

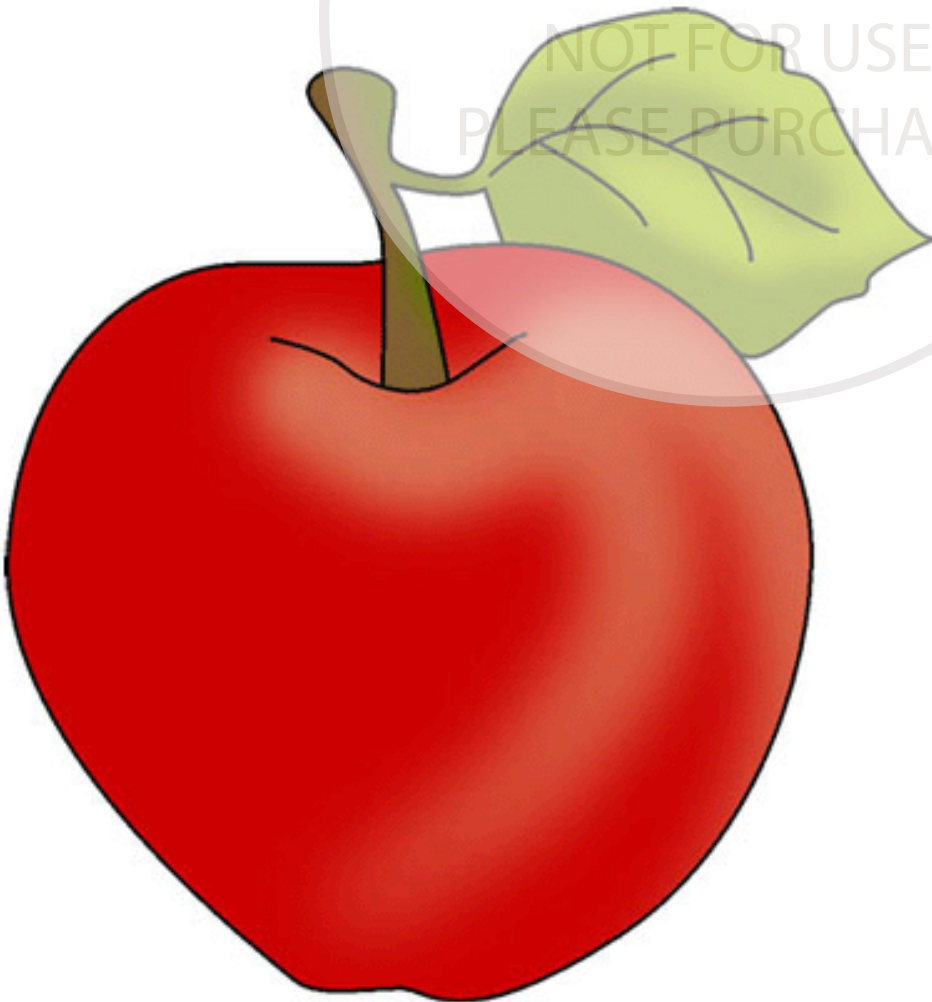
AFTER THE APPLE

...EASTER!

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“O TASTE
AND SEE
THAT THE LORD
IS GOOD.”

AFTER

THE

APPLE

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...EASTER!

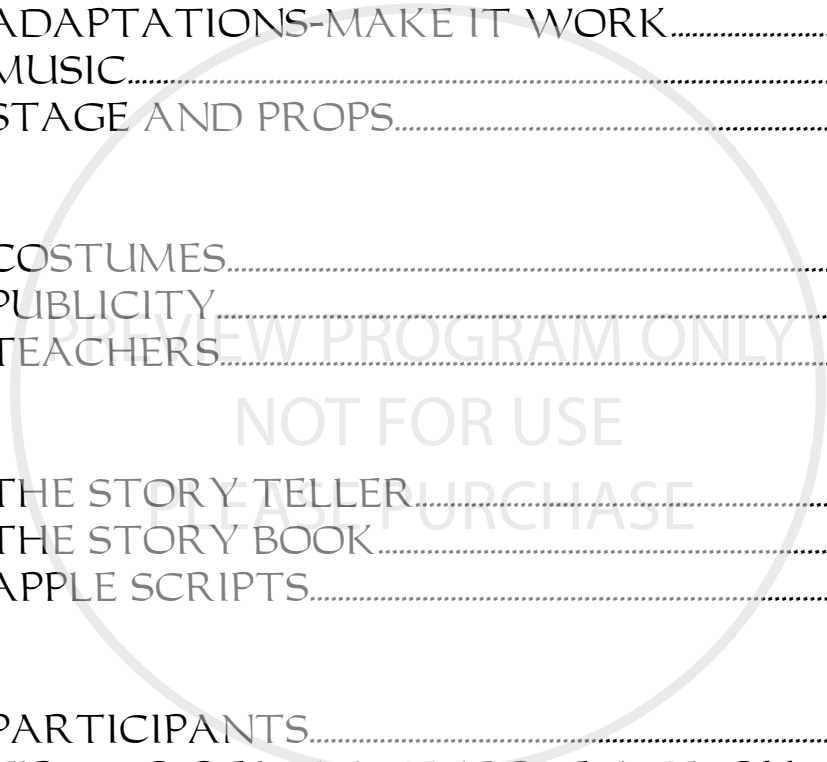
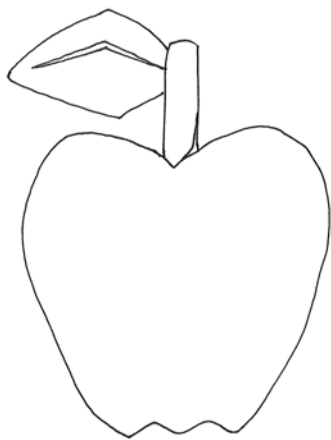
“O TASTE AND SEE
THAT THE LORD IS GOOD!”

PSALM 34:8



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AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER!



