

iLIGHT

EUD CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES BULLETIN

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Jesus is... risen

Today, for millions of Christians, the meaning of Easter is Jesus Christ's victory over death. His resurrection symbolizes the eternal life that is granted to all who believe in Him. The meaning of Easter also symbolizes the complete verification of all that Jesus preached and taught during His three-year ministry. If He had not risen from the dead, if He had merely died and not been resurrected, He would have been considered just another teacher or Rabbi. However, His resurrection changed all that and gave final and irrefutable proof that He was really the Son of God and that He had conquered death once and for all. Easter is a widely known man-made tradition resulting from Jewish Passover and pagan's celebrations. Passover was meant to remember the liberation from slavery in Egypt, but it was also an anticipation for the liberation from sin. According to Paul, **Jesus is our Passover** who shed His sinless blood to cover the sins of humankind. For us today, Easter should recall the original Passover meaning and remind us that He died for our sins, He is risen and He is looking forward to celebrate again with us in Heaven His victory over sin.

www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/the-meaning-of-easter-faq.html

Discovering Times of Worship

You are a special and beloved child of God!" Being responsible for Children's Ministries in my church and as a mother, this is exactly what I want those little ones to remember. And this is why I am constantly looking for ways to help children get to know this loving God more and more as their heavenly father.

In our everyday life, there are times when I find it easy to communicate that. But there are also those days in church or at home when challenges seem to pile up and tiredness seems to overwhelm me. How good to know that there are high days and holidays that help us to leave all the hustle and bustle, all deadlines and demands behind, that help us to relieve and relax together, to explore and to worship and to celebrate the love of God in special ways.

With our festive moments we worship and serve an active God

- in the past. Those festive moments remind us of certain memorable events or experiences that we ourselves or others have made with God. They

give us the opportunity to thankfully praise and worship our Savior. At the same time, these festivals help us to recognize its significance for today.

- in the present. Those festive moments let us experience God's loving care and the rich blessings that His presence brings us. They cause us to thankfully rejoice and feel great happiness, and also
- in the future. Those festive moments give us a foretaste of the coming time when God will turn everything to the best. They not only strengthen our anticipation and hope for the fulfillment of divine promises, but in turn represent a "visualization" of the future. Therefore, every feast celebrated by the church of Jesus in anticipation of its promised future is a small anticipation and taste of the lavish feast: the bridegroom has prepared for his bride (Rev. 19: 6-9; 6-9). So the future reaches into our present and fills it with joyful expectation of the second coming.¹

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD



CHRISTIANITY

Christians are called Christians because they follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, who was born about 2.000 years ago in the Middle East. He was a Jew. Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. The Jews at his time, however, did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah who had come to save the world, and brought him to die on the cross. But Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead and is still alive today.

Like the Jews, Christians believe in one God, however, He is made of three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The cross is the symbol of the Christian religion, because it reminds of Jesus' death to save the world. Also, the fish is a Christian symbol: the letters of the word *fish* in Greek are the abbreviation of "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour".

Christians believe that God communicates with humankind through His word, the Bible. This book consists of two mayor parts, the Old and the New Testament. During the year, Christians celebrate different feasts: Christmas (in December) reminds of Jesus' birth. In February, many Christians have a time of fasting, where they eat little or nothing in remembrance to Jesus who was fasting 40 days before starting his ministry. Easter takes place in March or April and reminds of Jesus' death on the cross.

There are many groups who claim to be Christians: Catholics, Protestants, Orthodoxes (mostly in eastern Europe and Russia), Puritans (e.g. Amish people or Quakers), and also smaller groups like Seventh-Day Adventists, and Baptists. Many groups have traditions and practices that are not shared with other Christian groups.

Most Christians gather for worship service on Sundays, but some keep the Sabbath as holy day like the Jews.

