.

Student #2: Suddenly, Jesus joined the disciples and walked along with them, but they did not know who he was because God kept them from recognizing him.

Student #3: "You seem to be having a very serious discussion. What are you talking about?" Jesus asked them.

Student #4: One man answered, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem that doesn't know what has happened the past few days." Then they told him about how Jesus had been crucified and buried and that some women had gone to his tomb but the tomb was empty. "We have heard He is alive," they said, "but we have not seen him."



Student #5: Jesus must have smiled as he said, "Do you find it hard to believe what the prophets wrote? They said the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his time of glory."

Student #6: Then Jesus quoted lots of scripture explaining what was said about himself.

Student #7: They were coming into Emmaus so the men asked Jesus to stay with them. They sat down to eat and Jesus took the bread and blessed it, broke it and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened and they saw it was Jesus! As quickly as He had appeared to them, Jesus disappeared.

Student #8: They were so happy and excited to have seen Jesus that they ran back to Jerusalem to tell the others that they had seen Jesus.

Student #9: Do you want to see Jesus? The Bible says, "You will find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deuteronomy 4:29) Oh, He may not appear to you in the same way He did to the Emmaus travelers but if you study God's Word and look for Him with all your heart, He will show Himself to you.

Student #10: The Bible says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." (Isaiah 30:21) The story of 'Just Jesus' at Easter is a wonderful reminder to 'Walk This Way'.

**EXIT**



## Adults

# The Great I AM

*Adults participate as desired. Wear modern clothing. Carry large, lit candles. Choose readers who enjoy being part of 'Just Jesus'. Divide speaking parts between the number of people available.*

Speaker #1: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

Speaker #2: "I AM the Bread of life." (John 6:35) "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Revelation 1:18)

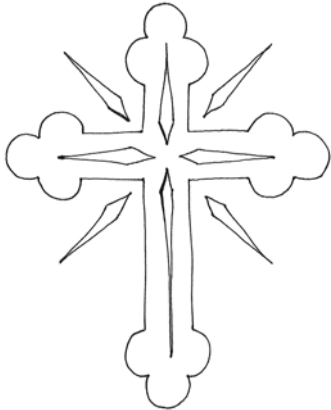
Speaker #3: "I AM the Light of the world." (John 8:12) "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." (Revelation 1:11)

Speaker #4: "I AM the Door of the sheep." (John 10:7,9) "Fear not, I am the first and the last." (Revelation 1:17)

Speaker #5: "I AM the Good Shepherd." (John 10:11,14) "I am the root and the offspring of David and the bright and morning star." (Revelation 22:16)

Speaker #6: "I AM the Resurrection and the Life." (John 11:25) "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I Am!"

Speaker #7: "I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life." (John 14:6) "The Father and I are one."



Speaker #8: "I AM the true vine." (John 15:1, 5) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Speaker #9: The Lord Jesus Christ is 'very God of very God'. He is the Great 'I AM'.

Speaker #10: Our glorious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is more than 'Just Jesus', more than just a good person and more than just a religious teacher who was martyred for His faith long ago. He is alive on His Throne in Heaven, having defeated death forever. He is our great Creator, our Savior and will be our eternal Lord and King. And that is why we say:

ALL SPEAKERS (Joyously!):

Hosanna, He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

HAPPY EASTER!

**EXIT**

**Music**

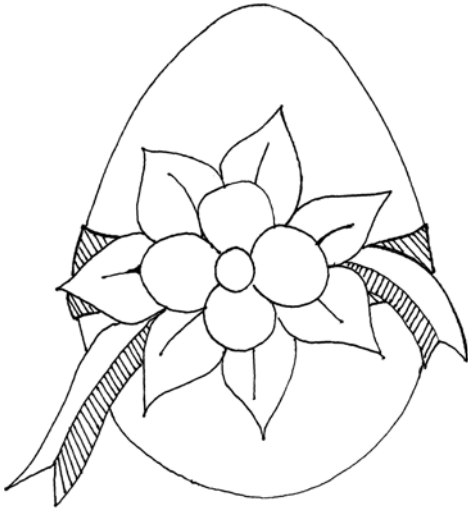
YOUR CHOICE: Feature one Easter Carol sung by the audience or plan a special musical piece by individuals.

**Close In Prayer  
Dismiss to The Easter Party  
Let's Have A Party!**



# THE EASTER PARTY

*One small group prepares THE EASTER PARTY. This could be a few men and women hand picked for the event, an adult Sunday School class or the church women's group.*



*Choose the form this gathering will take early in the planning stages. Host a full Easter Breakfast or continental Breakfast. If held in the evening, serve desserts or a full meal. The people who attend will enjoy whatever type of event prepared for their enjoyment.*

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**THE PLAN!**  
MENU

Plan appropriate food choices. A pleasant option may be to ask people to bring their favorite dessert.

If this is a Sunday morning event, consider serving a Continental Breakfast complete with doughnuts, fresh sliced fruit, juice, coffee and tea.

If your event is in the evening, consider feasting on a full dinner, tureen style, sandwiches and cookies or a formal dessert bar.

## SEATING



Decide the best arrangement for seating depending upon the size of the anticipated gathering. Position tables and chairs.

Serve buffet style with guests moving around the room to chat. Place chairs in small circles throughout the area for small group conversation.

## MUSIC

Play Easter music. This may take the form of live performances by local church musicians or CD background music chosen before the program during the planning stage.

## CENTERPIECES

Cover tables with springtime table cloths. Simple wicker baskets filled with Easter items (*colorful straw, large bow, Cross, lambs, eggs, etc.*) carry the Easter theme through the party. The baskets may look different from table to table.

Place a sign in each basket stating, "Just Jesus! '...even a child shall lead them'".

## BEFORE THE PARTY

Decorate the serving table and guest tables.

Plug in the coffee pot and prepare hot tea while the program is in progress.

Set out foods, cream and sugar.

Make your favorite Easter punch on a nearby serving table in a crystal bowl.





## DURING THE PARTY

Serve food, pour beverages and replenish serving plates as needed. Greet guests cordially as they come through the serving line. Move about the group to be sure everyone feels welcome.

Find seats for those who may not be familiar with your church. Introduce people. Enjoy the program participants as they mingle with the guests.

## AFTER THE PARTY

Don't forget! The party is not over until clean up is complete. Ask everyone to help with dishes, remove tables and chairs and sweep the area clean.

Choose a team of children, teens and adults who agree to stay for clean up. Many helpful hands make the job go faster!

