

Easter Program!



**MORNING  
GLORY!**

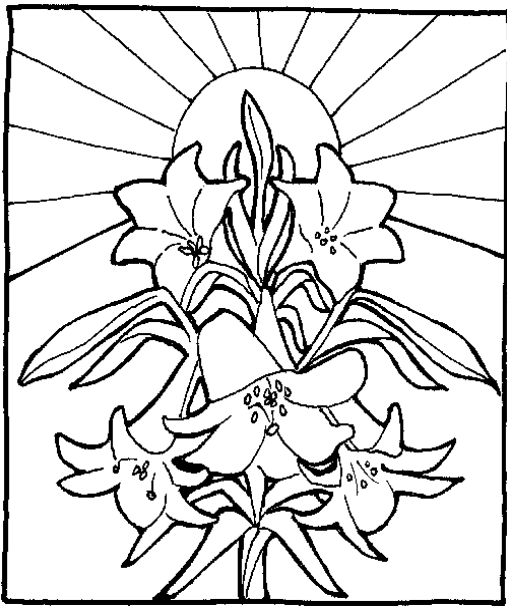
To  
God  
Be  
Morning  
Glory!



GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE!



# MORNING GLORY! IT HAPPENED AT EASTER



**MORNING GLORY** An easy All Church Easter Celebration. Feature children, teens and adults. Share one amazing Jerusalem morning when Jesus changed the world forever.

**MORNING GLORY** Rehearse in small groups with leaders/teachers. Gather the whole group for one dress rehearsal and this Easter celebration is set to go.

Memorization is an option!

**MORNING GLORY** A casual presentation sprinkled with humor, inspiration and the telling of Jesus' great gift.

**MORNING GLORY** Sing traditional Easter Carols. Add special music by individuals or small groups.

Adapt music to fit group talents.

**MORNING GLORY** *Breakfast In Galilee.* Serve snacks, play Easter music and enjoy time together.

This is an optional party plan.  
Conclude the program as desired.

# Index

## Teaching Tips

Introduction and Index.....1-4  
 Easter Director.....5-6  
 Adaptations ~ Make It Work.....7  
  
 Easter Music ~ Sing Glory To God.....8  
 Stage and Props.....9  
 Costumes.....10-11  
  
 Publicity.....12  
 Teachers~Teach From the Heart.....13-14  
 At A Glance.....15

## Morning Glory ~ It Happened At Easter

Procession ~ Readers Introduction.....16-19

### PART ONE

Preschool ~ Here Comes Jesus.....20-21  
 Kindergarten ~ Let's Eat.....22-23  
 Judas Speaks: Traitor In The Camp.....24-25

### PART TWO

Grade One ~The Secret Garden.....26-27  
 Grades Two and Three ~ Cock-A-Doodle Choices.....28-30  
 Grade Four ~ And The Earth Trembled.....31-33  
 Satan Speaks: I Win!.....34  
  
 A Special Story: Jesus and The Bird Cage.....35-36

### PART THREE

Grades Five and Six ~ Tick-Tock.....37-38  
 Grades Seven-Nine ~ He's Ba-a-ck! The Garden Tomb.....39-40  
 Grades Ten-Twelve ~ He Is Risen.....41-42  
 Mary Speaks: God Wins!.....43

### CONCLUSION

Adults ~ Morning Glory Road.....44-45  
 One Person Speaks: We ALL Win!.....46  
 Conclusion.....47

### PARTY

Our Easter Gathering ~ Breakfast In Galilee.....48-49



## *Important 'Techy' Information!*

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Some groups enjoy memorization and other groups avoid it.  
Except for young non readers, read all parts. If your group is  
fond of memorization, lead time will be longer and more  
intense rehearsal is necessary.

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# EASTER DIRECTOR

RISE AND SHINE AND GIVE GOD THE GLORY!



## Lead With Love!

Make segment copies. Assign individual segments to Sunday School classes, church committees, groups of friends and individuals who agree to become part of the event. Adapt **MORNING GLORY** to fit the number of participants available.

## Lead With Preparation!

Leaders organize their small groups with props or costumes. Help the teachers/leaders as needed. They should be able to handle their own material. The result will be a casual, meaningful presentation of the Easter story.

## Lead With Enthusiasm!

It is possible that as you read this you are thinking, *"Why me? I cannot do this!"* Put those feelings aside and dive into this charming presentation of Easter morning with a minimum of hassle. May your church be blessed by this special touch of Easter.

**DELEGATE.** Small group leaders prepare their groups and participate with speaking parts. Trust the staff to carry out their tasks. Never apologize when asking people to help.

**POSITIVE APPROACH.** It is worth the extra effort in the midst of family celebrations and travel plans. Casual preparations will be appreciated.

**PRAY!** Take staff, students and set up details before the Lord and then-RELAX! He is the Power in control.

**PLAN!** Copy and read this Master Planner. Target areas requiring special attention. List details to be handled personally.

**PREPARE!** Copy printed segments, Assign responsibilities. Give teachers and participants copies in a folder. Teachers highlight personal parts for easy use. Adapt the program as needed.

**Some groups enjoy memorization and others avoid it.**

**Except for youngest participants, read all parts.**

**If memorization is part of the plan,  
lead time is longer with more rehearsal.**



**This is an ALL CHURCH production!**

**Involve teens and adults  
as readers, musicians and leaders.**

## ADAPTATIONS - MAKE IT WORK!

~God Always Provides A Way~



*Segments for specific ages may be adapted to older or younger groups, combined or eliminated. Present the Easter story with the participants available in your local church or school.*

MORNING GLORY ... IT HAPPENED AT EASTER is designed to last 45 minutes, depending upon special music. BREAKFAST IN GALILEE party is not included in this time frame.

When should we present MORNING GLORY?

~ Sunrise Service, Sunday School or Easter morning church. ~

OR, arrange another time in your church schedule for the presentation.

### SMALL CHURCH

Remove segments requiring more people than available. Combine speaking parts for fewer people. (Example: Junior-Senior High class, consider eliminating one presentation and featuring the vignette you like the best. Or, use the same group to present two or more segments.) Adults are crucial to the small church presentation.

### MEDIUM CHURCH

Choose favorite segments and eliminate the rest. The goal is to tell the Easter story. Don't leave out important parts of the story!

### LARGE CHURCH

Organize speakers, snack makers, servers, prop masters, sound and lighting people and others who make this easy program exciting. Use as many people as possible.

### BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

Ask an Adult Sunday School class, Women's group or group of friends to take complete party responsibility. Decorate, plan and prepare food as well as arrange for clean up.





# EASTER MUSIC!

~ Sing Glory To God! ~

*Choose music with the Music Director, organist and pianist. Easter songs are sung by participants and the audience. Include hymn books or use a projection system to illuminate words.*



## EASTER HYMNS

Traditional Easter Carols.

Choose audience songs that fit the tradition of your local church.

