

HOLY WEEK



A WALK WITH JESUS
THROUGH HIS LAST WEEK
ON EARTH



FAMILY LIFE
RESOURCES



We understand the challenges of busy schedules at home, which is why we offer resources that support you and your family which are easy to use, relevant and most importantly honor God. We pray these resources for your home along with the classes and services at First Church make an eternal difference in the lives of families like yours.

Blessings,
First Church Open Bible

Colossians 2:6,7

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.



JANUARY

"I Am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25-26)

- Do You Believe?
- Born of the Spirit
- A Very Bad Day
- Living Our New Life

FEBRUARY

"I Am the Door" (John 10)

- What Kind of Door is Jesus?
- Gate to the Pasture Land
- The Door to Eternal Life
- The Door to the Kingdom of Heaven

MARCH

The Passover (Exodus 12:24-25)

- God Reveals His Plan
- The Plan for Freedom
- The Exodus
- Remember What He Has Done

APRIL

Holy Week

- Celebrating Jesus
- Praying with Jesus
- Remembering Jesus
- Jesus Lives!

With Supplemental **Passover with Jesus** Insert

Holy Week

***"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Matt. 21:9)***

All of Jerusalem came to witness Jesus' triumphal entry into the city, joyfully shouting hosannas to the King of Kings..

As we approach this holy season, let's take time to worship our King. Let's seek Him in the quiet of prayer, read His stories, and reflect on His suffering. During this sacred time, let's set aside moments to talk of His final actions that secured our salvation.

Let's make sure our families understand why His death, burial, and resurrection are the foundation of the Gospel. Let's share this good news - starting with our own families.

LESSON 1

Celebrating Jesus!

Parent's Passage: Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12

Family Reading: Luke 19:28-42

Key Verse: John 12:13

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!"

Palm Sunday, 30 AD

Jerusalem was filled with travelers who had come to celebrate the Passover. All four Gospels tell of this great celebration. The Israelites were eagerly waiting for a king who would free them from the heavy hand of Roman oppression.

The prophecy in Zachariah 9:9 describes such a king. When Jesus entered the city, the entire crowd came out to see Him. They shouted **"Hosanna!"** Which means **"Save us now"**

"The whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen"
(Luke 19:37).

They were expecting a Messiah who would immediately deliver them from their oppressors. However, Jesus quoted a prophecy that many had overlooked and it would be fulfilled within their lifetime:

"The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side" (Luke 19:43).

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This prophecy was fulfilled in 70 AD, when all Jerusalem was completely destroyed including the Temple.

On the Sunday before Passover in Jerusalem of 30 AD, Jesus' followers did not fully understand His purpose. They did not realize that this King would become their Passover lamb.

This week - and month - let's make it our purpose to better understand who Jesus is and how he became our savior by studying the last week of his life

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Have a Family Palm Sunday Celebration

Discuss together about Jesus' teachings and His miracles. Sing worship songs together. John 12:13 is a verse of worship and praise. Imagine the crowd shouting and chanting, "Hosanna" to Jesus, while waving palm branches!