AFTER THE APPLE... is an easy-to-prepare Sunday School/All Church Easter Celebration. Your Story Teller gathers the youngest children on stage to trace the history of that famous Eden Fruit through the centuries to an open tomb! A parade of Bible people pass one apple from person to person to show how God's unique Salvation Plan came to reality from Adam and Eve to Jesus to Easter. It is told as a delightful poem that will engage the youngest listener and the oldest audience member!

AFTER THE APPLE... Use everyone in the church. Age doesn't matter! Young and old alike participate and then take their seats back in the audience to enjoy the full program. Choose a lively Story Teller, various Bible people who dress in Holy Land costume. Assign parts as desired. Gather the whole group for a final dress rehearsal and this simple Easter program is set to go. **NO MEMORIZATION!**

AFTER THE APPLE... is sprinkled with gentle humor yet tells the exciting story of Jesus' Resurrection. Challenge your church to think about how God's creation got into the jam where a Savior was needed.

AFTER THE APPLE... Add special Easter music as desired to complete the musical portion of the program. Check out the fun lyrics (*no CD or piano music available*) we have included as one option for the children. Adapt to fit talents of your group.

AFTER THE APPLE... concludes with an **Apple Easter Party**, an informal gathering featuring interesting foods with an apple theme! Play Easter music and enjoy good fellowship.



DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR

LEAD WITH LOVE!

Mold various ages into a well organized Easter team. Make copies of the appropriate segments and assign individual parts to children and adults who agree to become part of the event. Age doesn't matter! Adapt AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER to fit the number of participants available in your church.



LEAD WITH PREPARATION!

This program is easily prepared by assigning short segments to hand picked people. Even young readers can become a Bible person. The result will be an inspiring, humorous presentation featuring the story that changed the world forever, the Resurrection of God's Son, Jesus!

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 Easter presentation with a minimum of hassles. Bless your church with this special touch to remind everyone of God's gift that became necessary when Adam and Eve bit into that first apple.

DELEGATE!

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



POSITIVE APPROACH!

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

PRAY!

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

PLAN!

Copy and read this manual. Mark areas requiring special attention. List details you must handle personally. Give participants copies of their segment with their personal part highlighted

PREPARE!

Hopefully you have ordered and received AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER with more than one month lead time. We provide the master copy with permission to make as many copies as needed for your church. Copy segments for individual groups and assign responsibility for small group practice to teachers/leaders.

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. Because this program is set in poetic form, it lends itself to reading the story.

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ADAPTATIONS-MAKE IT WORK!

Adapt AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER to fit your church. Segments intended for specific 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.

AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER is designed to last about 45 minutes depending upon additional music. **The Apple Easter Party** is not included in this time frame.

WHEN SHOULD WE PRESENT THE PROGRAM?

Sunrise Service, Sunday School Hour or even Easter Morning worship is perfect. That being said, you may need to arrange another presentation time in your church or school 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 as needed.

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

50-100 + 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!

Coordinate appropriate music with the music director, organist and pianist. Easter Hymns are sung by the audience. Include hymn book numbers in a printed program or use a projection system to illuminate the words. Choose where to place the music within the program.

EASTER HYMNS

Sing traditional Easter Hymns at appropriate spots. Choose songs that fit the tradition of your local congregation. There are beautiful contemporary Easter songs available. Find and use music that fits your group. Here are a few suggestions:

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Because He Lives
I Know My Redeemer Lives
Christ Arose
Christ The Lord Is Risen Today
He Lives
The Hallelujah Chorus
Lift High The Cross
Beneath The Cross Of Jesus
Jesus Paid It All
The Old Rugged Cross
What Wondrous Love Is This
When I Survey The Wondrous Cross
Near The Cross
Hallelujah! What A Savior
Were You There
All Hail The Power Of Jesus' Name
Awesome God
Majesty
I'm Forever Grateful
Lord, I Lift Your Name On High



OPTIONAL SPECIAL MUSIC!

Choose people who perform personal choices of solos, duets, trios, instruments. Place special music anywhere in the program as desired.

A LITTLE EXTRA MUSIC FUN...

We found simple Easter lyrics set to familiar tunes you may enjoy teaching your children. **No CD or sheet music is available.** Sing a capella and have fun with the melodies!



Do You Know The Son of God?

(Tune: "Do You Know The Muffin Man?")

Do you KNOW the Son of God? The Son of God? The Son of God?
Do you KNOW the soon of God...Who died and rose again?

*Oh, yes, I KNOW the Son of God, The Son of God, The Son of God.
Oh, yes, I KNOW the Son of God... Who died and rose again.*

Do you LOVE the Son of God? The Son of God? The Son of God?
Do you LOVE the Son of God...Who died and rose again.

*Oh, yes, I LOVE the Son of God, The Son of God, The Son of God.
Oh, yes, I LOVE the Son of God...Who died and rose again.*

Will you OBEY the Son of God? The Son of God? The Son of God?
Will you OBEY the Son of God...Who died and rose again.

Yes, I'll OBEY the Son of God? The Son of God? The Son of God?
Yes, I'll OBEY the Son of God...Who died and rose again.

I Am The Resurrection

(Tune: Theme of "Gilligan's Island")

I Am the resurrection...I Am the life...

Those who believe in Me

Will never, never die. Will never, never die.



Jesus Died, But Rose Again

(Tune: Mary Had A Little Lamb)

Jesus died, but rose again
Rose again, rose again.
Jesus died, but rose again
On Easter Sunday morning.

Three Days

(Finger play–Author Unknown)

Day One– *Hold up one finger*

The guards watched the tomb

(Put hand above eyes. Pretend to watch something intently.)

All was quiet.

(Hold finger to lips.)

Day Two– *Hold up two fingers*

The guards watched the tomb.

(Put hand above eyes. Pretend to watch something intently.)

All was quiet.

(Hold finger to lips.)

Day Three– *Hold up three fingers*

The guards watched the tomb

(Put hand above eyes. Pretend to watch something intently.)

All was quiet.

(Hold finger to lips.)

SUDDENLY!