## OPTIONAL SPECIAL MUSIC

Feature local church and community talent. Insert music where desired. Think about performance time limitations in early planning stages. *Music is NOT provided in the existing program.*



VOCAL SOLO  
 INSTRUMENTAL SOLO  
 CHILDREN/ADULT CHOIRS  
 INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE  
 HANDBELL/CHIME CHOIR

# STAGE AND PROPS

**MORNING GLORY ... IT HAPPENED AT EASTER** *is an easy Easter presentation using a minimum of props and no special staging or backdrops. Individual groups carry their props as needed.*



**SET UP.** Existing flower arrangements, large cross and lighted open tomb add to the atmosphere. Leave Easter items in place.

**STAGING.** Participants stand center stage, speak from the aisles, enter from the back and sometimes mingle with the audience.

**SEATING.** Reserve participants' seating before the audience arrives. Assign assistants to sit with young children.

**SOUND SYSTEM.** Use the existing sound system to its best advantage. Place microphones within easy reach. Speakers must be heard clearly. Volume makes the difference between a frustrating experience or a delightful program for the audience.

*Do not neglect this detail.*

**LIGHTING.** Turn off overhead lights. Place small spot lights on the floor aimed upward toward the participants. Create dramatic lighting with light and dark shadows. Consider scattering strings of white twinkle lights along the floor and walls.

# COSTUMES



*Holy Land costuming is recommended for a few small groups. When costuming a large group, one solution is to ask each participant to create their costume.*

*Parents may be willing to help with bathrobes, caftans and headgear. Not everyone in the program needs costumes. Some wear modern clothing.*

Some characters may need assistance. Props can be made from cardboard and held as if they are "real" items. Use bathrobes, sandals, sheets, long T-shirts with rope belts, bare feet, simple caftans and head wraps. Jewelry may be worn.

**PILLOWCASES:** Pillowcases work well for small children. Cut a neck hole in the top. Cut up the front to the neck hole. Cut armholes in the sides. This makes a long, vest type costume. Plaid or striped flannel pillowcases work great for costumes.

**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 top of the head makes a headpiece.*

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

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

## Student Ushers



Assign student ushers who hand out programs and seat people before the performance.

**Employ a variety of ages!**

*Place children at each door. "Welcome! May I show you to your seat?" Or, "Where would you like to sit?" It is an added personal touch that is much appreciated by audience members.*

**Smile!**

Ask participants to remain in costume at **BREAKFAST IN GALILEE**. Assign specific students to serve beverages, greet guests and wander through the guest area while people eat and talk.

**Party Helpers!**

# PUBLICITY

*Publicize MORNING GLORY ... IT HAPPENED AT EASTER through church communication channels. Announce it in the church newsletter, the weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit. Talk it up! Tell everyone!*



## CHURCH BULLETIN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Print announcements in the church newsletter. Let people know there will be a party with great food following the program.

## LOCAL NEWSPAPERS AND WEB SITES

Include a news announcement with Easter publicity. Talk to a newspaper reporter and photographer to see if a feature article is possible. Add information to web sites local folks see often. (Church, community, personal.)

## TELEVISION AND RADIO

Announce the event on your local cable advertising channel. Check it out! It is one more avenue of great publicity!

## INVITATIONS

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



# TEACHERS!

## Teach From The Heart!

### Involve Students

If there are more students than speaking parts, divide parts. If there are less students than parts, students speak two or three times. Assign singing, holding visuals, carrying props and dressing in costume.

**Involve Everyone!**

### Highlight Individual Parts

Decide if students will memorize their speaking parts or read them. Decorate segment copies with colorful paper, glitter and Easter stickers.

**Performance copies must remain in good shape.**

### Practice

Rehearse during Sunday School. Plan costuming. If a prop is suggested, decide how this will be provided. Make the segment fit your small group with appropriate adaptations.

### Communicate

Tell parents when to have their children at rehearsal and performance. Invite them to attend. Be sure they know what props or costuming their child needs.

## Rehearsal and Performance

Line up according to specific instructions. Sit with your group in the designated area. Lead them on and off stage. Perform your speaking part with enthusiasm. Coach students quietly if they have problems speaking their parts.

**Stage fright is not uncommon!  
Sometimes it's the kids!**

## If You Need Help

The program comes together at the last moment with little formal large group rehearsal. Ask the Director for help as needed.

## “Breakfast In Galilee”

Stay for **BREAKFAST IN GALILEE**. Collect props and program copies. Mingle with guests. Enjoy your students and their families.

## Enjoy The Experience

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to touch the lives of children and adults. Enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. This Resurrection Morning account is classic. Jesus changes people everywhere.

**The spiritual experience is amazing!**

# AT A GLANCE

## ~ MORNING GLORY PROCESSION ~ READERS INTRODUCTION

### PART ONE

PRESCHOOL: Here Comes The King!

KINDERGARTEN: Let's Eat!

JUDAS SPEAKS: Traitor In The Camp!

### PART TWO

GRADE ONE: The Secret Garden

GRADE TWO AND THREE: Cock-A-Doodle Choices!

GRADE FOUR: And The Earth Trembled!

SATAN SPEAKS: I Win!

A SPECIAL STORY: JESUS AND THE BIRD CAGE

### PART THREE

GRADES FIVE AND SIX: Tick-Tock!

GRADES SEVEN-NINE: He's Ba-a-ck! The Garden Tomb

GRADES TEN-TWELVE: He Is Risen!

MARY SPEAKS: God Wins!

### CONCLUSION

ADULTS: Morning Glory!

ONE PERSON SPEAKS: We ALL Win!

## BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

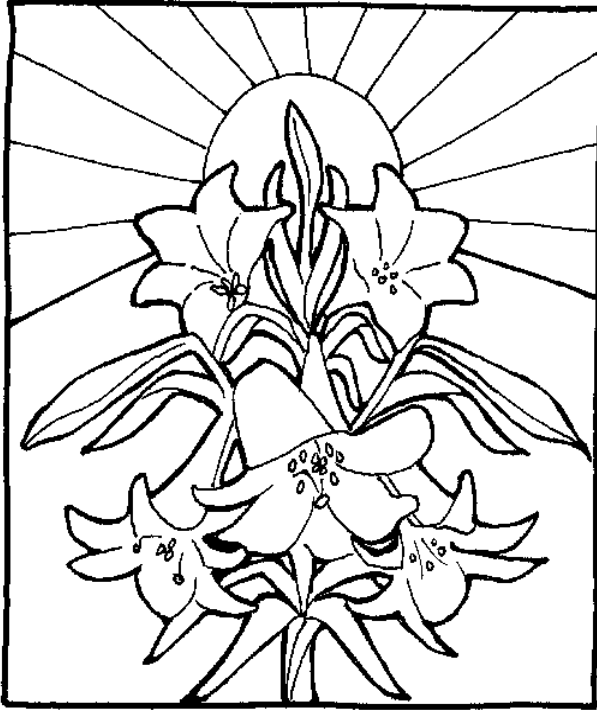




# MORNING GLORY

## It Happened At Easter!

### PROCESSION



*Gather participants in an outer room. Dim sanctuary lights. Arrange stage lights and spotlights so speakers can read their parts.*

### PRELUDE

Church Musicians (organ/piano/keyboard) play cheerful Easter music as the audience gathers. Music ends before the group enters.

