

Expanding the Impact of Your
Gifts of Encouragement

Jesus Lives! Come and See!

This event outline provides ideas for approximately an hour-long program. Each activity focuses on Jesus' resurrection. It's perfect for use as a spring outreach event for children ages 3 to 9. Consider adapting it for use in your children's Sunday school the weekend before or after Easter or in a mid-week Christian education event or Bible club.

We've planned your event for you—including a Bible story presentation, snack, activities, and songs for young learners! May God bless you as you share the joy of Jesus' resurrection with the kids in your care.

If you have ideas for how we might make future events even more useful in your setting, be sure to let us know! You may e-mail us at editor@CTAinc.com

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#JLCIDC



Jesus Lives!

Kids Event Outline

In this event outline you will find suggestions for activities, songs, snacks, and Bible Time. Choose the activities you wish to use, taking into account the size of your group; your guests' ages, interests, background knowledge, and skill levels; and the time-frame you have scheduled.

As Children Arrive

Warmly greet children and parents as they arrive. Give each child a *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Goodie Bag*, and help little ones as necessary use markers to label the bag with their name. (You will need to use a permanent marker to write on the plastic, so supervise carefully to ensure ink doesn't stain any child's clothes. As an alternative, affix large, self-adhesive labels to each Goodie Bag. Use washable markers to write names on the labels.)

HINT: Later in this event, you will assign the children to small groups for work in the activity centers. You will likely want 4 to 6 children in each small group. Consider using the Goodie Bag arrival activity to do this. For example, use a blue marker to write names on 4 to 6 different Goodie Bags, a red marker for a different group of 4 to 6 Goodie Bags, a green marker for 4 to 6 additional Goodie Bags and so on. Then later, you can easily create a blue small group, a red small group, a green small group, and the like.

Introduce the students to each other as each child arrives, and help everyone learn newcomers' names. Engage everyone in conversation, using questions like these:

- What things make you feel happy at Easter?
- What things do you see outside at this time of year that remind you of new life?
- What things do you see outside that are green? Do green things grow? How do you know?
- What baby animals have you seen this spring?
- Have you seen any crosses? (Hint: Can you see a cross shape in any of the doors at home? in a utility pole? at church?)
- How does the cross remind you of the new life Jesus gives?

When your guests have arrived and you're ready to move the children into today's small-group activities, say something like this: **We're here today to celebrate the new life Jesus has for us. The new life Jesus gives will last forever! I pray you will have lots of fun as you celebrate!**



Small-Group Activities That Teach

NOTE: You likely won't have time for all the activities suggested below, so choose from among them those that best suit the guests you hope will attend and that make the best use of the products, resources, and volunteers available to you.

Assign the children to groups, 4 to 6 kids in each group. (If you color-coordinated the names you printed on each child's Goodie Bag as the children arrived, explain that now.) Mix older children with younger ones, and assign one adult per group to shepherd the children from activity to activity. These adult guides should offer encouragement and show Jesus' love and care.

Explain that the groups will move from one activity to the next every 10 minutes or so. Ring a bell or play the "traveling music" the groups will hear when it's time to rotate.

Resurrection Story Bible Center

Seat children near you so they can see the pictures as you read the book *Jesus Lives! Come and See!*

Before you begin, tell the children they will help you read the book. Throughout the story on your cue, students will cup their hands around their mouths like a megaphone and say these words in unison: "Jesus lives! Come and see!"

Cue the group each time these words appear in the story, and encourage the children to join in repeating them.