(Jump, as if in shock.)

The stone rolled from the door of the tomb.

(Make a rolling motion with hands.)

Jesus stepped out!

(Walk fingers across palm.)

God's Son was alive!

Point to sky



You Bring Us Sunshine

(Tune: "You Are My Sunshine")

You bring us sunshine....You bring us rain,
We know You make things grow each day.
You bring us love to share with others
And we thank You when we pray. CHORUS

Dear God we love you, we want to know You
And be more like You want us to be.
Our hearts are open to spread Your love, God,
'Cause we know You love us too. CHORUS

You brought us Jesus, Thank You for Jesus.
He died to take our sins away.
We want to talk to Him and thank Him.
We know He hears us when we pray. CHORUS

CHORUS: You are our sunshine, our only sunshine
You make us happy when skies are gray.
You'll never know, Lord, how much we love You.
Please don't take our sunshine away.

Don't You Know?

(Tune: Do-Re-Mi from "Sound of Music")

Don't you know that Jesus died?
Raised again in three short days...
Me, the one for whom He died...
Far, my sins He took away.
So, I love Him evermore...
Love, I've never known before...
T, the shape of Calvary.
Don't you know He died for me!
Glory Hallelujah (Repeat from beginning.)



STAGE AND PROPS

AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER is a sweet re-telling of the Resurrection Story performed in a simple poetic style. Staging and props are equally as casual.

A Story Teller gathers the youngest children around his/her feet on stage to hear a wonderful story poem about THE Garden of Eden Apple. Bible characters make an appearance, hold the apple and explain their need for a Savior.

SET UP

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

STAGING

CENTER STAGE: Place one large, comfortable chair center stage. Optional items may include a small table with lamp, colorful afghan, green plants, baskets. One basket of red apples. Young children sit on the floor in front of the Story Teller to hear the poem.

FULL STAGE: The larger portion of the stage becomes a generic Holy Land scene. Traveling back in time to hear the stories of Bible people who know they need God's Promised Messiah. Characters may appear on either side of the Story Teller and hold the apple while standing near a palm tree, wooden bench with pottery and baskets or any items that look like Holy Land times.

LIGHTING: A small decorative table lamp on the table should be lit. Place small spot lights on the floor across the stage. Turn off overhead sanctuary lights. Create dramatic lighting with light and dark shadows.

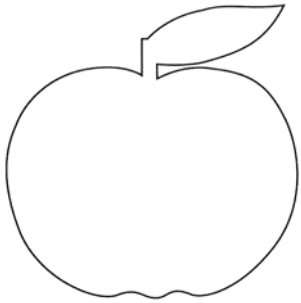


PROPS

THE APPLE: The most important prop is one large, red apple. The apple may be real or artificial. This apple is passed from one character to another and ends up featured alone on a tall stand CENTER STAGE at the end of the program.

When specific people need props or costumes, it is indicated. Check to be sure every participant has what they need for performance.

Since no memorization is required, consider backing the speaking segments with large red apple shapes made from construction paper. (See sample graphic we provide.)



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



When costuming, one solution is to 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.

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 'After The Apple'!
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 Apple Easter Party. They serve beverages, greet guests and wander through the serving area while people eat and talk.





PUBLICITY

Publicize AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER through church communication channels. Announce it in the church newsletter, weekly worship bulletin and from the pulpit.

CHURCH BULLETIN/NEWSLETTER

Inform the congregation about this special Easter program. Print an announcement in the newsletter. If you plan the **Apple 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.

TELEVISION AND RADIO

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

INVITATIONS

Send home family invitations 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

When participants read, back copies with colorful construction paper cut into red apple shapes. Performance copies must be in good shape.

PRACTICE!

Rehearse individuals during the first few minutes of Sunday School and plan costuming. Adjust the program to fit your group. Reserve several weeks 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

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

...Stage fright is not uncommon!



NEED HELP?

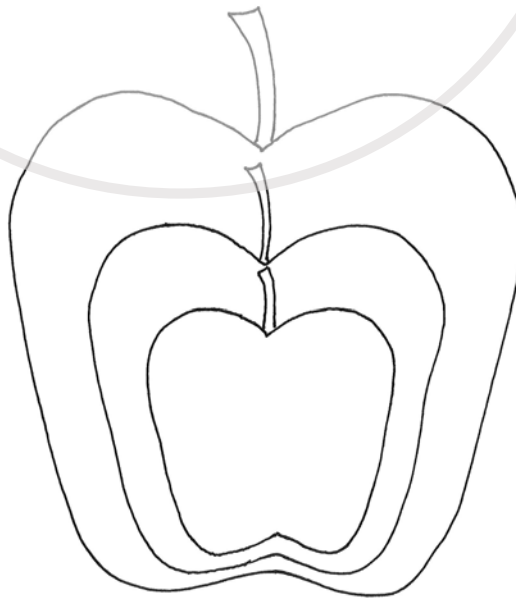
The program comes together at the last moment with little formal large group rehearsal. Work out staging issues during rehearsal and ask the Director to help. Be sure musicians and singers know what music is to be performed and when that will happen within the program.

THE APPLE 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!

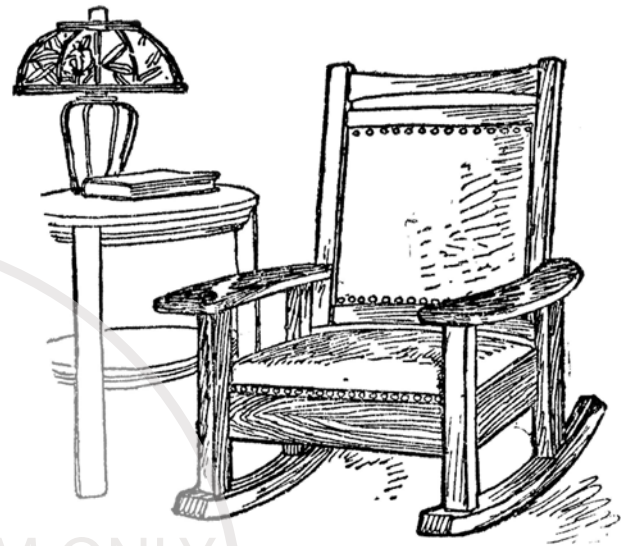
This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to touch lives. Enjoy your small part of the bigger picture. The story of Jesus' Resurrection is classic. Our children should hear it and our adults should hear it again. The spiritual experience is amazing! Have fun with the production.