### PROCESSION

When the Prelude stops, participants enter from the back. Whisper (*like gossip*) "He's Alive!" while walking. Whispering gets louder and louder and louder until they give one final shout to each other when everyone is in place:

**"HE'S ALIVE!"**

# READERS INTRODUCTION

*Station readers (teens and adults) around the edges of the audience. (Costumes not needed.) In a dark room, Readers carry flashlights . Read with enthusiasm.*

*Combine parts or divide parts according to the number of participants available. This can be read by two people speaking back and forth.*



READER # 1: Long ago, before the time when history books begin, people celebrated the return of spring. When song birds began to sing, it seemed the darkness and death of winter had been defeated. New Life was in the air! But...what did "New Life" mean?

READER #2: For over two thousand years, Christians have celebrated God's good news for all people that completes the angel's Bethlehem announcement: "In the city of David is born this day, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord". That's it! New Life!

READER #3: That Bethlehem Child was Jesus, good and obedient (*except for that Temple incident*), son of Mary and Joseph of Nazareth. He grew in stature and wisdom, in favor with God and men. No one knew it then but Jesus was bringing New Life.

READER #4: Thirty years after Bethlehem, Jesus announced it was time to begin His ministry. He was God's Son, The very Emmanuel the prophet Isaiah said would be sent by God to be the Savior of the world. He chose twelve friends to become the first disciples who told God's good news of New Life across the world until it reached us here, in this very spot, today. Can you hear their voices? He is not here. He is Risen. He's Alive! New Life!

READER #5: Common folk heard Jesus speak God's words of hope and heaven. He explained the kingdom of God. They could be part of God's eternal plan. His words were fresh air in a desert land. Many believed. Lives were changed. They said, "We believe it! New Life!"

READER #6: Some people did not believe Jesus was sent by God to bring New Life. They laughed and called Him crazy. Even his mother and brothers worried about Him.

READER #7: God sacrificed His Son, Jesus. It was a promise God made to Abraham, David and Isaiah. Jesus was a promise God was ready to keep. Jesus' death looked like real death. It was hard. It was dark. But don't be deceived it was really New Life!

-----  
**READER #1:** Five hundred years before Jesus was born the prophet Isaiah wrote: "Who would have thought God's saving power would look like this? The servant grew up before God—a scrawny seedling, a scrubby plant in a parched field. There was nothing attractive about him, nothing to cause us to take a second look.

**READER #2:** "He was looked down on and passed over, a man who suffered, who knew pain firsthand. One look at him and people turned away. We looked down on him..."

**READER #3:** "But the fact is, it was our pains he carried—all the things wrong with us. We thought he brought it on himself. That God was punishing him for his own failures.

**READER #4:** "But it was *our* sins that did that to him— *Our sins!* He took the punishment and that made us whole. Through his bruises we get healed.

**READER #5:** "We're all like sheep who've wandered off and gotten lost. We've all done our own thing, gone our own way. And God has piled all our sins, everything we've done wrong, on him, on him!"

*Taken from Isaiah 53:1-6 TM*

**READER #6:** Passover week began with a joyful celebration. The crowds were large. Jesus was entering the city.

**READER #7:** And so the worst week for the world and the best week for the world began. Let's tell the story one more time. This time look for **MORNING GLORY!** This time look for New Life! It is there if you look hard enough and...**BELIEVE!**

# PRESCHOOL

## Here Comes Jesus!

*Preschool children (Ages 4-5) wave palm branches.*

*Teacher is on stage with children.*

*OPTION: Carry one handmade cardboard donkey. Each child waves a palm branch.*

*Costumes: Holy Land*

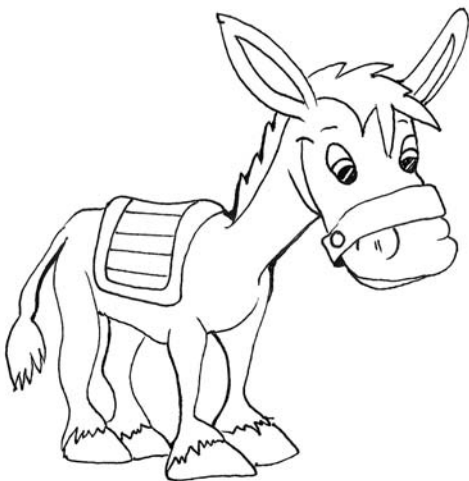
TEACHER: Here comes Jesus! He's riding a donkey and the people are waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna!

CHILDREN: Hosanna! Here comes Jesus!

TEACHER: The people are excited to see Jesus riding that donkey into Jerusalem. God promised He would send a Savior to rescue and rule his people. Jesus is just right.

CHILDREN: Hosanna!

TEACHER: Wave at Jesus, children! He's passing us right now.



CHILDREN: *(Wave hands and wave palm branches).*

TEACHER: A king rides a horse. Jesus is a strong King. Even when we feel weak, He is strong. A king who comes in peace rides a donkey. Jesus brings peace to every single person who knows Him as their King. While He's riding by, let's sing a song He will hear.

CHILDREN: *(Singing together while waving branches)*

Jesus loves me this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to Him belong.  
They are weak, but He is strong.

CHORUS: Yes, Jesus loves me.  
Yes, Jesus loves me.  
Yes, Jesus loves me.  
The Bible tells me so!

Waving branches for our King,  
We want Him to hear us sing.  
Jesus look as You pass by.  
We will serve You til we die.

CHORUS: Here Comes the King!  
Here Comes the King!  
Here Comes the King!  
The Bible tells me so!

TEACHER: Look at any donkey's back. You will see a brown shape of a cross. Some are easier to see but the Cross is there. Some folks say that every donkey has carried the sign of the cross since the day the donkey carried Jesus into Jerusalem so soon before His crucifixion.

*If you have made a large cardboard donkey,  
allow the children to carry it back the center aisle  
before they sit down so everyone can see it.*



# KINDERGARTEN LET'S EAT!

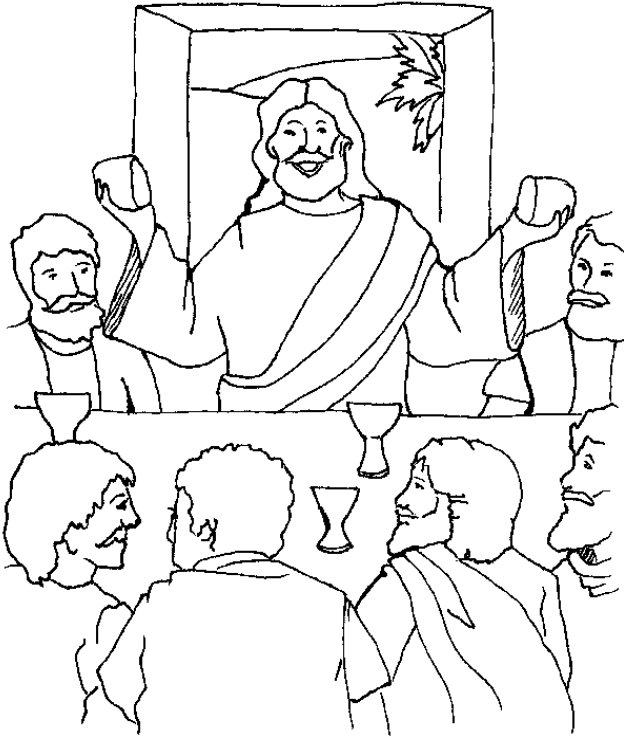
*Actors: Kindergarten Teacher and students*

*Costume: Modern day clothing. Students carry small wicker baskets filled with some type of small treat.*

*Consider cookies, soft candy, crackers, pretzels or any mixture of inexpensive treats that can be shared with the audience.*

TEACHER: Who likes to eat? *(Students raise hands)* That's what I thought. Everyone looks forward to a delicious dinner. What are your favorite foods.