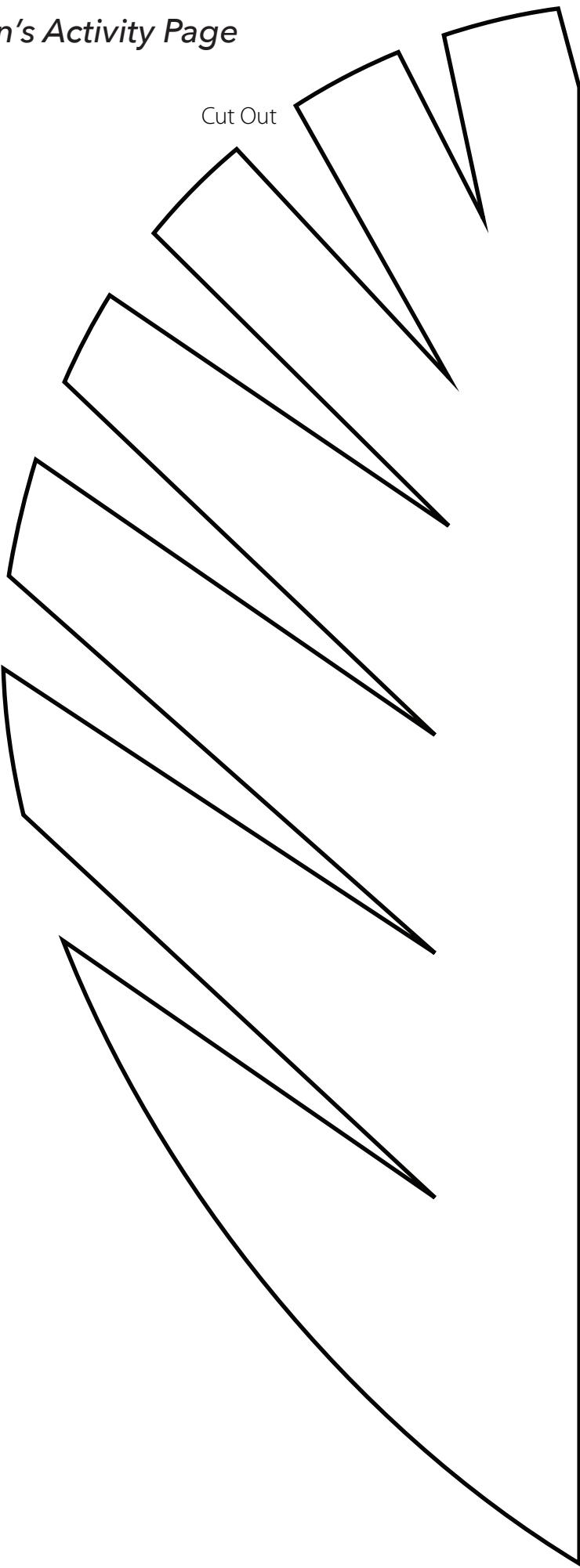
Use the palm branch template on the next page to make palm branches with your children. Write "**Hosanna**" or "**Praise Jesus**" on them. Find light-weight scarves and sing a family praise song while you wave the branches and scarves.

You can also have some praise music playing and have a family worship time while waving the scarves and branches before the Lord.

Try this: Recite John 12:13 together, adding some rhythm and notes. Sing it together several times, adding loud shouting of "King of Israel".

"Hosanna!"
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"... KING OF ISRAEL!"

"Hosanna!"
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"... KING OF ISRAEL!"



Place on fold

Palm Branch Template



MATERIALS:

Green Construction Paper
Wooden Craft Stick (green) or
Wooden Tongue Depressor and
Green Paint or Markers

INSTRUCTIONS:

Cut template and position it onto folded green construction paper.
Trace and cut, then open fold and glue a green craft stick for the stem.

Hosanna... King of Israel!



LESSON 2

Praying with Jesus

Parent's Passage: John 13-16

Family Reading: John 17

Key Verse: John 17:26

"I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

One of Jesus' longest recorded prayers is found in the book of John. After washing His disciples' feet, sharing the Passover meal, and speaking to them about the future, He prayed for them. Read John 17:1-5 slowly, meditating on its meaning.

The first part of his prayer reveals His relationship to His Father since the beginning of time.

The next part is an intercessory prayer for His followers - for their protection, holiness and truth.

The final part of His prayer is about His arrest, trial and execution. He willingly did that for us. Let that soak in... He prayed for us, we were on his heart and mind.

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me"

(John 17:20-21).

The astonishing request in this prayer is that Jesus wants us to be in the same relationship with Him that He has with the father. He wants unity with us!

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"May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" Verse 21

In case you missed it, He repeats it in verse 23:

"I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

Pray to the father that the Holy Spirit may reveal to you and your family, the profound spiritual truth Jesus reveals to us in his prayer for us.