From: Brown, A. & Langley, A.: *Les Religions du Monde expliquées aux enfants*. Hachette Livre, France, 1999

That is why our festive moments bring color and cheerfulness to our family life. They give a rhythm and a structure to the course of our year. And it is God himself who has not only given us a weekly festive time for recess and recreation, but also those moments in which he invites us to focus on him in such different special ways. I find encouragement in *Special Testimonies On Education* where Ellen G. White wrote: "Shall we not keep holy festivals unto God? Shall we not show that we have some enthusiasm in his service? With the grand, ennobling theme of salvation before us, shall we be as cold as statues of marble? If men can become so excited over a match game of cricket, or a horse-race, or over foolish things that bring no good to any one, shall we be unmoved when the plan of salvation is unfolded before us? Let the school and the church henceforth have festivals of rejoicing unto the Lord." (*Special Testimonies on Education*, 1897, p. 82) And it is those rejoicing moments that help us to get to know God's character even better.

So when I am tired and ask myself how I should manage to prepare and arrange festivities on top of all those daily life challenges, I remind myself of the stories in the Bible and especially of those in the New Testament told by Jesus. In those stories celebration takes place in the middle of all the different struggles of daily life. It seems as if the surrounding conditions for such festive moments were anything but perfectly planned: When a shepherd finds his lost sheep and carries it home on his

shoulders, he invites his neighborhood to celebrate: "saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." And after a woman has searched her whole house to find a lost coin "she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost." And the father of the prodigal son „said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry." (Luke 15:6.9.22-24)

I read about rejoicing together and being merry. And I am so impressed by those moments of festivity and celebrating, of community and joyousness and I get a new glimpse on God and his character. I want to invite you and the children in your home and in your church to experience similar moments together as well. Let us celebrate the gift of life and of salvation, of joy and faith and of a loving God throughout the year! And let us remind our children that they are special and beloved children of God!

¹R. Pöhler: *Bausteine 2. Gottesdienste und andere Feste feiern. Gestaltung von Festen und Feiern 2.3.* P. 4-6

Katrin Grieco
Institute for
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JESUS

wants all of me

A Prove of Love

How do you know that God loves you? You may answer: Because my father, my mother, and the pastor of the church tell me that. But how can you be sure about it? Actually, God shows His love for us in many ways: for example,

through the Bible and nature. But there is one better than all: God loves us so that He sent Jesus, His one and only Son, as a gift to save us. Who could do that without having an amazing love?

“For the Father himself loves you dearly because you love me and believe that I came from God.”

John 16:27

From: Ferreira de Oliveira, S.: *Talking with God*. Editorial Safeliz, Madrid, Spain, 2015

PRAYER OF **BENEDETTA**

Dear Jesus,
What do rabbits have to do with Easter?

From: "Caro Gesù, potresti cambiare il sapore agli asparagi?
100 nuove letterine dei bambini a Gesù". Sonzogno Editore, Milano, 2007

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IN SYNERGY

Setting Children's Ministries in Germany on new grounds

At the moment "Foundations for Working with Children" are developed and published by the Adventist Youth Department in Germany in cooperation with the Institute for Religious Education (RPI). They are based on the goals of the RPI, the Adventist Youth Department and the iCOR values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The foundations of working with children result from the conviction that God has put much potential into every human being - regardless of age, culture, gender or community affiliation. Therefore, these foundations encourage churches to seek ways and opportunities to consciously perceive, encourage, and nurture this potential in each person, to learn from each other, to grow together, and to accompany children in their faith.

Methodological suggestions for churches to deal with this subject will be provided by the Institute of Religious Education (RPI). We hope that the local churches and their staff, Adventist schools and kindergartens deal with this content and make it the basis of their work on the ground to become more and more the spiritual home that God desires for his children and the society in which we live.