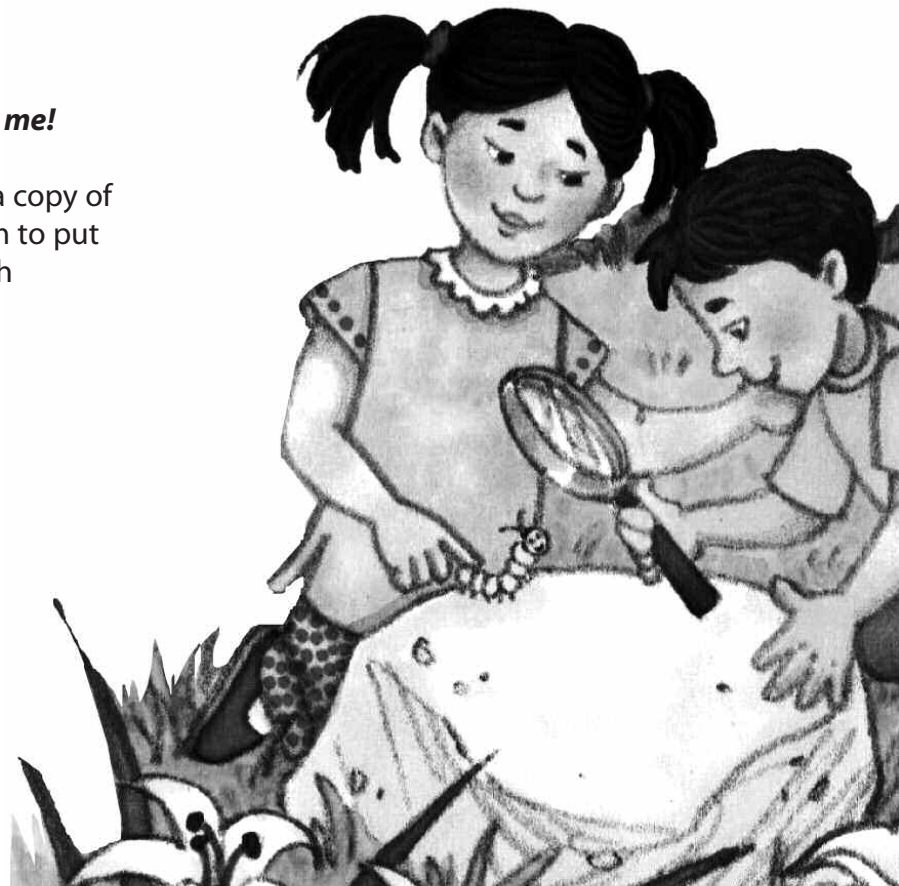
After reading the rhyming portion of the book, invite the children to listen to the whole story of Jesus' resurrection. Read the simplified version from pages 14 to 15 of *Jesus Lives! Come and See!*

Ask, **Why did Jesus die?** (He died to take away our sins.) **Now we are God's very own children. Jesus lives and gives us new life. The life we have in Jesus will never end!**

If time will allow, teach children this cheer:

Jesus lives! Come and see! He gives life to you and me!

As the children leave this activity center, give each a copy of the book *Jesus Lives! Come and See!* Encourage them to put it in their Goodie Bag, take it home, and share it with friends and members of their family.



Resurrection Mural

Roll out a mural-sized length of butcher paper on the floor. Place crayons and colored pencils and washable markers there, too. Tell the children they will make an Easter mural. Show them the pictures in the *Jesus Lives! Come and See!* children's book. Talk about signs of spring and new life that we can discover in the spring. Encourage them to include other details like trees, grass, clouds, sun, and so forth. You can assign groups to draw specific parts of the Easter story, or you can let each person draw their own picture.

As the groups work, remind the children that Jesus died to take away all our sins—the wrong things we do and the good things we fail to do. Even though Jesus never sinned—not even once—he loved us so much that he died in our place. He let himself be punished for us. The best part of all is that Jesus didn't stay dead. He came alive again! Now we know for sure that we will always be with our Friend and Savior, Jesus.

Each group that rotates through this center will add details to the mural. Encourage the last group or two to color in all the white space. Plan to display the completed mural in a prominent place in your church on Resurrection Sunday.

Song Center

Teach children the following song to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know." Use the accompanying actions to help each group learn the words and sing with confidence and joy. Explain that Jesus' death paid the penalty for our sins. His resurrection crushed the power of death and hell forever. Jesus is our kind, good friend now and forever.

Jesus died for you and me (*point to others, to self*)

On the cross at Calvary. (*make cross with index fingers*)

Jesus took our sins away. (*sweeping hand motions*)

We're forgiv'n! Hip, hip, hooray! (*thumbs to chest, jump and shout*)

Chorus: **Yes, Jesus loves me . . . The cross proves it is true!**

Jesus rose for you and me (*point to others, to self*)

His grave's empty! Come and see! (*beckoning motion*)

Jesus conquered sin and hell. (*pound fist into opposite palm*)

Share the Good News! Go and tell! (*cup hands to mouth*)

Chorus: **Yes, Jesus loves me . . . The cross proves it is true!**

Challenge children to think about people who need to hear the Good News of Jesus' resurrection—everyone! Jesus, our Savior, loves everyone! He wants all people to believe and be saved. Pray together. Ask Jesus to help you share the Good News as you go and tell others about his love.