Family Prayer Template

START

Gather in a quiet place in your home. This is your special time to be with Jesus. Read aloud Matthew 26:36-46. Emphasize how Jesus asked His disciples to watch and pray with Him.

Start the prayer time by thanking God for bringing us to Christ.

CONTINUE

Read verse 39 and 42 again. Jesus prayed, **"If this is possible may this cup be taken from Me."** He then ended with, **"Yet not as I will, but as you will!"**

Talk as a family about the fact that Jesus was under the will of His Father, and this time His Father asks Him to go to the cross for us. Pray together for a family need, and close with Jesus' words, **"Yet not as I will, but as God the Father wills!"**

CLOSE

Read Matthew 26:41 again. Remind your family that prayer keeps us connected to God, and is the way to stay in God's protection.

Finish with a prayer of gratitude, thanking God for His protection and love.

LESSON 3

Remembering Jesus

Parent's Passage:	Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Family Reading:	Matthew 26:36-47,56
Key Verse:	Philippians 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!

Do not worry, pray!

In the final hours before His arrest, Jesus took His three closest friends with Him and told them, ***"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*** (Matthew 26:38)

What an example Jesus gave us in those final hours with His friends. Just as we do, Jesus desired to have close relationships with others - and these three were his closest friends. He trusted them with His feelings. Jesus also knew that He needed more than just His close friends. Most importantly, He needed His heavenly Father. To draw near to God the Father, Jesus wanted to pray and He asked His friends to pray with Him. Jesus may have been remembering the words from the Old Testament in Isaiah 41:10:

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Jesus demonstrated the power of prayer, and how it draws us closer to God. We can always pour our hearts out to Him. No matter what we face, we are never alone. We can tell God, our heavenly Father, anything.

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After leaving His friends, Jesus prayed ***"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."*** (Matthew 26:39) Jesus's prayer reveals how sad He must have felt over what is to come, but Jesus understood that sometimes God says, ***"No"*** to what we ask because His purpose is greater than ours - Jesus desired above all to be obedient to His father.

Friends are wonderful to have, but as Jesus found that night - and as we sometimes experience in our lives - friends aren't always reliable. He returned only an hour later to check on His friends. They had fallen asleep and had failed to pray for Him. He woke them and spoke firmly, ***"watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."***

Be prepared for battle

Prayer not only allows us to ask for what we need, but also prepares us for challenges. Battles are coming. Prayer will help us face those challenges and battles when things don't end up the way we thought they would. Philippians 4:13 tells us: ***"I can do all this through Him who gives me strength."*** Through prayer and time in God's Word, we receive the strength we need for life's battles. Prayer (and of course spending time with God by reading the Bible) are the best ways to gain that strength from our Heavenly Father!

Unfortunately, Jesus's friends failed to pray with Him that night before He was arrested. Even when Jesus urged them to be alert and to pray, they didn't listen. Perhaps if they had taken the time to pray, they would have been more prepared for what was coming next.

When Jesus returned from praying for the third time, He woke them up, ***"Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go!"***

For God so loved the world . . .

Even before He finished speaking, Judas, (one of the twelve disciples) arrived with soldiers to arrest Jesus. The disciples were confused, and Peter fought back with his sword.

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"Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck . the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus)." (John 18:10)

Jesus understood, though, that a sword fight was not what God intended. Jesus would be beaten and tortured in the coming days and yet, He gave so many examples of loving people - even when most would think they don't deserve His love.

- He loved Malchus when He healed his ear;
- He loved Peter when He encouraged him to pray to be ready for what is to come;
- He loved His mother Mary even while He suffered on the cross and asked His disciple John to watch over her (John 19:25-27);
- He loved those who crucified Him by asking God to forgive them (Luke 23:34);
- Most of all, He loved all of us by dying on the cross in our place.

It's not fair!

Jesus did nothing to deserve the death penalty He received. Even Pilate, a Roman leader declared: ***"You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. . . he has done nothing to deserve death."***

Yet, Jesus was whipped and beaten, His clothes were taken from Him, He was mocked and given a crown of thorns, and His wrists and feet were nailed to a cross. And yes - Jesus did die.