STUDENTS: *Let the students respond by naming some of their favorite foods. This response can be impromptu or practiced.*



TEACHER: Jesus gathered His friends in an upstairs room for dinner. This was their last meal together before Jesus died. Jesus said, "I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer." From Luke 22

What are you carrying in your baskets?

STUDENTS: *Students name the small treats in their baskets.*

TEACHER: *Jesus offered the disciples bread and wine at that last meal to remind believers of something new and special. What did He start that night that we have remembered ever since?*

*STUDENTS: Holy Communion!*

*TEACHER: What does the word "Communion" mean?*

*STUDENTS: Sharing!*

*TEACHER: We still share the Lord's Supper today, right here, in our very church. We share tiny samples of food to remember that Jesus gave His life so that we can have New Life.*

STUDENT: Can we share our Easter treats with everyone?

TEACHER: What a wonderful idea. While everyone is singing, walk around and share your treats with everyone in the room.

**OPTION:** Kindergarten students carry the baskets and offer their treats row to row while the audience sings.

## EVERYONE SINGS

### Choose a Familiar Easter Song



# JUDAS SPEAKS: TRAITOR IN THE CAMP!

*Monologue Actor: One teen or adult portrays Judas Iscariot.*

*(Speak in a kind, reasonable voice and let the audience in on the gossip.)*

*Costume: Holy Land costume*

**JUDAS:** *(Bowing)* I am Judas, a dear, dear friend of Jesus. He's the Teacher from Nazareth. He's important in my life but I must tell you, lately He's been doing crazy stuff.

**After the Jerusalem crowds went home for lunch and coats and palm branches were picked up, Jesus got off that donkey, visited the temple and headed for Bethany.** Busy guy! After dinner, Mary did the oddest thing. She said she wanted to show Him how much she loved Him. The next thing you know, she pours her most treasured possession—a delicate flask of very costly perfume—over His feet. His feet! Do you know how much perfume is worth? I'll tell you what it's worth! It's worth a lot of money.

**She wiped his feet -his feet!- with her long hair.** The scent of that wonderful perfume filled the entire house! What a waste of expensive perfume! I can sell it at top price *(I know a guy)* and give the money to the poor. Well, most of it. I—I mean We—could keep a little, just for the good of the group you understand. The latest sandals are on sale in the market and I saw a striped robe to die for. Well, maybe not die.



**When I mention my plan, Mary gets praised.** I get yelled at! Jesus said, "Don't say anything against Mary. You will always be able to help the poor. I won't be with you for long. Mary has done something beautiful. She has prepared my body for burial which is soon to come. What she has done will never be forgotten." I felt 'this big' (*squeeze fingers together.*) I still want that money. And the sandals. And the robe.

**Our leaders want to arrest Jesus and have him killed.** They think He's *big* trouble. Hmm... I bet they would pay *big* money for information about Jesus. Not that I would do that, you understand. But, it IS something to think about! I wonder what it would be worth to them.

*Walk away quietly.*

# GRADE ONE

## THE SECRET GARDEN

*Actors: Grade One Teacher and Students.*

*Costume: Modern clothing. Assign short stanzas of the poem for individual students to read aloud.*

*Divide poem according to students available.*

*Practice during Sunday School in the weeks preceding the program. Place individual parts on colorful paper cut out like flowers and leaves.*



TEACHER: After their Last Supper together, Jesus and His friends talked and walked for a long time. They crossed the brook and went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Silver gray olive trees spread dark branches over their sleepy heads.

### THE SECRET GARDEN

by Ellen Bunnell

I know a Secret Garden  
Where Jesus goes one day.  
His friends are traveling with Him  
Their job is, "Watch and Pray".

Jesus walks away from them  
To find a lonely place.  
He seems quite sad and lonely,  
His friends lie down to wait.

His prayer is soft and meaningful.  
He asks for Father's care.  
And when the night becomes too dark,  
He gives in to despair.

Oh, not that Jesus would have tried  
To run away and hide.  
He knows the end is coming soon,  
And that's just why He cried.

The friends of Jesus place their heads  
Upon the cold, hard ground.  
Soon promises to "Watch and Pray"  
Are gone as they sleep sound.

Dear Jesus tries to shake awake  
These men who should have peeked.  
They bow their heads with tired eyes  
And twice they fall asleep.

"Too late," says Jesus, "Now it's time  
For Me to meet My fate.  
The soldiers are awaiting Me  
At Secret Garden's gate."

This Secret Garden has a name  
We Christians love to hear.  
The little garden near the Mount?  
It's Gethsemane, My dear!

## MUSICAL OPTION: "In The Garden"

Instrumental/Congregation/Grade 1 students

# GRADES TWO AND THREE COCK-A-DOODLE CHOICES!

*Actors: Teen or adult portrays Peter (Holy Land costume). Carry a colorful cardboard rooster.*

*Grade Two/Three Teacher and Students (Modern Clothing): Peter meets the class on stage to tell his story. Students and Peter sit and stand casually as they talk.*



PETER: (*Bowing*) I am Simon Peter. Jesus was my best friend. I didn't act like a friend the night the soldiers marched Jesus away from Gethsemane.

STUDENT # 1: Did the soldiers have bombers and machine guns? Did the soldiers fight you to the ground while you were protecting Jesus?

PETER: What are bombers and machine guns? Pure fear kept me from helping Jesus. I followed from a safe distance and saw them enter the High Priest's house.

STUDENT #2: Why didn't you jump the bad guys? Spray them in the face with mace! You could have figured out a tricky way to help Jesus escape.

PETER: (*Smiling ....*) I was afraid. Those men were big, strong and mean. I hid in the shadows until it was safe to enter the gate and warm myself by the fire. I met a friendly looking servant girl.

STUDENT #3: Where was Jesus?

PETER: Jesus was a prisoner. A rough trial began in the night.

STUDENT #4: Did you whisper, "Hey Jesus! It's me, Pete! I've got a plan to get you out! Follow me."

PETER: The girl at the gate said, "Aren't you a follower of that prisoner?" When she pointed at Jesus, I really got scared. I lied, "I am not! I don't know that man." Strange men looked at me. Then I was really scared.

STUDENT #5: Peter, you promised Jesus that no matter what happened you would be there for him. I would never disappoint Jesus!