THE STORY TELLER

The Story Teller is the main speaker and holds the program together with humor and inspiration. Hold the entire script in a large, decorated 'story book'. Sit in the comfortable chair as the action moves and includes the listening group.

If desired, there may be more than one Story Teller. This may depend on how many people want to be involved.



COSTUME: The costume can be anything comfortable. Wear modern day clothing.

PROPS: One large, homemade decorated 'story book', full poem script and directions inside the 'story book', one large, shiny red apple.

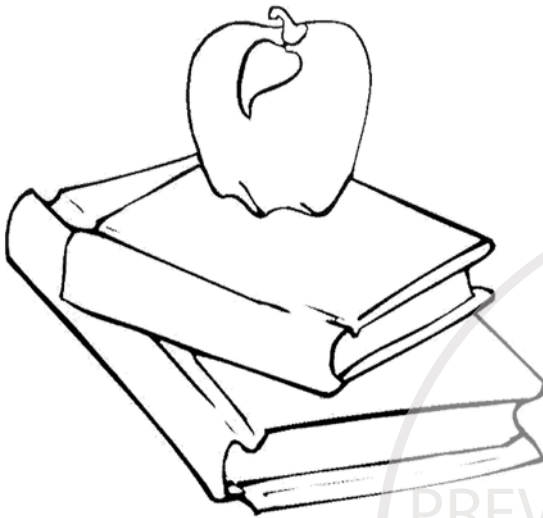
SOUND: Use a microphone and speak clearly. Practice the speaking parts aloud before the program to be familiar with the odd cadence of the Dr. Seuss styled poem.

SCRIPT: Read each section from directly from the original script. Memorization is not necessary but knowing the poem well is suggested.

STAGING: Remain on stage, seated in the chair throughout the program. Interact with the Bible people and guests as indicated in the script. Take the audience on a wonderful Easter journey toward the Cross and beyond to Resurrection morning using Eden's apple as the traveling symbol through time.



THE STORY BOOK



One of the most important props for the program is the oversized Story Book from which the Story Teller reads the poem and directs the group throughout the program.

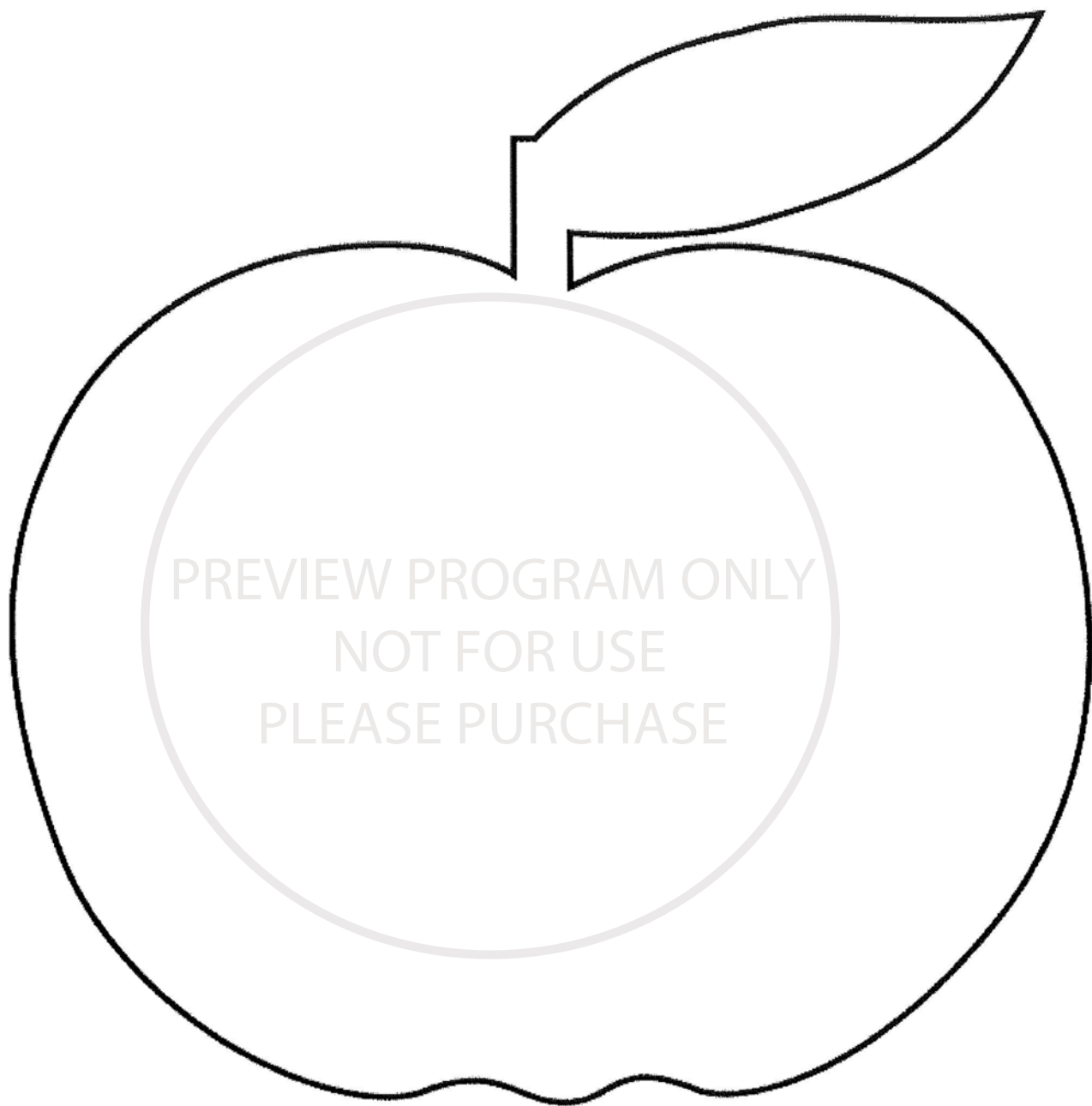
The best way to feature this prop is to make it from simple materials you may already have on hand. Create it as you wish but here are a few fun tips to consider:

1. Make the story book as large as possible. The front and back covers can be made from one piece of posterboard (usually available at Wal Mart or Staples) cut in half.
2. Attach front and back covers with wide, colorful ribbon. Let it flow with a large bow and trailing ends.
3. Insert full program script inside the covers. It must be easy to turn the pages as the poem is read.
4. The next page contains a graphic that works well as the centerpiece of the front cover. Make it colorful and bright red. To feature the leaf, consider gluing a silk green leaf to the paper section to give a 3D effect.



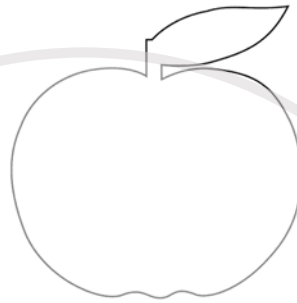
'O TASTE AND SEE
THAT THE LORD IS GOOD!
PSALM 34:8

AFTER THE APPLE . . . EASTER



APPLE SCRIPTS

Use the apple graphic as a backing for each short segment that will be read by individuals on stage. This makes the visual handling of scripts more unified and lessens the impact that people are reading their parts.



1. Make the apple as large as desired. It should be bright red with a silk green leaf similar to the cover of the Story Book.
2. The paper apple shapes should be cut out for best effect.
3. Glue or tape the segment onto the inside of the apple so there is no chance of losing it or having it fall off the backing.
4. The apples must remain in good shape for performance.



PARTICIPANTS!

AFTER THE APPLE...EASTER is set up so easily that you will be pleasantly surprised. If you are serving a tiny church, this works well. If you are in a medium or large church, add more children and music and it works for you too!

STORY TELLER

The Story Teller is the main participant. As he/she tells the Easter story, have many of the youngest children sitting on the floor around the chair.

CHILDREN

Grab every child available to become part of the gathering on stage. They sit at the feet of the Story Teller to listen to the Easter story and to meet the Bible people. Mix the ages. It won't matter where they sit. Older children can care for younger children on stage.

BIBLE PEOPLE

From time to time in the poem, Bible people make an appearance. Choose from available children, teens and adults. They dress in Holy Land costume to read their short segment. The Story Teller may need to prompt each character at the right time.



MUSIC PEOPLE

One appealing option is to add special music. Ask children, teens, adults to perform special music according to the talent available. The audience may participate by singing hymns or choruses.



BIBLE PEOPLE

Choose a variety of ages to portray each Bible person. Dress in Holy Land costume and, if young, may be seated in the group on stage.

EVE: Wear a simple sweat suit. Wear a flower wreath in hair and wrap a green leafy garland around body.

ADAM: Wear a simple sweat suit. Add a green leafy garland wrapped around the body.

KING DAVID: Crown, Holy Land caftan, lots of gold necklaces and jewelry...look regal.

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS: Simple Holy Land clothing.

SATAN: This can be played up or down depending on your personal taste. He can wear make up in form of pointed beard and mustache. Wear a large name tag: LUCIFER

BOY WITH LUNCH BASKET: Simple Holy Land clothing, wicker basket covered in simple fabric.

MARY WITH PERFUME: Simple Holy Land clothing, bottle of perfume

JUDAS: Simple Holy Land clothing

DISCIPLE: There are three short segments for DISCIPLE. The same person may read all those segments or choose three separate people.

JERUSALEM CITIZEN (male or female): Simple Holy Land costume, palm branch

SERVANT GIRL: Simple Holy Land clothing, pottery jug

CHILD: Simple Holy Land clothing

MARY MAGDALENE: Simple Holy Land clothing

ANGEL: White clothing, wings/no wings, halo



TIPS FOR READING THE POEM STORY

There is a trick to reading poetry in the style of Dr. Seuss. Practice with children and adults so they get used to the swinging cadence of the language.

Often one line picks up a thought in the second or third line and if they have not read it aloud during a rehearsal, it won't make sense.



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BUT A WORD TO THE WISE:

PRACTICE WITH EVERYONE....ALLOUD!

ENJOY!

The program is divided into three parts. This allows time for the addition of music as desired. Choose your own music or eliminate it according to time restraints.



AT A GLANCE

All Children gather on stage at the feet of the Story Teller to hear the poem that tells the story of the Apple and Easter.

PART ONE

Music Option:
Story Teller
Eve
Adam
King David
Mary
Satan
Boy With Lunch Basket
Mary With Perfume

PART TWO

Music Option:
Judas
Story Teller
Disciple
Jerusalem Citizen
Servant Girl
Satan
Child: The Secret Garden

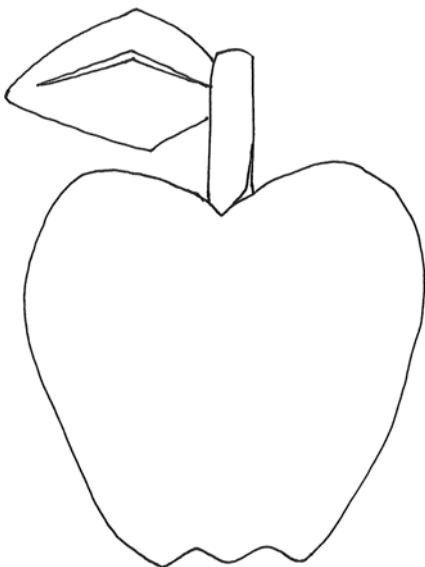
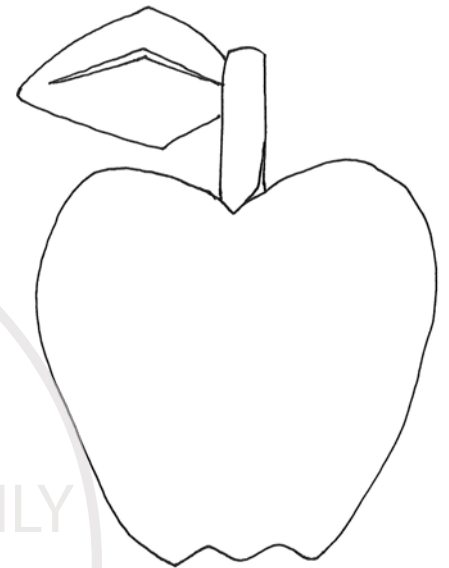
PART THREE