This is not the warrior the Israelites expected! Even His disciples had scattered - one follower even ran away naked when someone tried to seize him (Mark 14:52)!

Jesus' friends and followers probably thought, this is not the way it should have happened! Do you ever feel that way? Do you ever wonder, "God, I've done what you've asked. Why is this happening to me?" Well, dear sweet follower of Jesus, you are not alone! And your battle is not over!

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***"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you."* (1 Peter 4:12)**

Difficult and terrible things happen to good and obedient people. But we serve a God who understands our suffering. Jesus told his disciples, ***"I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy ... I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."*** John 16:19-22

Jesus's death was horrible! It was painful and it was unfair! But wait! It was not the end ...

Children's Activity - Easter Cross

Easter Paper Craft - Cross, Tomb & Lilly

Below is an example of the finished Easter Paper Craft project found at the end of Lesson 4.



Crafting Notes:

Set your printer options to "Actual Size" (100% Scale) when printing the template pages.

Use a full sheet of light blue construction paper as the base, and use the full sized templates as a cutting guide.

The Lily petals are created by folding two sections of the white circles inward.

Experiment with ripping strips of paper if you would like to include a sunrise. (Optional)

LESSON 4

Jesus Lives!

Parent's Passage: 1 Corinthians 15:14-20

Family Reading: John 20

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

". . . that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all give a similar accounting of Jesus' resurrection. But why is His resurrection so important?

The resurrection is the point!

The Bible tells us that sin means death:

- Romans 5:12 *"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men because all sinned."*
- Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death . . ."*
- James 1:15 *". . . when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."*

And, unfortunately, we are all sinners (Romans 3:23). But take heart! Remember in our last lesson – Jesus died on the cross in our place. 1 John 2:2 *"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins."* So yes, Jesus's death was enough to pay for all of our sins for those who believe in Him.

But there's more to the story! On Easter morning we remember and celebrate that the tomb is EMPTY!

1 Corinthians 15:20-21 tells us that Jesus is *"the first fruits of*

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those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.”
Easter reminds us that Jesus has victory over death!

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 **“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Jesus is who He is.

A few months back our lessons focused on the “I Am” statements of Jesus. One of those statements comes from John 11:25: **“I am the resurrection and the life.”** Resurrection isn’t just what Jesus does – It’s who He is.

Because this is who He is, He has all authority over life and death. John 10:18 tells us that no one can take His life. He has the **“authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.”**

Another one of Jesus’s “I Am” statements is: **“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”** (John 14:6). He is the way to God our Father. And if He is “the life,” then He must be alive!

And He is alive! The Bible tells us that after His resurrection, He appeared to more than 500 people. (1 Corinthians 15:5-8). If you still have doubts, you’re not alone. One of Jesus’s chosen apostles, Thomas, did not believe his friends when they told him they had seen Jesus.

Thomas is a great example of how Jesus’ love for us is not just at surface level. Jesus specifically took the time to go to Thomas, so that Thomas could see Him, touch Him and believe. **“Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’**
(John 20:27)

One day, those of us who believe in Jesus and accept Him as our Savior will be able to touch Jesus just as Thomas did.

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Until then, we will remember Easter and the sacrifice Jesus made and His victory over death. ***“Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*** (John 20:29) That's you and me, my friends! We are blessed - Jesus says so!

There's still more to do!