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MEMORIZING BIBLE VERSES

Writing & Words: Newspaper verse

Supplies:

- a pile of newspapers and magazines (make sure they do not contain unsuitable material)
- glue
- scissors
- poster board
- copies of the verse to be created

Instructions:

1. Give each child a copy of the memory verse, a few newspapers, glue, scissors, and a sheet of thin card stock.
2. Have the children search through the papers to find the words they need to create their verse. If words can't be found, individual letters can be cut out to create the words.
3. Glue the words on the poster board in the correct order to make the Bible verse. These can look quite interesting as each word may have a different font style.
4. Cut out pictures from magazines and papers to add to the poster and decorate the verses.



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From: Holford K. *100 creative ways 2 learn memory verses*. With permission from GC CHM

SPECIAL NEED MINISTRIES

It's not only about the children

When there are children with special needs, the whole family is affected and should be included in the Special Needs Ministry. When a family discovers that their child has a disability, it's often a time of crisis. Many family members go through the predictable stages of grief: denial, bargaining, anger, depression, and eventual acceptance. The first few months following a diagnosis of "disability can be an emotionally fragile time for parents. These parents need helpful friends who'll be examples of Proverbs 18:24b: "A real friend sticks closer than a brother."

A group of parents whose children were diagnosed on the autism spectrum made a list of their biggest needs and concerns:

- Sleep (and the rest that comes with it)
- Coping with family members' and friends' reactions
- Understanding what they did wrong to have disabled children
- Wondering if they've done enough to help their children
- Worrying about siblings not getting enough time



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or attention

- Dealing with the effects on their marriage
 - Worrying about their children's future: Will they have jobs? Will they be safe? Who will love them when the parents die?
- You can't minister effectively to families until you understand their lives. Parents in your church who have children with disabilities need unconditional love and acceptance. And they need to be reminded they can cling to God because he's faithful, never-changing, and omnipotent.

From: Verbal, P. *Special Needs Ministry for Children*. Group Publishing, Loveland, USA, 2012

The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the morning and evening worship. There is no reason why this should not be the most interesting and enjoyable exercise of the home life, and God is dishonored when it is made dry and irksome. Let the seasons of family worship be short and spirited. Do not let your children or any member of your family dread them because of their tediousness or lack of interest. When a long chapter is read and explained and a long prayer offered, this precious service becomes wearisome, and it is a relief when it is over.



Child Guidance, p. 521

Poster Message

Incredi-Biblical

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways."

Isaiah 55:8

Mom, come help me with this!" Toby called from her room. "In a little while," Mom called back. She was in the kitchen loading the dishwasher while Cheri vacuumed the living room rugs.

"I need help right now!" Toby wailed. "I've finished picking up my room, and I want to get this poster up on my wall *now!*"

Cheri switched off the vacuum and rolled her eyes. "Toby, it's almost sunset," she called to her 7-year-old sister. "We have company coming for supper, and Mom and I are busy trying to get everything cleaned

up. We'll help you with the poster later."

"But I need to do it **NOW!**"

"She just doesn't get it, does she?" Cheri told Mom. "She always thinks whatever *she's* doing is the most important thing in the world, no matter what else is going on. I guess that's just the way little kids think."

Mom smiled. "You were like that yourself not too long ago," she reminded Cheri. "Sometimes I think we're all a little bit like that."

"What do you mean?"

"Think about how we often pray," Mom said, closing the dishwasher door. "We beg God for what we want right now, and it seems just as important to us as Toby's poster does to her. We don't have any idea what the big picture is or what other issues God is dealing with. Maybe if we did, we'd be a little more patient."



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Info Splat

In St. Louis, Missouri, in 1903, you could get your rugs vacuumed for \$4 by John Thurman, who went door to door with a horse-drawn vacuum service.

React now!

Think of a time you had to wait or received the answer "No" to something you prayed for. As you look back, can you see that there was more to the story than you realized at the time?