Music Option:
Satan
Mary Magdalene
Angel
Story Teller

CONCLUSION

Story Teller

THE APPLE EASTER PARTY!



AFTER THE APPLE ...EASTER!

PART ONE

MUSIC OPTIONS: Audience sings an Easter Chorus or Hymn.
Children Sing A Song

Story Teller walks along the center aisle, calling for all the children to join him/her on stage for a great story! The children joyfully follow and find seats on the floor around the chair.

STORY TELLER: There is no better story than the tale that I tell.
It's a story of people that God loved so well.
Were they perfect as perfect as perfect can be?
They started out perfect and then...
Let me see?

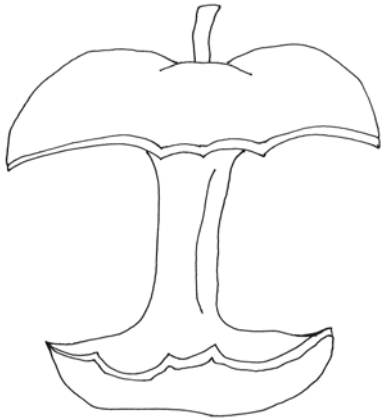
Let's think about this.
Let's meet a few-of the people God loved,
Of the people God knew.
Now don't get excited, we must take it quite slow.
The story begins with an apple, you know.

Was it really an apple tempting Eve from that tree?
No one knows except God and Eve.

What is certain, the fruit, whatever it be,
Was about to change all humanity.

(Show apple to group)
I hold in my hand a beautiful apple!
Does it tempt you to eat it?
Is it something YOU'D sample?





EVE: *(Grab the apple from the Story Teller)*
Give ME that apple! It caused so much trouble.
I'll toss it aside, right now, on the double.

If only my brain had allowed me to think,
That luscious, red apple would be tossed down the sink.

ADAM: Too late, my dear Eve, you already ate it.
And not only that, you made me debate it.

The sorriest day in the life of creation
Was the day my wife bit into that abomination.

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STORY TELLER: That is exactly what this apple became;
A shiny red symbol--Satan's claim to great fame.

Old Satan struck hard and then slithered away
Smiling like he had been on grand holiday.

Pretending to be a wily serpent,
He whined and cajoled,
Leading Eve wherever he went.

She was the first but she wasn't the last
To be tricked by that snake, that snake in the grass.

Years and ages and eons passed by.
God's love just grew stronger and that is no lie!

The Father created more people, it's true.
Let's meet them, let's greet them, it's only a few!





KING DAVID: *(Hold the apple while speaking)*
I, David, began life as a shepherd.
My sheep were protected from lion and leopard.
God taught me to love Him in quiet green pastures.
Then guided me safely through giant, bad ogres.

I stood up for God in poem and in song.
(Toss and catch apple) This apple touched me.
It didn't take long.
I sinned, then I cried, I knew I was wrong.
When I asked His forgiveness,
God blessed me as king of His family throng.

STORY TELLER:

The pages turn and time moves on.
God's Plan is forming. It soon will be dawn.
From Old time prophets to New Covenant people,
We move on to the tale that will lead to a steeple.

MARY: *(Hold apple while speaking)*

Let me hold that apple, the cause of such strife.
This apple cost Jesus, my Son, his good life.

My part of the story is, sadly, quite true.
An angel presented himself with a clue
To my future as mother and wife.
I didn't know then it would change my whole life.

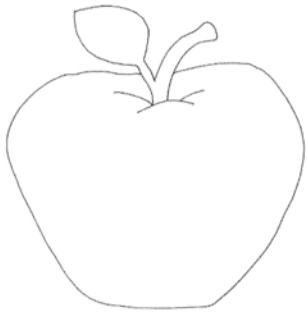
My baby was born in Bethlehem town.
God planned it and jammed it with guests of renown.
Angels and shepherds and wise men came near.
They let us know there was nothing to fear.

Jesus grew strong, tall and good looking.
There was something about Him,
He began missions of healing.



STORY TELLER: *(Hold apple while speaking)*

When loved ones were healed, those people were smitten.
His life followed what prophets foretold...what was written!
Three years our dear Jesus lived, worked and He played.
His mission on earth, God's grand plan displayed.



SATAN: *(Grab apple from Story Teller)*

Then I came along, you thought I forgot.
I've been looking for this. It's all that I've got.
I'll get Him, I'll get Him, I'll get Him good.
There's no room for error. I've got to be rude.

STORY TELLER: *(Take apple)*

Get away from here! It's not time for you yet!
We have people to save, we have fishes to net!
Heavenly Father allowed three wonderful years
So Jesus could heal and preach and sooth tears.

Old Satan had plans, He was sure of himself.
He plotted his evil to harm Jesus' health.
It almost worked...according to plan.
What he forgot was God's mighty hand.

BOY WITH LUNCH BASKET: *(Grab apple)*

An apple! How nice!
I can add to my lunch.
I have a hunch,
It could feed a bunch.

I met Jesus and He spoke to my heart.
Many people listened, they got a new start.

Jesus took my fish and my bread.
He blessed it and broke it.
Five thousand were fed!





MARY WITH PERFUME: (Hold apple)
My friend Jesus was going away.
How could I thank Him? What could I say?