As time will allow, sing other favorite songs about Jesus' death and resurrection.



Resurrection Wooden Puzzle Center

The *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Color Your Own Wooden Puzzle* comes with three mini markers. Plan to have the children use these to color the picture on their puzzles. In addition, you may want to have more markers, crayons, watercolor paints, and/or other art supplies available. Choose media appropriate for the ability levels of the children who will attend your event.

Give one puzzle to each child, and invite the children to describe the picture on it (the resurrected Savior). Use questions like these to draw out more facts:

- **What does *risen or resurrected* mean?** (Jesus came back from the dead.)
- **Why did Jesus die?** (To wash away our sins; Jesus let himself be punished for our sins—he had no sins of his own.)
- **What makes Jesus' resurrection such a happy thing for us?** (Our sins are gone; we are friends of God; we know Jesus' love now and will experience it forever; his love for us never stops!)

Answers will vary, depending on which other centers the children have already visited today and the group's previous experiences in Christian education at home and church. Coach them as appropriate while they decorate their puzzles, disassemble, and reassemble them.

If some children finish early, suggest that they trade puzzles with other friends and practice putting one another's puzzles together.

As the children leave this center, have each put their *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Wooden Puzzle* in their Goodie Bag, take it home, and share it with friends and family members. Encourage them to tell everyone what the puzzle shows, who Jesus is, and what he has done for us.

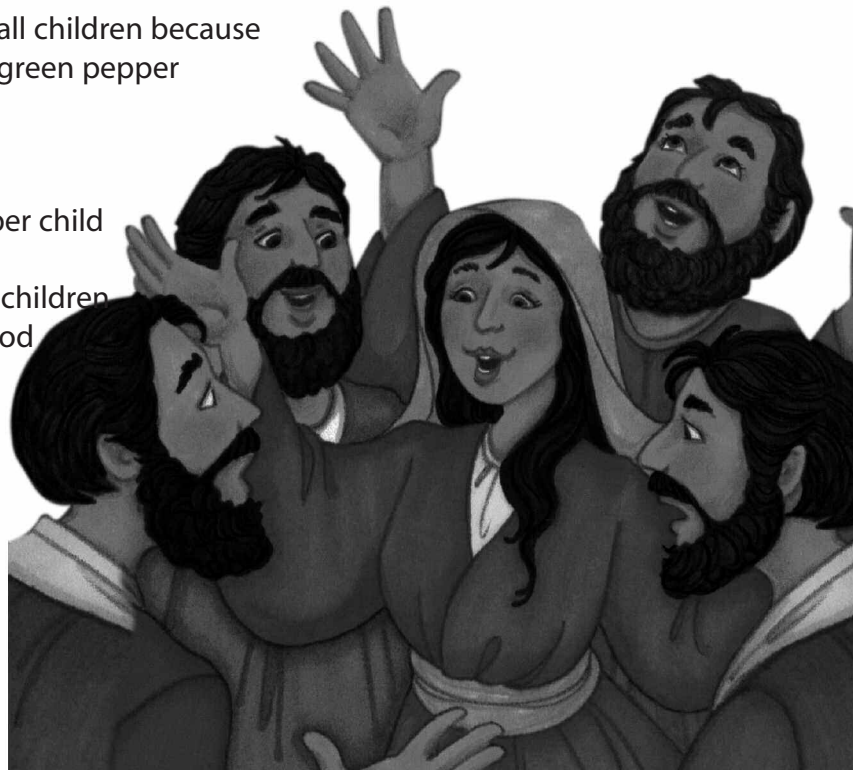
Snack Center

Students will make happy-face snacks at this center. You will need:

- A rice cake for each child (or 1/2 English muffin)
- Softened cream cheese
- Raisins, round carrot slices (avoid these with small children because of the choking hazard they might present), red/green pepper strips, grated cheddar cheese
- Fruit juice
- Paper plates, napkins, plastic knives
- *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Plastic Tumblers*, one per child

Begin by showing the group your Bible and telling the children this is God's Book. Open to John 20:18 and read the Good News Mary shared with Jesus' friends after his resurrection: "I have seen the Lord!"

Explain that Mary went to Jesus' tomb on the first Easter morning. She planned to put spices on Jesus' dead body to prepare it for final burial. Say, **Show me how you think Mary looked as she walked to Jesus' grave.** (Children will make a sad face and walk with slumped shoulders.)



