

All Age Worship: Easter and a special time capsule

Aim: To explore how the events of Easter speak to us 2000 years later. To encourage young people to make a time capsule

Materials

- A round tin that could be used as a time capsule
- Recent newspapers
- A cardboard box
- Water
- Postcards
- The Real Easter Egg

Overview

1. Discuss what makes a time capsule. You can use some of the suggested props as you speak to show what goes in a time capsule. You could use the script below:

“Have you ever heard of a time capsule? It’s when we gather some memories and ideas from one time and put them in a tightly sealed tin or container. Then we bury that container or hide it away until some point in the future. At some point, perhaps 10 years later, we dig it up and remind ourselves what life used to be like and we might think about how much things have changed.

What sort of things might you put in a time capsule? We could put some stories in from the papers to show what was going on in the world. We could get some postcards or pictures of our home town to show what that looked like. Perhaps we can write messages to people in the future saying what a day in our life was like. Sometimes people put in a list of famous people’s names so people in the future can look them up. Who would you put on your list? In 10 years, it might be interesting to see what became of Donald Trump, Greta Thunburg, Cristiano Ronaldo, Prince Harry and Meghan, Billie Eilish etc (You can use your own celebrities).

But it might be just as interesting to write down the names of all of your friends now and in 10 years see what became of them.

And because we are Christians, we might also want to include a prayer for the future.

There are all sorts of things we can put in a time capsule but we need to consider what we choose to act as the capsule. Imagine if you put all of your precious items and memories in a cardboard box and it gets damp then you could lose everything. Look what happens when I pour water on this box. It’s ruined and the items get lost. While a tin may rust, the items inside should be safe if it is sealed tight. So as long as you put some thought into your contents and container, making a time capsule can be great fun but also an important way of connecting the past to the present, to the future and sending a message to those who come after us. Though sometimes the contents of any capsule can disappear or alter over time due to all sorts of conditions. That unexpected element can make a time capsule all the more exciting.

2. As Easter is coming up, I want us to think about one of the strangest and most

unexpected time capsules ever. After He died on the cross on Friday, Jesus was taken by His friends and placed in a tomb. Then a great stone was rolled across the door to keep the body safe. On Sunday some women who were friends of Jesus went to clean and anoint His body. They were about to get a massive surprise because something astonishing had happened. Let's listen to what they found:

Reading: Luke 24:1-6

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!"

Jesus has risen from the dead as He had promised. His resurrection showed that the power of God's love is stronger even than death and that if we trust Jesus we can be with Him forever.

This event happened over 2000 years ago but the miracle that happened that day will stay with us forever. It is like every time we read about or imagine that empty tomb, we are opening a time capsule which contains a message of joy, hope and love forever:

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen".

3. Easter eggs, the tomb and new life

I hope you will get an Easter egg this year but I wonder if you know why you will be getting an egg. When you crack open your Easter egg, you can see it encloses an empty space, just like the tomb. The symbolic message of the egg is that of new life just like the message that Jesus' resurrection is a promise of our new life which can overcome death. And if you look at the front of this egg (hold up the Real Easter Egg) you can see that the egg is like the stone being rolled away from the front of the tomb. So when you eat your Easter eggs, let them remind you of that original "time capsule" of the empty tomb containing its ancient and lasting message of hope, love and new life.

Reflection

Lord

Thank you for the first Easter.

When you were laid in the tomb on Friday it was a place of sorrow and sadness.

But on Easter Sunday, the empty tomb became a lasting and joyful reminder of the love and power of God.

Help us each day to remember the message of the empty tomb and to share that message by showing love and support to those in need.

And may our support, and the source of our happiness, always be that you are risen.

Amen

Activities

If you are having a youth event around Easter, one good idea would be to create a time capsule called Easter 2020. You need to agree with the group how long it should be kept;

perhaps only a couple of years and the children could make several in groups using empty biscuit tins. You do not have to bury your capsules, you could just store them away in a store room or cupboard. Remember to tell the children that the people opening the capsule may be different from them so they need to speak to those people.

Suggested contents:

- A headline or story from that day's papers
- Some pictures of people who were famous or important in 2020
- What film won the Oscar in 2020
- Who was at the top of the Premier League
- A description of themselves and where they hope to be in the future
- A list showing their favourite books, music, films, TV programmes, hobbies etc
- Some empty bags or packets from their favourite products
- Some Easter Sunday 2020 mementos: a piece of an Easter egg box, a candle from the Easter vigil if appropriate, a copy of the Gospel reading for this Easter Sunday, a palm, the title of one of the hymns being sung that Easter, the name of the Vicar, Minister or Priest who led the service.
- A prayer for the future