PETER: Be careful what you say, young one. I didn't think I would fail Him. I found myself swearing and saying I never knew Him.

STUDENT #6: Jesus was in trouble and you didn't help. How could you have done it?

PETER: I ask myself every day. The third time I denied knowing Jesus a rooster crowed. Jesus told me the sound of that rooster would remind me of my terrible, cock-a-doodle mistake. I could never make it better.

STUDENT #7: Jesus forgave you. Forgive yourself

PETER: I saw Jesus across the courtyard, calm, alone, facing His false accusers. A wave of shame swept over me. Jesus turned and looked at me with love and understanding.





STUDENT #8: Jesus understood how scared you were.

PETER: I made up for that one horrible, cock-a-doodle night. The good news of God's New Life for all people became my message to the world.

STUDENT #9: We will serve Jesus. We'll tell everyone about the Easter story that changed the world.

*Peter waves as he leaves the stage .*

TEACHER: Remember that man, kids. He is Peter, The Rock. Jesus said, "*On this Rock I will build my church*". Even when we make huge mistakes the Lord is willing to forgive us and make us what we ought to be.

Exit



# GRADE FOUR AND THE EARTH TREMBLED!



**ACTORS:** *Grade Four Teacher and Students.*

**COSTUME:** *Modern Clothing.*

*Station students around the audience. Each student speaks from where they stand. Some speak in the front, some in the back and some on the sides.*

*Divide poem according to the number of participants. If there are few students, place them at opposite sides of the congregation so they speak back and forth across the audience.*

## SPECIAL EFFECT

One person plays one low note or bell or organ chime slowly again and again like a tolling bell as the group reads. The effect is that of time slowly moving forward through the last hours of Jesus' earthly life. As soon as the last words are spoken, the tolling stops and everyone remains silent with bowed heads while standing in place for 30 seconds. Jesus is dead. Let the audience 'feel' the emptiness. Students quietly take their seats. No one speaks!

**TEACHER:** One day the earth trembled. Earth's dark night happened in the middle of the day. Let those who have ears listen to God's ultimate love.

Have you ever stopped to wonder  
Why they call Good Friday "good"?  
It seems to me that sad, black day  
Could be misunderstood.

How His Father must have cried  
As He watched His dear Son die,  
And not for crimes that He had done,  
But for sinners such as I.





What kind of love could be so great  
 To suffer willingly  
 The penalty for someone else;  
 His blood was shed for me.

--Rose Newman

A purple robe, a crown of thorns,  
 A reed in his right hand;  
 Before the soldiers' hateful eyes  
 I see my Savior stand.

He bears between the Roman guard  
 The weight of all our woe;  
 A stumbling figure bowed and scarred  
 I see my Savior go.

He hangs, by whom the world was made,  
 Beneath the darkened sky;  
 The everlasting ransom paid,  
 I see my Savior die.

--Timothy Dudley-Smith

STUDENT #1: Five hundred years before Jesus, the prophet Isaiah said, *"He was treated harshly yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to be killed and he did not open his mouth."* From Isaiah 53:7

STUDENT #2: The soldiers led Jesus through Jerusalem streets to Golgotha Hill. Jesus was weak. A brave African, called Simon, was ordered to carry His heavy cross.

STUDENT #3: Jesus' close friends were there. His mother, Mary, and close friend, John, stayed close to Jesus until the end.



STUDENT #4: Two criminals who deserved to die were crucified with Jesus. People shouted, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah God has chosen."

STUDENT #5: On the Cross, these words were written: "This is the King of the Jews".

STUDENT #6: One criminal said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come as King". Jesus said to him, "I promise that today you will be in Paradise with me."

STUDENT #7 OR TEACHER: It was twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining. Darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock. The big temple curtain was torn in two. Jesus cried, "Father! In Your hands I place my spirit!" ...and died.

The entire earth stood still. It was over. Done. God's New Life born to young Mary, announced by angels, visited by shepherds and honored by wise men was gone. Bad people rejoiced. Good people cried. How could God let this happen?

**STAND IN SILENCE FOR THIRTY SECONDS.  
MOVE TO YOUR SEATS IN SILENCE.**

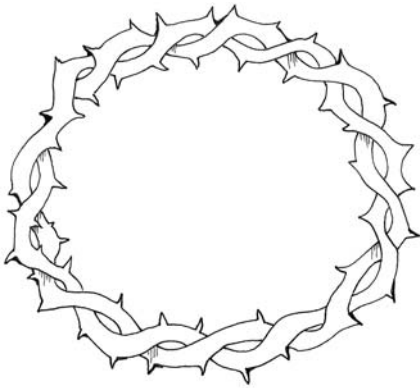


## SATAN SPEAKS:

## I WIN!

**ACTOR:** *One teen or adult portrays Satan as a smiling, well dressed, charming person. Spray glitter on face, hair, hands and clothing. Satan appears smug, happy and full of himself.*

**SATAN:** *(Walk across the stage with confident joy!)* Did you hear the tolling bell stop? I hope the whole earth heard the silence. Jesus is gone...finally! From the beginning of time I planned to become God. Why should I **serve** God when I can **be** God. Today I am in perfect position to take control of heaven and earth. **I win!**



**Almighty God thought His clever little plan in Bethlehem would stop me.** Know-nothing shepherds, a young couple with an unlikely baby story, foreigners with nothing better to do than follow a silly star carrying baby presents. Ha! Nobody believed that. I made sure of it! **I win!**

I have been hounding Jesus every moment of the last thirty three years to destroy that goody two shoes. Jesus of Nazareth! Son of God! He means nothing to me. Today, I worked my plan and saw the end of the Only Life that could destroy me. But He didn't destroy me. **I win!**

**Jesus is gone.** He died the death of the worst criminals. I even added a crown of thorns for special effect. A warning to others. His clueless followers are shaking in fear from their dark hideouts all over town. Cowards! **I win!**

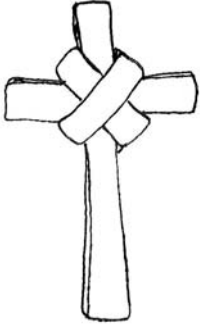
*(Speak to the audience ... Sweep your arm across the crowd)*

And, **YOU** lose! You were so sure your Jesus was the high and mighty Messiah, God's precious Savior. But, He's dead! Jesus could never do for you what I offer. Wealth, power, happiness. Follow me! I am the Prince of the Power of the Air. **I win!**

Leave the stage and disappear laughing.

# A Special Story

## Jesus and The Bird Cage



**ACTORS:** Pastor (or someone to act as the Pastor), One child

**COSTUMES:** Modern Day for pastor, child about 10 years old

~ unkempt, unwashed, swinging an old caved in bird cage.

Pretend to have two birds in the cage.

**PROPS:** One large, empty bird cage.

This is an adaptation of a Paul Harvey, radio commentator, story from Dr. S.D. Gordon's pulpit story.

Child: Crosses stage, whistling and swinging an old bird cage.

Pastor: Hey! Where did you get the birds?

Child: I trapped them!