Say, **Show me how you think Mary's face looked when she saw that the big stone in front of Jesus' tomb had already been rolled away.** (The children should demonstrate surprise and confusion.)

Say, **Show me what you think Mary's face looked like when she saw two angels sitting inside Jesus' tomb and heard them tell her, "Jesus is alive."** (The children should demonstrate fear, excitement, curiosity.)

Say, **Show me how you think Mary's face looked when she saw Jesus, risen and glorified.** (Children should demonstrate happiness and excitement.)

Invite the children to use the ingredients on the table to design one of the facial expressions they just demonstrated. Give each child a paper plate with a rice cake or English muffin half. Invite them to use plastic knives to spread softened cream cheese on this base. They should use the remaining ingredients to design the expression they have chosen. As they work, talk with them about their creations.

When everyone is ready to eat, pour fruit juice into each child's *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Plastic Tumbler*. As the children enjoy eating their snack, talk with them about their creations and about the victory Jesus won for us.

After students finish their snack, hand out *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Activity Bookmarks*. Read the bookmark aloud and explain how the children might use it to tell someone about our loving and powerful Savior, Jesus. Have fun finding the hidden objects on the front of the bookmark. Point out that when children share the message of the bookmark with someone else, they can let that person look for the hidden objects.

As the children leave this center, ask them to put their activity bookmark in their Goodie Bag, take it home, and share it there with friends and family members.

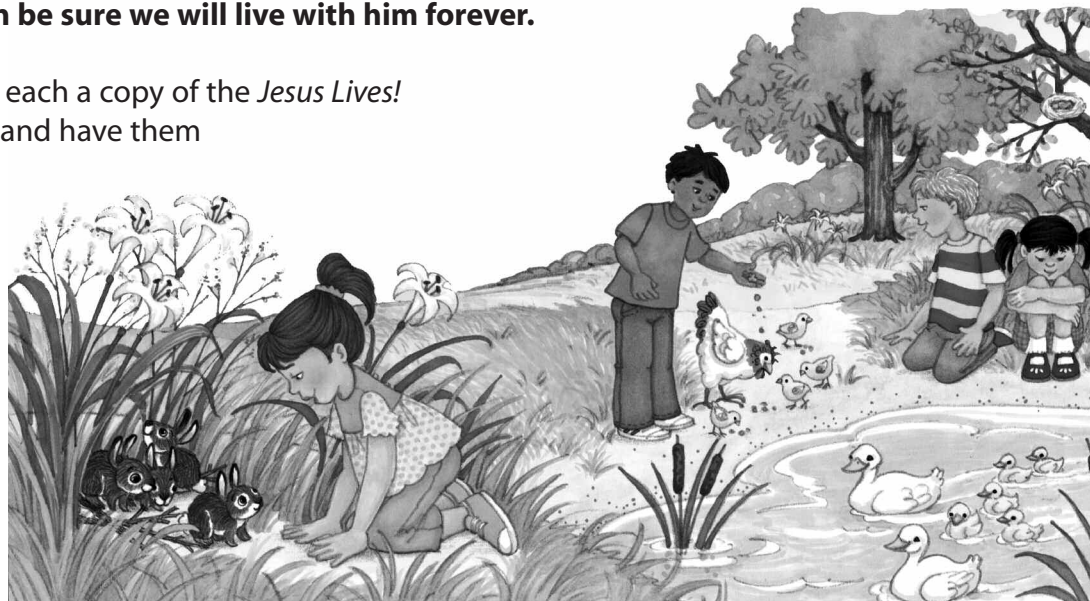
Find-It Fun

Have each child find a partner or form a trio with two other children. Hand out the *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Pencil-Rub Book*. Before giving students the pencil that accompanies it, read through the book aloud together. Let the children guess what they might find on each page.

Then hand out the mini pencils that come with the books, and read the book again. Pause to allow students to rub lead lightly over the areas indicated to reveal each of the hidden surprises. Talk about how each surprise can remind us of new life—especially the new life we have in Jesus, our Savior.

Say, **When it comes to Jesus, there is no guessing at all. We can know for sure that he loves us. He died on the cross to take our sins away. We don't have to guess about whether Jesus came alive on that first Easter morning, either. Jesus appeared to Mary and his other friends, too. We can know for sure that Jesus is alive—and because he lives, we can be sure we will live with him forever.**

As the children leave this center, give each a copy of the *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Pencil-Rub Activity Set* and have them put it in their Goodie Bag for sharing with friends and family members at home.