I poured my perfume all over His feet.
The fragrance was lovely, the odor was sweet.

His friends were unhappy, they said I was sappy,
But Jesus just smiled. I made Him happy.

PART TWO

MUSIC OPTIONS: Audience sings one verse of an Easter Hymn
Children sing one song
Special musical piece by child or adult

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JUDAS: (Hold apple)

I have seen this apple before,
It's tempting to hold it and head for the door.

Mary should have given me her gift.
The money I earned could give folks a lift.

Or...maybe I could have bought a new hat.
My old hat is tattered, I could have used that!

STORY TELLER:

This is where our tale takes a turn.
Jesus knew His time on earth would end soon.

He gathered His buddies around Him one night
To comfort and mention He'd be out of sight.



DISCIPLE: *(Hold Apple)*

We didn't believe Him at dinner that night.
We said, "Don't you dare.
We need you here for our own welfare!"

But Jesus insisted He just had to go.
He said He would leave us a Comforter, Friend.
His Spirit to keep us when we're high, when we're low.

JERUSALEM CITIZEN (male or female) : *(Hold Apple)*

Were YOU there that day? Sunny, I recall.
People of Jerusalem lined the great wall.
We carried our palm leaves to cool our hot heads.

When Jesus rode by,
We bowed to the King...that's no lie!

Some folks even let Him tread on their threads.
Their robes were lined up on the road to protect...
I added my palm branch.
It made quite an effect!

SERVANT GIRL: *(Hold Apple)*

The time came at last for a supper time meal.
Jesus sent friends to make a great deal,
For the use of our Upper Room, supper room spot.

They came and they met here,
There seemed quite a lot.

DISCIPLE: *(Hold Apple)*

Jesus, my Friend, looked at us sadly,
He wanted to stay, He wanted us badly.

But Heaven was calling Messiah, the Savior,
And Jesus was willing our sin to deter.

He offered us bread and he offered us wine.
Jesus said to remember him, each time we dine.



SATAN:

I told you I'd get him and I'd get him but good!
As he ate his last meal, I planted a falsehood.

I waited nearby for my chance to reign havoc.
Just a little more time to finish what I first took up!

DISCIPLE:

When dinner was over, we looked 'round for Judas.
Gone from our sight, that man didn't suit us.
He ran to the temple his pay to receive.
He sold out our Jesus, he didn't believe.

Stop the poetry action and have an older child or pre teen
stand center stage to read the following piece.
If desired, a quiet background of music may be
the accompaniment.

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CHILD:

I know a Secret Garden where Jesus went one day.
His friends went traveling with Him
Their job was, "Watch and Pray".

Jesus walked away from them
To find a lonely place.
He seemed so sad and lonely,
His friends laid down to wait.

His prayer was soft and meaningful.
He asked for Father's care.
And when the night became too dark,
He gave in to despair.

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



The friends of Jesus placed their heads
Upon the hard, hard ground.
Soon promises to "Watch and Pray"
Were gone as they slept sound.

Dear Jesus came to shake awake
These men who should have peeked.
They bowed their heads with tired eyes
And twice they fell asleep.

"Too late," said 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?
Why, it's Gethsemane! My Dear!

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STORY TELLER: *(Hold Apple)*

The darkest day in history was the day that Jesus died.
He took our place, so full of grace,
He bowed His head and cried,
*"Father, forgive these people here,
They don't know what they're doing."*

They followed Satan's evil plan
The plan he had been brewing...
Ever since that day in Eden, oh so long ago,
When this apple tempted Eve,
And brought so much sad woe.



PART THREE

MUSIC OPTIONS: *Special instrumental piece*
Children Sing one song
Choir



SATAN:

I TOLD you that I'd kill this man,
The one they call Messiah.
He knows I'm evil and I plan
To finally end this drama.

From the day Eve bit into that apple,
My joy--to defeat God's Son of Man
And with sin people would grapple.

Watch and learn as I weave my wickedness.
It's not my job to love with kisses and blessing.
I'll finish him off.
My hat then I'll doff.
I'll win with God finally losing.

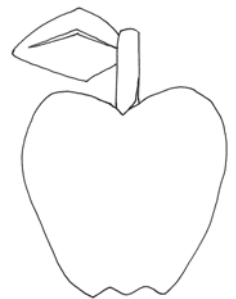
MARY MAGDALENE: *(Hold Apple)*

The story did not end that day on the hill at Calvary.
The watchers watched the garden tomb
So He wouldn't get away.

How could a dead man walk again?
Why were the guards so stern?

Day One, Day Two, Day Three...
I cried mostly for me.

My friends and I took herb and spice
To honor Jesus' life.
Our sleepy eyes could not believe
The view that came to light.



An open tomb! Jesus was gone!
And in His place we saw
An angel dressed in glorious white
And he spoke words with awe!

ANGEL:

Don't be afraid, dear ladies.
Why look for life among the dead?
He is not here, he's gone, you see!
He's Risen as He said!

Go quickly now and find His friends,
For sure they'll want to know
That Jesus did just as He said,
Tell Peter too, that dear old friend,
Get him out of bed!



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STORY TELLER:

And that's just what the women did!
They ran and found the men.

Rejoicing reigned throughout the land
The message they did send.

Peter and John ran back
To that dark gloomy tomb.

They found the empty grave clothes
But Jesus wasn't there.

"He Rose! He Rose!" the shout went up,
Such joy was meant to share!



And do you think my story ends with that good news today?
Oh no, my friends, that is not all, Jesus came to stay!
He walked the land and talked to man for many days. Hooray!
Five hundred people saw our Lord
And trusted in His Word.

When time ran short,
Our Jesus took His friends up to a mountain.
He said goodbye...but not for long...
God's Son rose like a fountain.

ANGEL: *(Stand center stage, arms lifted toward audience)*

Why do you stand looking into Heaven?
This same Jesus who is taken into Heaven will come again,
Just the way He left!