From: Bockmann, M. et al.: *Elasti-Brain. 365 Devotions to Stretch your Mind and Shape your Faith*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 2008

SECRETS FROM THE TREASURE CHEST



I'm a pastor's kid. I'm just like everyone else, but sometimes people judge me. I hate it! Can you help?
– Girl, 12

First, you need to know something important. Those people aren't judging you. They're judging your parent. And that's not fair either.

Some church members insist that the preacher's kid be a shining example of a perfect Christian boy or girl. After all, a spiritual leader in the community should know how to raise children, right?

Well, perhaps. But boys and girls have minds of their own. They make choices, sometimes good ones, sometimes not so good.

But that doesn't keep unthinking churchgoers from being totally shocked when a preacher's kid doesn't live up to the high standards they've set. They suddenly become judge and jury for the church family, condemning the poor child for actions they'd more readily

accept in someone else's kid. Strange. We don't expect a doctor's young son to be able to perform open-heart surgery, or an artist's daughter to paint a masterpiece. Why should we assume that a preacher's child is going to live a perfect life based on the fact that his or her parent pounds the pulpit once a week?

Don't despair. "*The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed*" (Psalm 103:6, NIV). That includes preacher's kids who must grow up under other people's standards.

Should a preacher's son or daughter be "better" than, say, the offspring of a plumber? We certainly have ample opportunity to *learn* how to be better. So, in one sense you are *not* like everyone else. God has

given you the opportunity to learn even deeper lessons about His love. All you have to do is open your eyes and ears to the many church activities around you. Get to know the God your parent represents.

And never let judgmental people stand in your way. Do something to really get their tongues wagging: forgive them.



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From: Mills, C.: *Secrets from the Treasure Chest. Questions Kids ask about Life*. Review and Herald Publishing Ass., Hagerstown, MD, USA, 1996



ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the North and South German Unions

"Hands On"-Exhibition

The "Hands on"-Exhibition "Easter garden" is a journey to the biblical Jerusalem during the days of Jesus. Children are able to dive into the story and get to know "Peter" as their personal guide through seven decorated rooms. Peter accompanies the kids through

the various stations in the last days of Jesus and invites to engage in interactive elements. The kids experience a market and wave palm leaves as a donkey comes by, they get to smell perfume in the house of Mary, taste bread and grape juice in the upper room, get tired by the twinkling light of the stars in the garden of Gethsemane, they wonder at a fire

place inside the courtyard and hear the crow of a rooster, they sit at the foot of a cross and are impressed by an empty grave and experience the Easter message: "Jesus is alive!" This exhibition is a great way to involve all members of a church to join in service and to invite children from church, from public kindergartens or schools with their teachers.



Craft Peter's Rooster with Handprints

We let everyone write on his handprint what kind of weaknesses he struggles with, which burdens or challenges he has to face. The handprints were cut out, collected and glued together in the shape of a rooster. This craft reminded all participants: we do make mistakes just like Peter. And we do have our struggles and face different challenges. But Jesus still loves us. And Jesus still has a mission for us as well: Pasture my lambs!





ACTIVITY REPORT



News from the North and South German Unions

Training weekend

for Children's Ministries Leaders on Easter, Resurrection and Pentecost

During this training weekend, all kinds of staff in Children's Ministries enjoyed a colorful time together. Dedi-

cated helpers provided the appropriate opportunities for learning new songs, inputs and workshops, presenting ideas and materials concerning Last Supper, Easter, Resurrection and Pentecost. The cooperation with the Institute for

Religious Education (RPI) and a bookstore made it possible for the participants to be able to browse through various books and aids for worshipping and celebrating with children.