Large-Group Activities

Resurrection Echo

As groups complete the center activities, call them to join you in a large, central area. Teach the group the following chant/cheer, and keep performing it until each of the small groups has joined the large group.

First, the leader says a line; then the students echo it.

Listen everybody! Now come and see! (*students echo*)

Jesus is alive for you and me. (*students echo*)

He died on a cross on Calvary. (*students echo*)

Then he came alive for all to see. (*students echo*)

Jesus lives! X – X – X (*students echo and clap three times in rhythm*)

Come and see! X – X – X (*students echo and clap three times in rhythm*)

So – o – o – o

(Then repeat the chant from the beginning. You may vary the students' final claps by using stomps, jumps, cheers, lap pats, and other movements.)

Egg Hunt

Ensure that everyone has the *Jesus Lives! Come and See! Goodie Bag* they received as they arrived. By now, the bags will have several take-home items in them. They will now add eggs from the egg hunt.

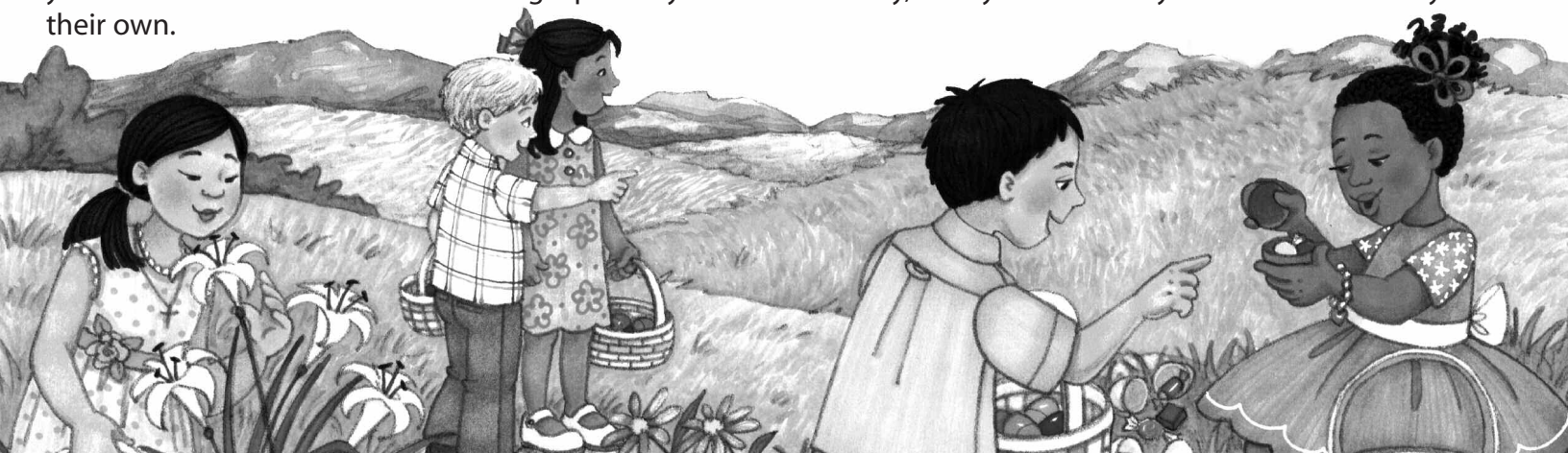
Explain the egg hunt process, boundaries, and rules. Have plenty of adult helpers available to ensure no child wanders off and to make sure everyone enjoys a fun, safe time. You may want to pair very young children with an older child or adult helper.

Explain that you have hidden one special egg for each child: the *Jesus Lives: Come & See! Gospel Easter Egg[®] with Stickers and Activity Mat*. Each child may take home just one of these eggs. If they find more than one, they are to leave the additional eggs for other children to find.

Then release the group to find the hidden eggs.

When most of the eggs have been found, call everyone to a central location. If possible, have them sit down with you. Repeat the "Resurrection Echo" one last time. Thank everyone for coming, and make sure they have their take-home items.

In addition, give visiting children a letter, brochure, or some other pre-printed invitation, welcoming them to visit your church and to consider becoming a part of your church family, if they don't already have a church family of their own.



Follow Up

After the event and cleanup, gather volunteers one last time. Pray for the children who attended and their families, asking God to bless the Word he has planted in their hearts. Ask that Jesus' gift of eternal life will forever remain their most precious possession.