Many people in Jesus's time expected Him to fight a war with swords, where He would conquer the Roman government and free His people. But instead, Jesus came to fight a spiritual battle. He came to take our place in death and to show us the way to everlasting life. However, His work (and ours) didn't end on the day of His resurrection. When Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, he explained ***“I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God, and your God.”*** (John 20:17)

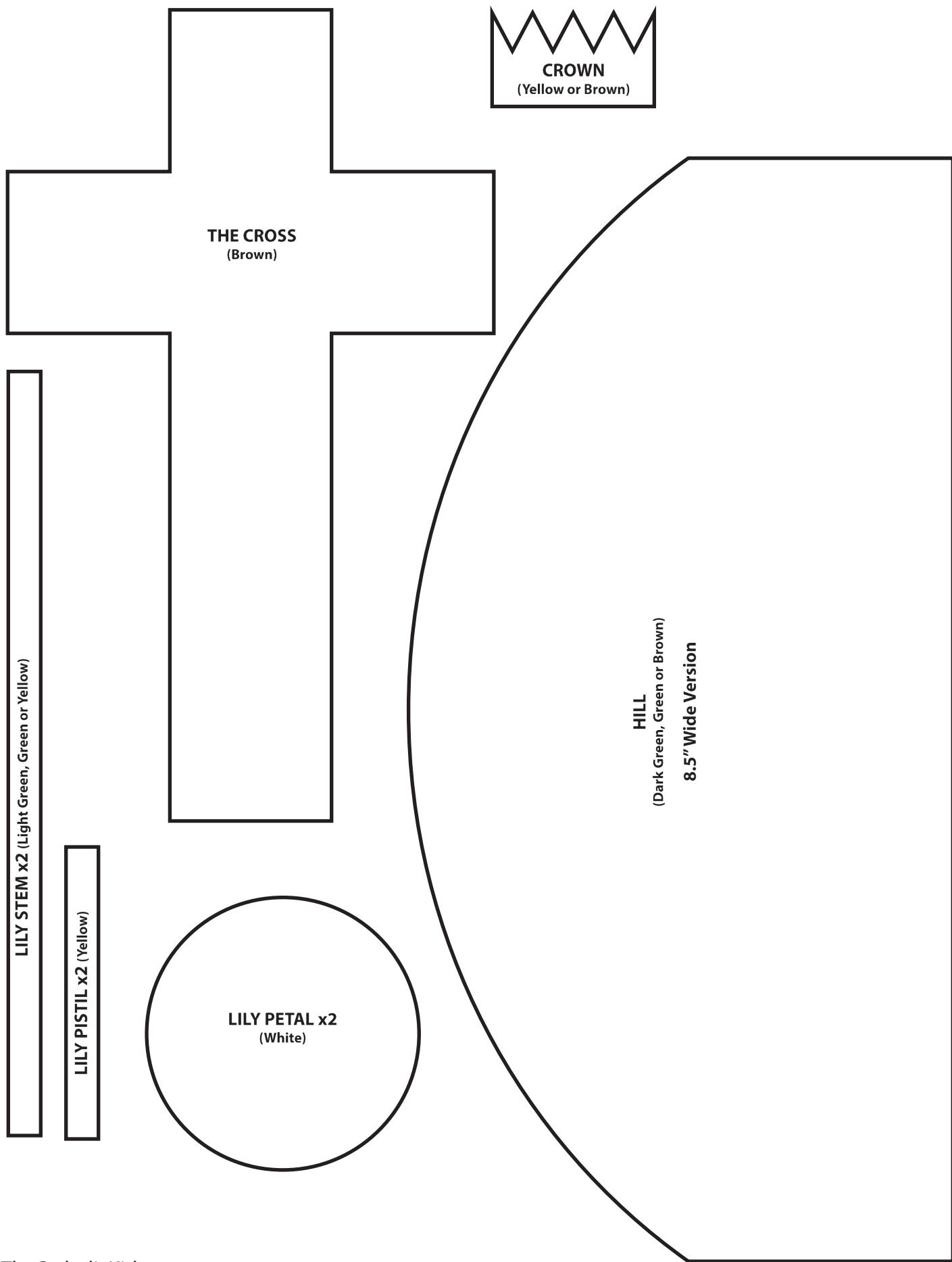
Jesus still has more to do before He returns for those who believe in Him. No matter what difficulties we face as believers, we have the assurance that He is alive and will return for us.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if that were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you ... And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:1-3)

