**Messy Church – April 2020 – Resurrection appearances**

This time, we are going to look at some of the stories that come in the Bible after Jesus’ death. The stories start on Easter Sunday morning.

Instead of putting all the stories at the beginning, we have put the stories with the activities, except for one, which appears in the celebration.

The stories are:

1. The empty tomb and the women
2. Mary Magdalene in the garden
3. The walk to Emmaus
4. Thomas and Jesus
5. Breakfast on the beach
6. Ascension

**Stories and Activities**

1. The empty tomb

You will need: bread roll, green icing, black icing, Jelly babies, cocktail sticks

Cut out a circle in the front of the roll – this becomes the stone and entrance to the tomb. Pull out some of the bread to make it hollow. Ice the top to be like grass. Make three crosses out of cocktail sticks and stick them in the top of the roll (could be only one cross, or none at all). Add Jelly baby soldiers, or jelly baby women coming to the tomb.

*Tell the story*

On the Sunday after the Friday on which Jesus died, three women – Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James – went to the place where Jesus’ body had been put on Friday, to prepare it properly for permanent burial. When they got there, they found that the stone that had been put in front of the cave had been moved away, and that there was no body in the cave. They saw two angels, who told them that Jesus was not dead, and that they should go and tell his friends.

Luke 24, verses 1 to 12

1. Working in the garden

You will need: seeds to plant in the garden, or if you have no garden, a yogurt pot or an empty egg shell\* with paper towel in and cress seeds, or a jam jar with paper towel around the inside and pea seeds.

\*For the egg shell, boil the egg first, and then paint or felt tip a face on it. To get the best effect, make sure your painted face is below the top you take off to eat the egg. Eat the egg, and rinse out the inside before putting paper towel in. When the cress grows, the face will have green hair.

If you are planting seeds in the garden, follow the instructions on the packet. For cress seeds, wet the paper towel thoroughly, and sprinkle the seeds over. Make sure that the paper towel is always wet, until the cress is big enough to cut – four or five days. For peas, make sure the paper towel stays upright around the inside of the jar – use pebbles or sand, or soil. Put the pea seeds between the paper and the glass, so you can see the roots develop. Make sure the paper stays damp.

*Tell the story*

The women told Jesus friends what had happened to them, and Peter and John went to look, and found the cave empty, didn’t understand, and went away again. Mary Magdalene stayed in the garden. She was crying, because she didn’t understand what was going on. Suddenly she saw a man, who she thought was the gardener. She asked him where Jesus’ body was, and said that she would get his friends to help take the body away and bury it properly. The man looked at her, and said her name – “Mary” – and she recognised by his voice that he was Jesus. Then he told her to tell his friends again that he was alive.

John 20, verses 14 to 18

1. Walk to Emmaus

Next time you go for a walk for your exercise, see how far you have walked - Harlington to Luton is 7 miles, about the same distance as Jerusalem to Emmaus. Work out how long it will take you to walk that distance, and think about running all the way back!

*Tell the story*

On the first Easter Sunday afternoon, two of Jesus’ friends, one called Cleopas and another (we don’t even know whether the second one was male or female, never mind their name), decided to leave Jerusalem and go to a village about 7 miles away, called Emmaus. That’s probably where they lived – you will see, in the story. As they walked along the road, they were talking about what had happened over the weekend, and along the road, a stranger caught them up and walked with them. He asked what they were talking about, and they told him, surprised that he needed to ask. They included the information from the women going to the cave where the body had been. Then the stranger explained all the prophesies from the Old Testament which related to the Messiah, including those which said he would die. When they got to Emmaus, the stranger seemed to be intending to go further, but Cleopas and his companion asked him to have a meal and to stay the night, as it was beginning to get dark. He came in with them, and when they sat down to eat, he broke the bread and blessed it. Then they saw that it was Jesus, but he disappeared before they could do anything. They went straight back to Jerusalem, to tell the other friends of Jesus, and found that Jesus had been seen by Peter. While they were all talking, Jesus came and stood in the group, and said “Peace be with you.”

Luke 24, verses 13 to 36

1. Thomas and Jesus

You will need: an empty cardboard box, the sheet of printed figures, colouring pencils or felt tip pens, scissors, glue

Cut one big side out of the cardboard box to make the the room where Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover meal – it would have been a simple rectangular room, with perhaps a low table and some couches to recline on, but you could just have empty space to put the figures in if you don’t want to make furniture. Stand the box up so that the open side faces you. Colour the figures on the extra sheet, cut them out and stick them to thin card, if you have it (the other side of the box would do!). Show the first scene with Jesus and ten disciples, and then repeat for the second scene, with Thomas added.

*Tell the story*

The story is included in the celebration – tell it with the scenery and characters you have made.

John 20, verses 19 to 29

1. Breakfast on the beach

You will need: card for a base, twigs or sticks, paint, and/or red and yellow paper, glue

When you are out on your walk, or in your garden, find some sticks and make a model bonfire with yellow or red paper (colour some if you haven’t got it ready coloured) or paint the ends of the sticks – glue the sticks to your piece of card. Can you make the card like a beach? You could have fish for your lunch or tea – how would you like it for breakfast?