Pastor: What are you going to do with them?

Child: I am going to play with them and have fun with them.

Pastor: Sooner or later you'll get tired of them. Then what are you going to do with them?

Child: *(Thinking)* I have some cats at home. They like birds. I'll feed them to my cats.

Pastor: *(Thinking)* Hmm, how much do you want for the birds?

Child: Mister, you don't want these birds. They're just plain old field birds. They can't even sing. They're ugly.

Pastor: Just tell me. How much do you want?

Child: *(Squint eyes, count on fingers)* Two dollars?

Pastor: *(Reach in pocket and hand two dollars to child. Take the cage.)*

Child: Woo Hoo! (Grab the money and run back the aisle.)

Pastor: *(Walk to front of stage and pretend to encourage the birds to leave the cage. Place hands so it seems as if they fly away one at a time. Look satisfied as 'they' fly away.)*

Pastor: *(To Audience)* Let me tell you a "Once Upon A Time" story. Jesus and the Devil talked together and made a negotiation. Satan boasted how he'd baited a trap in Eden's garden and caught himself a world full of people.

Jesus asked, "What are you going to do with those people in your cage?"

The Devil said, "I'm going to play with 'em, tease 'em. Make 'em marry and divorce and fight and kill one another. I'm going to teach them to throw bombs on one another. I'm going to have fun with them."

Jesus said, "You can't have fun with them forever. When you get tired of playing what are you going to do with them?"

Satan smiled. "I hate them. They're no good anyway! I will destroy them. I will kill them."

Jesus said, "How much do you want for them?"

Satan laughed, "You can't be serious! If I sell them to you, they'll just spit on you. They'll hate you. They'll hit you and beat you. They'll hammer nails into you! They're no good."

Jesus said, "How much?"

Satan closed one eye, looked Jesus up and down and whispered, "All of your tears and all of your blood. That's the price."

Jesus took the cage, and paid the price...and opened the cage.

Pastor Exits With Bird Cage  
Walking back center aisle.

# GRADES FIVE AND SIX TICK-TOCK!



**ACTORS:** Grades 5-6 Students.

**COSTUME:** Today's clothing. Carry a variety of clocks. The clocks can be working or non-working. They may be plain or beautiful.

Gather whatever is available.

Divide parts between available participants. If there are more students, divide parts. Assign one or more students to say the words—**TIME MARCHES ON.**

**STUDENT #1:** Time marches on. Jesus is dead. The Roman captain was amazed at what he saw at Calvary. He said, "This man really was the Son of God". He believed!

**STUDENT #2:** Time marches on. Jesus is dead. A man named Joseph bravely asked permission to have Jesus' body for a proper burial in a new tomb.

*STUDENT #3: Time marches on. Jesus is dead. Nicodemus, a secret Jesus follower, had talked one night away with him. Jesus' words, "You must be born again", still rang in his ears. He helped wrap Jesus' body with perfumes and spices.*

*STUDENT #4: Time marches on. Jesus is dead. They took Him to a peaceful garden and placed Him on a rock shelf in the tomb. They rolled a huge stone to close the entrance. The women watched and cried.*

STUDENT #5: It is a dark waiting time. Friends of Jesus could only sit still until the longest day they had ever known finally ended. When all is said and done, time marches on.

STUDENT #6: The clock moves slowly. The day never seems to end. Tasks that must be completed are left undone and the waiting continues. The clock moves one second, one minute, one hour at a time. And we wait.

STUDENT #7: Friends hid in fear, leaders made plans, soldiers guarded the tomb. God was at work. The waiting continued.

## SPECIAL MUSIC AUDIENCE SINGS

# GRADES SEVEN-NINE

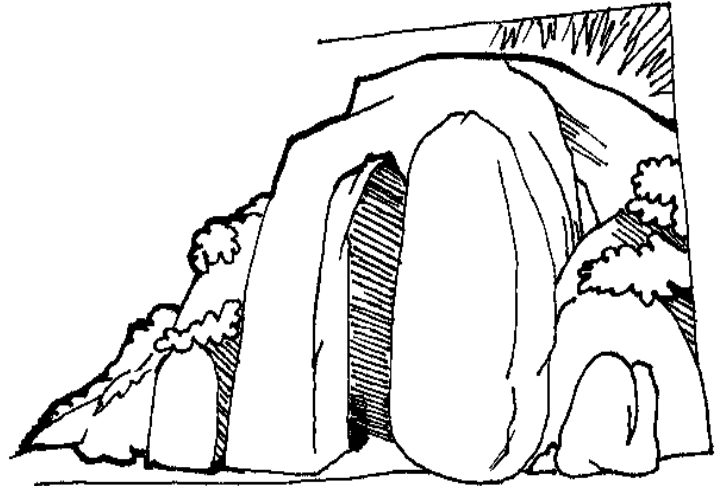
## HE'S BA-A-CK! THE GARDEN TOMB

ACTORS: Grades 7-9 Students. Divide parts between available students.

COSTUME: Holy Land. One Angel.

The mood turns joyous! Students enter jumping and laughing and slapping each other on the back. They have good news and they are telling it. They shout "He's Back!" Their whole attitude is, "You've got to hear what just happened! "

STUDENT # 1: (*Laughing..*) Have you heard the good news? The great news? The outstanding news? Jesus is alive! He's ba-a-ck!



STUDENT #2: In spite of all Jesus told us, none of us expected to see Jesus alive. I saw Him with my own eyes. I believe.

STUDENT #3: Someone moved the stone. Sitting on the stone, was a bright, shining creature, so dazzling it hurt your eyes. God's Angel!

STUDENT #4: (*Angel*) God sent me. "Don't be scared. I know you're looking for Jesus. But you're looking in the wrong place. He's not in the tomb. He's alive. Just go and tell that to Peter and the others."

STUDENT #5: We didn't stop running until we were out of the garden. And then.... We saw Jesus.

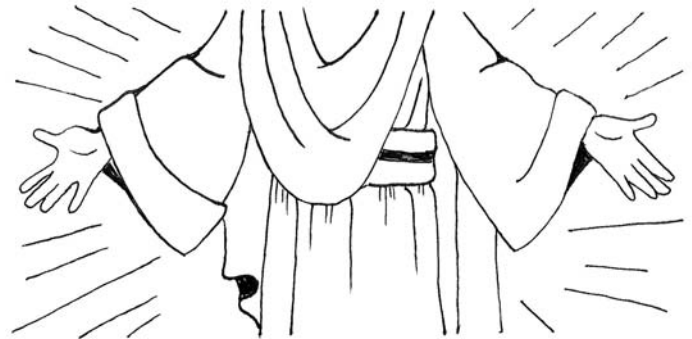


STUDENT #6: Peter went inside the open tomb. What a sight! The rock shelf was there. The linen was there. The head band was there. Jesus was gone! The tomb was empty! Jesus was alive!

STUDENT #7: Jesus said He would come back from the dead in three days...and He did it! Jesus did it! He's alive!

Leave joyfully,  
shouting "He's alive. Jesus is alive!"

