

Unlocking real life stories of urban people  
Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ  
Releasing life changing skills and confidence



# UPSIDE-DOWN EASTER

- or how to find new meaning in a coconut...  
-



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## What is Unlock Glasgow?

Unlock Glasgow is an initiative of the Scottish Bible Society in partnership with Unlock UK and the Church of Scotland Priority Areas Group. We are here to support the work of any church or community group in Glasgow's Urban Priority Areas. We can provide resources, or help to lead a Bible study group, or training for group leaders.

Unlock is about meeting in small groups to explore the Bible together - but taking as a starting point experiences of everyday life. As people think about the stories in the Bible in the light of what happens in our own homes, in tower blocks, on our city streets, in our lives each day, the pages come to life for us, and we can imagine much better how Jesus' disciples felt, what the situations facing the old testament characters were really like.

Find out more on: [www.unlockglasgow.org.uk](http://www.unlockglasgow.org.uk)

### **This material aims to:**

- Let people look at the Easter story from a different perspective, and discuss what Easter might mean for people today.
- Let experiences from people and churches from other parts of the world inform how we look at the Easter story and faith in general.

### **This material will not:**

- use Bible stories with the purpose to come up with any kind of "answer", or act as traditional Bible Studies where we mainly learn from facts or theological statements.

### **How to use the material:**

The material suggests a certain number of sessions, but the exercises can be done in another order and be adapted to fewer or shorter sessions. It's important to note that the sessions don't follow the events in Holy Week, and for example the resurrection is discussed before the Last Supper in the order the sessions are laid out in this material.

### **Ground rules for participants:**

The first session should set out some "ground rules" for the discussions, to let people know what will happen in the discussions, and how they are expected to contribute.

- \* Everyone will contribute as much or as little of their personal stories that they are comfortable with.*
- \* Everything said during these evenings will stay within the group and be treated as confidential, whether it's someone's personal story or opinion.*
- \* People can opt out of exercises, without having to give a reason for it.*
- \* Most discussions will be "unfinished" and be interrupted after short periods of time. This is as it should be, since the aim is to start discussions, not finish them.*
- \* There are no "right" or "wrong" answers or opinions, and those who perhaps have more in-depth knowledge of the Bible should feel free to contribute to the discussions with "facts" provided they know that those comments are not more valid than other opinions expressed in the group.*

### **Leader's notes:**

The "cultural input" in this material is essential for the new understanding of the Bible stories. But rather than using the suggested input, it is of course even better if you have people from various countries and backgrounds who can contribute with their own stories!

**FEEDBACK FROM GROUPS USING THIS MATERIAL IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

# SESSION 1: EGGS & CHOCOLATES

**Material needed:** Flipchart, coloured flipchart pens, paper, copies of the handouts  
*Optional: Chocolates as prizes if you do the quiz. Coloured felt tip pens or crayons for the optional group exercises at the end. Magazines, scissors, sellotape/glue.*

## WELCOME (10 mins)

Welcome people, ask them to briefly introduce themselves to the people they're sitting next to. Then use one of the following **ICE BREAKERS**:

**CHAT:** Talk in pairs about how many ways you know how to cook and eat an egg!  
Brief feedback in the big group.

OR

**GAME:** Form small teams and use the quiz on Handout 1. The teams get 2 points if they recognize both BRAND NAME and MANUFACTURER of the chocolate logos.

*(Correct answers: A= HEROES (Cadbury) B= MARS (Nestle) C= CRÈME EGG (Cadbury)  
D= DAIM (Kraft Foods/Marabou) E= LINDOR (Lindt) F= ROSES (Cadbury) G= LION (Nestle) H= ROLO (Nestle) I= MAYA (Green & Blacks) J= DIVINE DARK (Divine))*

## STARTER EXERCISE (20 mins)

In small groups, list all Easter Symbols you can think of.

Especially those not (or only very loosely) linked to religion, like everyday things that would appear in shops and magazines.

*(For example: the Easter bunny, hot cross buns, eggs, sunrise, chocolate, daffodils, lilies...)*

Divide a flip chart paper in two columns and list the groups' answers in the first column.

Now let the groups discuss the meaning or interpretation of these symbols, and encourage them to use a simple and non-religious language. There are no right answers!