*Tell the story*

After Easter, the disciples went back to Galilee, and one night they went fishing, but they didn’t catch anything. When it started to get light, they could see someone on the beach at the edge of the water, who called to ask if they had caught anything. They said no, and the person said they should throw the net over the other side of the boat. They did it, and they caught so many fish they couldn’t pull the net in again. John said to Peter, “It must be Jesus!”, and Peter grabbed his robe, which he had taken off, and jumped into the water to wade to the beach. The others came to the shore in the boat, pulling the net behind them. When they got to the beach, they found a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it, and bread, waiting for them. Jesus told them to bring some of the fish they had just caught, and Peter went and pulled the net ashore. Although it was so full, the net had not torn. Jesus cooked some more of the fish and invited them all to come and eat, breaking the bread and the fish up so everyone got some.

John 21, verses 1 to 13

1. Ascension – model

You will need: a piece of A4 paper, the page of figures supplied, scissors, glue, cotton wool

Colour and cut out the figures. Use the piece of A4 paper for a backing sheet for the picture. At the bottom of the page, draw and colour a hill for the people to stand on. From the top of the hill, in the centre of the backing sheet, cut two lines about half an inch apart (don’t cut right to the top, or the bottom of the page).

Put the figure of Jesus across the strip between the cuts, and use a piece of the scrap paper from your printed sheet to make a bar across the back of the strip, glued to the figure of Jesus either side so that Jesus can slide up and down the paper.

Stick the pictures of the followers on the hill. Towards the top of the sheet, use some more of the scrap paper to make a cloud (you can cover it with cotton wool, if you like), and glue it to the backing sheet on either side, so that when you slide the figure of Jesus up the sheet, he disappears into the cloud.

*Tell the story*

About forty days after Easter, Jesus took his friends for a walk. They went up on a hill, where they were on their own. Jesus was standing at the top of the hill, and his friends a little lower down. As they were talking, a cloud drifted across the top of the hill, between Jesus and his friends. When it had gone, Jesus wasn’t there any more. His friends looked up at the cloud, but they couldn’t see Jesus. Suddenly, two men in white were standing with them. They asked “why are you standing looking into the sky? Jesus, whom you saw being taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you saw him go.”

Acts 1, verses 6 to 11

Celebration

There are details of some songs that you can find on YouTube after the story and prayer. Three are better for younger children, but there are three more that you might want to listen to, including “Thine be the glory”.

You can find a video of Clive telling the story on YouTube by clicking on the following link:

<https://youtu.be/lpLhJh8VgiA>

Story

Has anyone ever told you something just to fool you? Told you something that wasn’t true, to see if you’d believe it? April 1st is known as April Fool’s day, and every normal year people try to get a silly story accepted as true on this day. Ask your parents (or grandparents) about spaghetti trees and liquorice plants! Well, if you’ve been fooled enough times, you start to distrust everything, even things that are true.

It was after Easter. Jesus had come alive again, risen from death. Mary had seen him in the Garden. All the disciples were hiding in the Upper Room, hiding because they were frightened that the people who had killed Jesus would come for them as well. All of a sudden, Jesus appeared and spoke to them. They were thrilled and amazed. Did I say all of the disciples? That wasn’t quite right. It was all the disciples but one. Thomas had gone out. He was the only one missing when Jesus appeared.

When Thomas came back, he couldn’t believe the excitement. “We’ve seen Jesus”, the others told him. What did Thomas say? Did he say, “That’s great”? No! Did he say, “I’m sorry I missed him”? No! Did he say, “Is he coming back again”? No! What did he say? He said, “I don’t believe it!” He said, “Unless I see the marks where Jesus was killed, and can touch them myself, I won’t believe it!”

Then what do you think happened? Well, about a week later the disciples were all together, and this time Thomas was with them. You know what happened next, Jesus appeared again. This time he spoke to Thomas. “Well, Thomas, do you want to touch my wounds?” he said. “Stop doubting and believe.”

“My Lord and my God”, Thomas said to Jesus. “Well, Thomas,” said Jesus. “You believe now, because you’ve seen me. In future, people who haven’t seen me will believe. Think how happy they will be.”

What can we learn from this story? For one thing, we can learn that not everything we’re told is true. As we get older, we come across people who try to make us believe lies, particularly on the internet. But that doesn’t mean everything is untrue. Jesus rose from the dead and didn’t die again, although he did go back to heaven, so we won’t just see him as Thomas did. So we have to learn how to know what is true, and who we can trust. It’s all right to question things, but there is a time to stop the questions.

Prayer:

Jesus, help us to be wise so that we can tell truth from lies. Help us to be truth tellers.

Amen

Songs

The following songs are on Youtube. The links will take you to them.

Our God is a great big God

<https://youtu.be/eSTfM8M2Md8>

We have a king who rides a donkey

<https://youtu.be/gSbEEwik2hs>

Be bold, be strong

<https://youtu.be/zRvCUz6KFB4>

Songs for older children or adults

Thine be the glory

<https://youtu.be/bmJgbpJQHYU>

Led like a lamb

<https://youtu.be/O0GrscBNDxo>

He has risen

<https://youtu.be/7PiG6GjK7Is>

Enjoy our celebration.

Then have tea or a treat if it isn’t tea time!

If you send me pictures of anything you do, I will share them on the Church Facebook page (if you want to send pictures that you don’t want shared, just tell me. I’ll only share the one’s you’re happy to share.)

Harlington Messy Church Team