One thoughtful female student  
remains on stage.  
She is *Mary Magdalene*.



MARY: I was miserable knowing someone had stolen Jesus' body. Who would do such a thing? Hadn't they done enough? I stood at the tomb. I didn't look up when someone asked me why I was crying.

I thought he was the gardener or maybe the person who had removed Jesus. I asked the man to tell me where he put Jesus' body. His answer was one, single word, "Mary".

I knew that voice! I turned around and there he was! Jesus, My Lord, alive!

Exit

# GRADES TEN-TWELVE

## HE IS RISEN!

**ACTORS:** Grades 10-12 Students. Divide parts between available participants.

**COSTUME:** Modern clothing. Carry props.

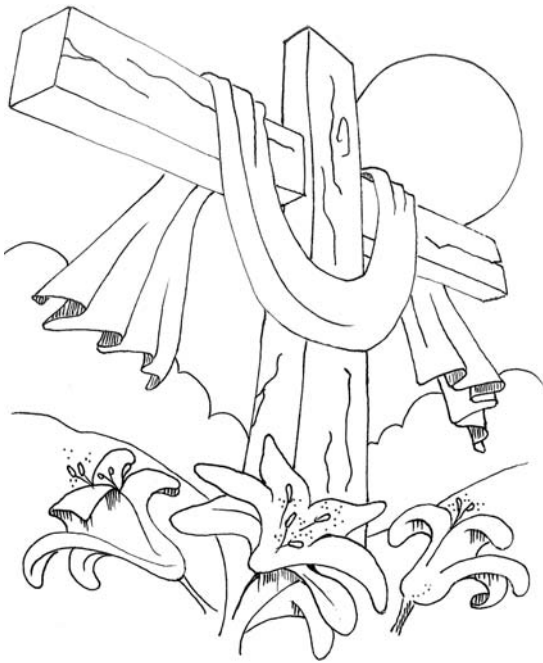
Enter one at a time to tell the story of the Garden Tomb.  
Line up single file in the center aisle.

**STUDENT #1:** It has been more than 2000 years and we followers of Jesus, still tell the tremendous story of God's Morning Glory. Did Satan win? No! Did God win? Yes!

**STUDENT #2:** Good Friday IS good. Easter Sunday Morning is so much better! Jesus kept His promise and rose from the dead. Alive!

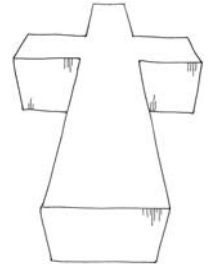
**STUDENT #3: (LILY)** The beautiful lily is a traditional Easter flower because it represents innocence, hope and New Life. The trumpet reminds us that Heaven is ready to blow God's joyful trumpet.

**STUDENT #4: (TREE BRANCH)** Some Christians bring tightly budded branches of flowering trees into the house weeks before so it blooms for Easter. Christians pick birch or willow and sometimes decorate the branches with colored feathers.



STUDENT #5: (FILLED EASTER BASKET) Rabbits, baskets filled with colorful eggs ... These sweet symbols point to New Life and the joy that Jesus brings. And to think that New Life came from a garden tomb when there seemed to be no hope at all.

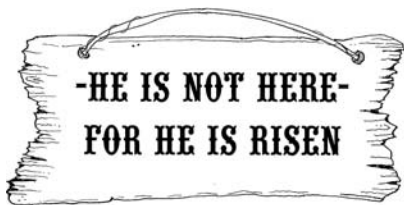
STUDENT #6: (CROSS) No one knows exactly where Jesus was buried. In 1867, British General Gordon was convinced he had found Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. He bought the ground and opened the cave.



STUDENT #7: (LARGE ROCK) We Christians are a hearty bunch. We continue to shout "He's Alive" to anyone who will listen. Today at the tomb you will find an open air amphitheater where daily gatherings are held. A large rock is rolled to one side.

STUDENT #8: (FLOWERS) About a thousand people from all the continents visit the Garden Tomb every day. Africans, Asians, Islanders, Americans ....gather side by side to worship Jesus, the Risen Savior of the world. Why? Jesus promised New Life! We believe!

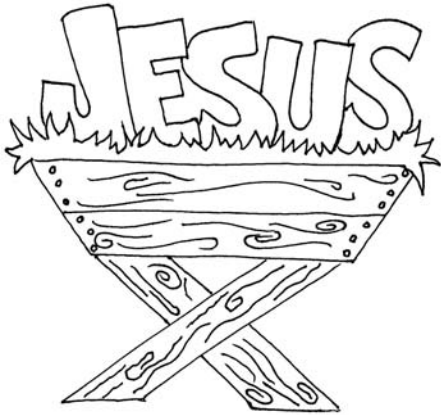
STUDENT #9: (SIGN-HE IS NOT HERE, HE IS RISEN!) This is no ordinary cemetery. Every Sunday the tomb is closed and a little door is fastened to the entrance, on which are the angel's words, "He is not here, for He is risen!"



STUDENT #10: When Don Bridge was Chaplain of the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem he told the faithful visitors, "In the long run, it doesn't really matter whether this is the authentic tomb or not, because of three simple words that sum it up. "It is empty!"



# Mary Speaks: God Wins!



Actor: One adult portrays Mary, Mother of Jesus, in this short monologue.

Costume: Simple Holy Land

Speaking Softly With Quiet Awe: It is Morning! God's Morning. I was so young when Gabriel said I would have a baby boy that was God's miracle. I said "yes" but I was afraid.

What a beautiful baby son! Joseph and I marveled at the humble stable, poor shepherds, wise men and God's protection that led us to Egypt.

I wish you could have seen him grow up. Jesus was a delightful young man in our home. I knew God's hand was on that boy.

Then came the years when He traveled. He healed people, raised the dead, fed the hungry. I admit there were moments I thought Jesus was mentally unstable but I was really just afraid for Him.

He called all people to New Life. He talked about the Kingdom of God. I, more than anyone, understood He came from God. I did not want Him to suffer. And He did suffer. I was helpless.

I did the one thing I could do. I stayed with Jesus until the end. I was there at the beginning and I was there at the end. But...It wasn't the end. It was just the beginning of New Life.

The garden tomb was empty! Jesus rose from the grave just like He promised. I am honored to be included in God's "Morning Glory".

Exit

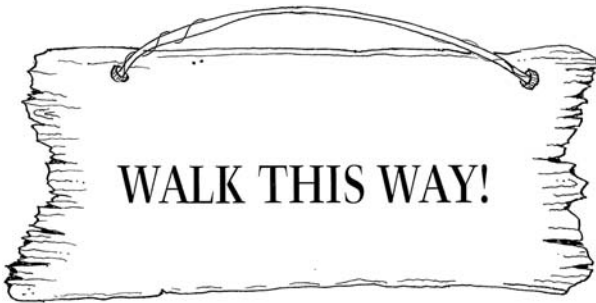


# ADULTS

## MORNING GLORY ROAD!

**ACTORS:** Two adults-Emmaus Road travelers.

**COSTUME:** Holy Land clothing. Speak to one another as if relating a current experience.



#1: It was time to leave Jerusalem for Emmaus. I thought He was dead. Did somebody tell you about Jesus?