Keep in Mind

EVENTS FROM THE INTER-EUROPEAN DIVISION

2018



April 7

CHM Worship Day "Lode a Gesù"
Bologna, **Italy**

April 8

Evang. Project "Messy Church"
Latina, **Italy**

April 13-15

CH/ChSS Training Course
Zaragoza, **Spain**

April 17-22

European Health Conference
Bucharest, **Romania**

April 27-30

CHM/ChSS Training Course
Prague, **Czech Republic**

June 1-3

Children's Conference
Sofia, **Bulgaria**



September 18-22

People 7.0. Forward Together — CHM / FM / WM Summit
Lignano Sabbiadoro (Venice), **Italy**

2019



SAVE
THE DATE



Different Models: Intergenerational Family service

Family services usually aim to be "family-friendly". But they may vary widely in their approach. In some churches this just means their service takes place at a family-friendly time, or they provide a chrèche or separate program for the children. Others may just have a children's story and a worksheet theme of the service. Some may even include a lively and contemporary children's song as part of their worship experience. Other services are truly intergenerational family services, and they aim to involve children more actively throughout the program.

The needs of the families, and the worship culture, vary from church to church. If you want to start an intergenerational service, ask your families what they would like to see included, or excluded, from the worship service. One church that surveyed their families discovered that the service needed to finish by 12:15 at the latest. The children were used to eating lunch at 12:00 during the week, so they became increasingly restless when their tummies started rumbling. The parents also suggested including a song for the children during praise time; letting

children use percussion instruments during the part of the praise time; keeping prayers simple and short; not using archaic language in church; and providing thoughtful worksheets for the children on a similar theme to the sermon.

Intergenerational services often have an order of service similar to a traditional church service, but they aim to involve more people in more creative ways throughout the service. The "sermon" is likely to be much shorter to enable time for participants to be more involved in the prayers and the Bible story, the scripture readings, brief discussions and other creative activities.

Benefits

- Children's needs and interests are considered by the worship planners at every point in the service, as well as the needs and interests of the adults in the congregation.
- Ensuring that there is something for everyone helps to nurture a spirit of generosity within the congregation — "I can enjoy what's happening right now, even if it's not my style, because there'll

be something that suits my needs very soon."

- The service usually includes some movement (like an action song) and something visual (like watching something happen) so that it will appeal to a wider range of learning modes than the highly verbal traditional service.
- Teenagers and young people can be involved by giving them the topic and inviting them to prepare an activity on the theme.
- The intellectual needs of some members can be met by preparing an inspirational handout with a summary of interesting points or thought-provoking questions for them to consider.

Challenges

- An effective family service does take extra time and thought to plan and prepare. It's useful to work together in a team so that the workload can be shared amongst people.
- Family services are often noisier than other services, so make sure you have an adequate PA system.

From: Holford, K.: *Altogether Wonderful. Exploring Intergenerational Worship.* With permission from GC CHM

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



WENN FRÖSCHE FESTE FEIERN (GERMAN ONLY) Katrin Grieco

The new German book project that was developed by the Youth Ministries Department, the Institute for Religious Education (RPI) and Family Ministries. This book is full of creative ideas for children's church or family celebrations with the Bible that are as colorful and hubbub as everyday life with small children. You will find personal testimonials, delightful pictures and imaginative suggestions for large-scale celebrations and spontaneous festive moments.



HELP! I'M A PARENT Claudio & Pamela Consuegra

Being a parent today is one of life's greatest challenges, but also a sacred calling. It is awesome to think that God chose you to partner with Him in molding and shaping the character of your children and leading them to become disciples of Jesus Christ. This parenting devotional weaves the Word of God with practical applications to the challenges today's parents face.



KAMISHIBAI MATERIAL

A Kamishibai theatre is a box of light wood. Two double doors opening slowly. A small theater is created in the room. Pictures appear on the black framed stage. The Kamishibai is a paper theater or narrative theater with origins in Japan: The storyteller pushes his pictures into the stage frame, opens the doors and begins to tell his story picture by picture. This method of image-based storytelling with the Kamishibai is very popular in kindergarten, elementary school and in children's church. It is distributed by Don Bosco publishing house in Germany.

Possible sets fitting Easter time:

- The Last Supper
- The "Via Dolorosa"
- Jesus has risen
- God gives His Spirit



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