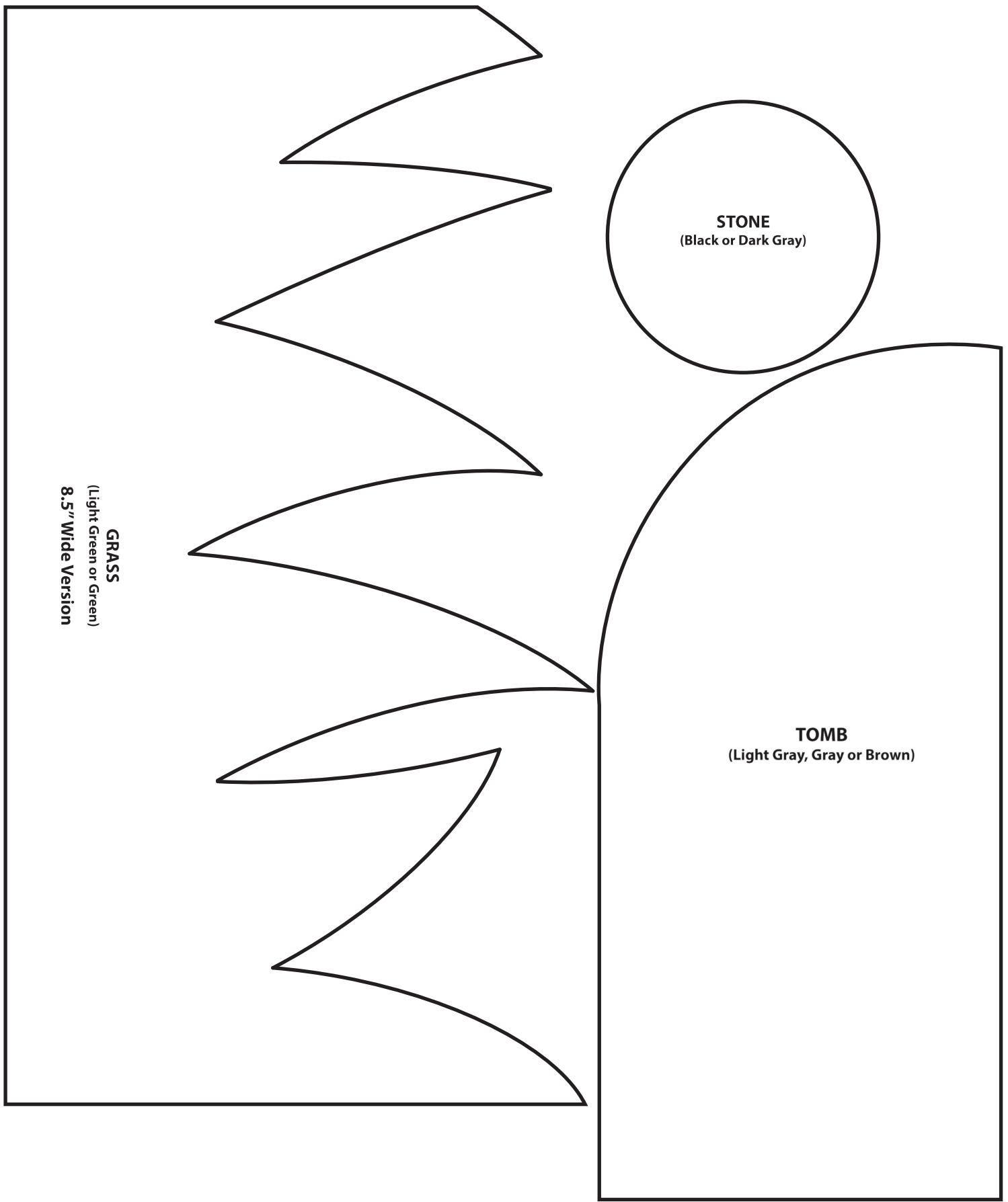
If you believe in Jesus – that He died on the cross for your sins and was raised to life – then, He wants you to share this good news with others.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Children's Activity - Easter Cross Template 1



Children's Activity - Easter Cross Template 2





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