#2: I was clueless. The terrible events that happened all week were the only things on our minds as we walked Emmaus Road.

#1: I was sure Jesus was God's promised Messiah. I waited for God to rescue us. He promised!

#2: Jesus was dead three days. The dream ended.

#1: I didn't notice a single traveler approaching us. He slowed down and walked with us. That was nice. It's always good to have company on a long walk.

#2: He saw our sadness. He asked what was wrong. We poured out our sad tale as fast as we could. I couldn't believe he hadn't heard about Jesus dying in Jerusalem. Everybody in the city knew.

# 1: He didn't seem that sad about it. He told us one Old Testament story after another that explained God's plan. The Messiah had to die and rise to life again. That's how God would save the people He loved.

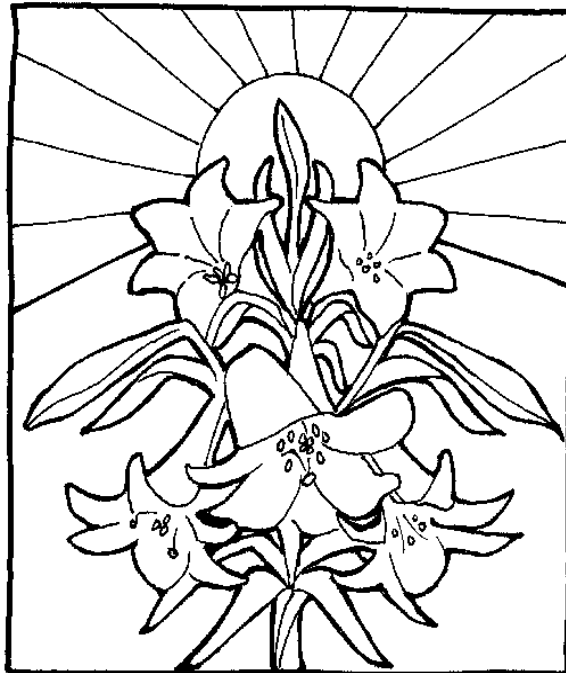
#2: Time certainly went fast. As it was getting dark we arrived in Emmaus. I asked the traveler to join us for dinner. Seemed the right thing to do. He agreed. It was a simple meal.

# 1: The man took the bread, thanked God for it and shared it with us. It was then I finally looked in His eyes. And what I saw there ... it was ... it was ... Glory!

#2: As soon as I recognized Jesus I was filled with joy. I tried to speak to Him but He disappeared. Just like that, He was gone!

#1: We need to travel back to Jerusalem to tell everyone we have seen Jesus.

Leave the stage together.



# ONE PERSON SPEAKS: We ALL Win!



**Monologue:** We have shown you "Morning Glory". Short version! Why do we celebrate a dark day that happened long ago? We celebrate because Jesus makes a difference. There was MORNING and GOD'S GLORY and HOPE for all the nations. His One Solitary Life changed history and changed individual lives. Let me remind you one more time of His humble life.

*"Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.*

*He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.*

*While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth - His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.*

*Nineteen long centuries have come and gone and today He is a centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.*

*I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected this life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life."*

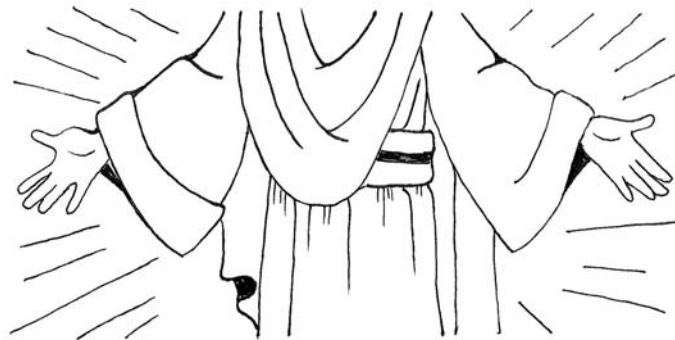
Adapted from a sermon by Dr. James Allan Francis  
"The Real Jesus and Other Sermons",  
1926, Judson Press of Philadelphia.

Did Jerusalem leaders win? No. Did mockers win? No. Did Satan win? No. WE WIN! We ALL win because at the end of our life journey is Morning Glory ...and Heaven ...and Forever with Jesus who gave His life for us! Happy Easter!

# CONCLUSION

Conclude MORNING GLORY ... IT HAPPENED AT EASTER with Easter songs. Choose individuals who sing, play instruments. Include a choir.

Attend BREAKFAST IN GALILEE immediately following the program .



## CLOSE IN PRAYER

Risen Lord, Wonderful Savior. We thank You for Your presence on this Resurrection Morning.

Thank You for reminding us that after a dark Friday You kept your promise and provided the whole earth with MORNING GLORY.

We praise and adore You. We give our lives to You. We look forward to another MORNING GLORY when You return to gather us into Heaven to live forever because of Calvary and Resurrection.

In Christ's Risen Name We Pray, Amen!

**HAPPY EASTER!**  
**JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST IN GALILEE.**



# OUR EASTER GATHERING

## ~ BREAKFAST IN GALILEE ~



Assign one group the responsibility of preparing BREAKFAST IN GALILEE. This could be a few handpicked men and women, a Sunday School class or a group of friends.

*Choose a full Easter breakfast, a true Galilean styled meal or Continental Breakfast. The people who attend will enjoy whichever meal is planned.*

## BEFORE BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

**Menu:** People bring their favorite Easter breakfast casserole or homemade sweet rolls. If this is a Sunday morning event, consider serving a Continental Breakfast complete with fresh doughnuts, orange juice and coffee.

*Since this gathering is called BREAKFAST IN GALILEE, have fun with the theme and dish up a simple Galilean meal or at least something similar. Serve fish sticks (bacon and sausage may be added), homemade bread with butter and honey, scrambled eggs, fresh fruit platters or fruit kebabs and beverage.*



**Seating:** Decide the best seating arrangement depending upon the size of the gathering. Serve buffet style with guests standing and moving around the room to chat. Place a few chairs in small circles throughout the area for small group conversation.

**Music:** Choose between live performances by local church musicians or recorded CD tunes.

**Centerpieces:** Feature Easter centerpieces. These may be as casual as Easter flowers in vases tied with yellow, pink, blue and green pastel ribbons or multicolored balloons tied to floral displays.

Thinking of the Galilean Breakfast theme?  
Use rustic tan burlap table runners,  
one large rock and a lily laying beside it.

## THE DAY OF BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

Decorate the serving table and guest tables. Plug in the coffee pot and put tea water on to boil. Set out foods, cream and sugar. Make your favorite Easter punch.



## DURING BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

Greet guests. Be sure everyone feels welcome. Find seats for those who may not be familiar with your church. Introduce people. Enjoy program participants as they mingle.



## AFTER BREAKFAST IN GALILEE

The party is not over until clean up is complete. Help with dishes, remove tables and chairs. Keep the area clean.



*Go Home .... Good And Faithful Servant!*