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CONCLUSION

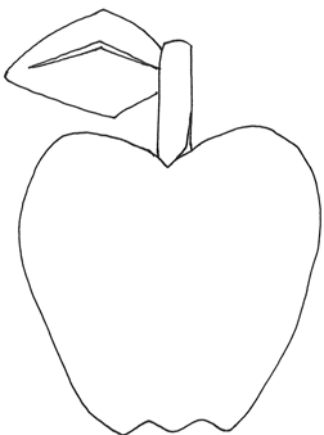
THE STORY TELLER:

(Hold Apple or place it all by itself, center stage, on a tall table.)

Have you wondered what happened to that troublesome fruit from the Garden of Eden? It appears that the effects of Adam and Eve's terrible choice has followed God's human creation until this very day.

Heavenly Father protected that tree from Adam and Eve and the rest of us too. He sent them from the Garden of Eden into a frightening world where they had to dig the earth for food. God didn't walk with them anymore. The price for disobedience was costly.

Don't worry! God arranged Plan B. It was not as delightful as Plan A but the Creation He loved so much would still have the opportunity to be rescued from sin and death.



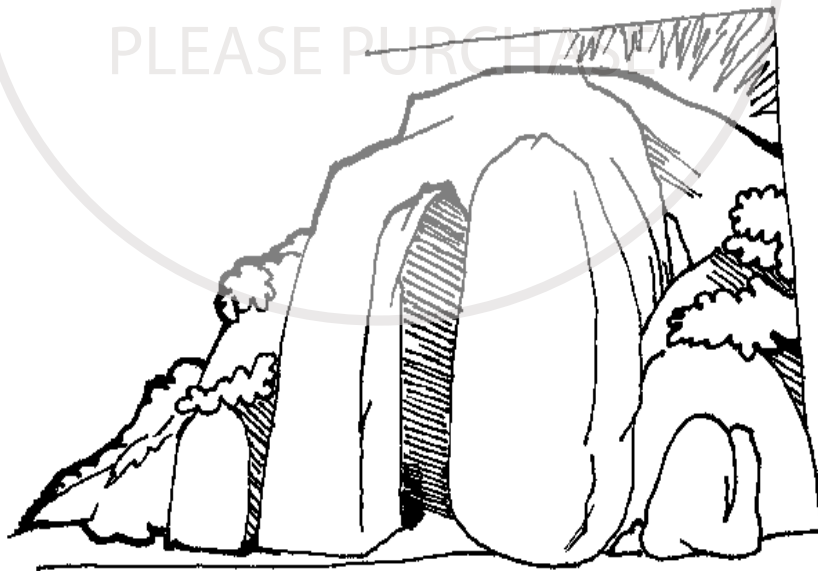
Plan B was Jesus! God became one of us and arrived one night in a humble stable, born to Mary, a young virgin, and to her faithful husband, Joseph. If you had been there, you would have been awestruck. Angels, shepherds, wise men...well, that's a story for another holiday!

Today is Resurrection Day! Easter! The day Jesus surprised everyone by doing what He promised; He rose from the grave! It is our hope and it is our assurance that Jesus' Word will never be broken. We are part of His family and we rejoice in it today!

It is enough to know that Jesus said:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

(John 14:1-3 NIV –Read this scripture from your favorite version.)



THE APPLE EASTER PARTY

One small group prepares THE APPLE 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. Make a choice to 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 planned for their enjoyment.

THE PLAN!

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MENU

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

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

If your event is in the evening, consider feasting of 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 bright red table cloths. Simple wicker baskets filled with apples carry the program theme through the party. The baskets may look different from table to table.

Place a sign in each basket stating, AFTER THE APPLE, EASTER! "Oh Taste and see that the Lord is Good."



PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
BEFORE THE PARTY

Decorate the serving table and guest tables.

Plug in the coffee pot and put tea water on to boil while the program is in progress. Set out foods, cream and sugar.

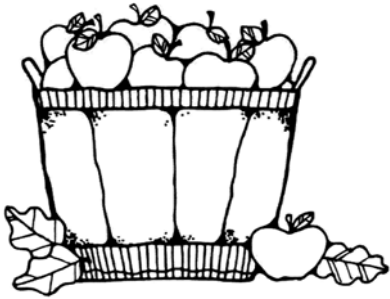
Make your favorite Easter punch and place on a nearby serving table in a crystal bowl.

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



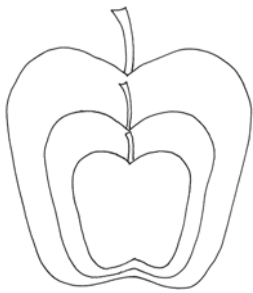
Don't forget! The party is not over until clean up is complete. Ask everyone to help with dishes, remove tables and chairs and sweep the area clean.

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

JUST FOR FUN APPLE RECIPES!

APPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

Apple upside down cake with cinnamon and apples and brown sugar and butter. This apple upside-down cake is a delicious cake to make and serve with ice cream.



Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons evaporated milk or cream
- 2 cups sliced apples
- 1 1/2 cups sifted flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract



Preparation:

Mix together 1/2 cup butter, 1 cup brown sugar, and 2 tablespoons evaporated milk or cream; spread in bottom of an 8-inch square baking pan. Arrange sliced apples on the brown sugar mixture. Sift together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt. Cream shortening with sugar; beat in egg the add sifted ingredients alternately with 1/2 cup milk and the vanilla extract.

Pour batter over apples. Bake at 350° for 35 to 45 minutes, until cake is done.

APPLE BROWN BETTY

Apple dessert with bread crumbs, butter, and apples and cinnamon.

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 medium apples, sliced
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon or orange peel
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3 to 4 tablespoons fruit juice

Preparation:

Mix bread crumbs, butter, lemon or orange peel, sugar, and cinnamon. Place half of the sliced apples in a buttered baking dish. Cover with half of the bread crumb mixture. Add remaining apple slices and cover with remaining crumb mixture. Moisten with fruit juice. Bake at 375° for 45 minutes. Serve hot or cold with cream, whipped topping, or ice cream.