*(For example: spring, renewal, happiness, light, life...).*

List the groups' answers in the second column

### **INPUT:**

*If discussions arise about the true meaning or origin of the symbols, there is an optional Handout 6 with assorted facts which can either be used by the leader for reference, or handed out to the participants at the end of the session. Discourage long discussions at this point, the idea is to list common symbols that are around us even if we don't always reflect upon them...*



## MAIN EXERCISE (30 mins)

Now look at the Easter story in the Bible (from the Last Supper to Jesus showing himself to the disciples after the Resurrection).

Read it aloud from Handout 8 or use another abbreviated Bible version (Children's or Young People's Bible). Look at the flip chart paper afterwards. How many of the words (emotions and symbols) we associate with Easter today are actually present in the story?

Discuss briefly in small groups and then in the big group. Watch out for people making interpretations of the Bible story, i.e saying that the resurrection was a "happy" event, and assuming that people said, did or felt things that aren't mentioned in the actual text.

If you want, you can make your own notes while the story is being read out loud, and tell the group afterwards what the list potentially could be for someone hearing the story for the first time (*horror, distress, evening, ground, soldier, swords, kiss, night shirt etc*)

### **INPUT:**

*The point with the above discussion is to make people realise that most of the bright and beautiful emotions and symbols we use for the Easter season are either not present in the story at all, or the interpretation of them was determined mainly after the events happened. Think of the time it took for the disciples to realise that Jesus really had risen... The joy of the possibility of Jesus being risen must have been mixed with fear of the authorities, uncertainties of the future for the disciples etc*

But knowing what we know today, that Jesus sacrifice is a symbol of God's love and the new life we are given in Christ, let the small groups discuss what could be Easter symbols for us today, in urban, inner city-areas. Signs of hope, new life, happiness, freedom?

Use magazines or newspapers and let people cut out pictures, or draw their own pictures... Use Handout 3 so people can draw or paste their pictures onto the sheet directly.

## SUGGESTION FOR SHORT CLOSING WORSHIP (5 mins)

Put all the pictures on the floor in the middle of the room, and sit in a circle around them. Say a free prayer about how we want to see Christ not just in the traditional symbols, but in all the things around us. Use the symbols on the floor as examples.

Keep the pictures and the flipchart paper for the following sessions.



# SESSION 2: SINGING THE SPRING

**Material needed:** Flipchart, coloured flipchart pens, paper, copies of the handouts  
*Optional: A bouquet of flowers and table cross for the closing worship..*

## **WELCOME** (10 mins)

Welcome people, ask them to briefly introduce themselves to the people they're sitting next to. Then use one of the following **ICE BREAKERS**:

**CHAT:** Talk in pairs about your favourite sign of spring, and where you go to see it.

OR

**GAME:** *(If you are 10 people or more)* This is an Easter version of a children's game! Everyone sit on chairs in a circle. Divide people into 3 groups: soldiers, disciples and Pharisees, but people sit in random order in the circle. There should be one less chair than people talking part, so one person always has to stand in the middle and be "Jesus". "Jesus" will call out a group's name (for example "soldiers") and then all the soldiers need to get up and swap seats with each other. The task for "Jesus" is to quickly grab an empty chair, so a "soldier" is without a seat and has to become "Jesus" and the former "Jesus" will become a "soldier". "Jesus" can also say "Resurrection!" which means that everyone will have to swap seats!

The game can be made more difficult by adding the rule that everyone who gets an empty seat to their right needs to shuffle along to that seat, so there's a constant swapping of seats, regardless of the group name being called out.

*(No doubt this game can be as chaotic as the real Easter events were once upon a time, which is the whole point...!)*

## **STARTER EXERCISE** (20 mins)

### **Input:**

*Look at the flipchart paper from the last session, and remember the everyday symbols we associate with Easter. You can also decorate the room with the new Easter symbols people drew at the last session.*

*Now remind people that half of the world (in the southern hemisphere) actually celebrates Easter when it's autumn, and the days are getting darker and colder, and the flowers are withering rather than blooming...*

*In many countries where Christians are persecuted, it's also impossible to hold big public gatherings and proclaim the gospel in public, so their Easter might more resemble the first Easter when the disciples were in hiding and scared of the authorities, rather than the public and joyful celebrations we sometimes see in our parts of the world.*

*If we try and imagine a poor, persecuted church in the southern hemisphere celebrating Easter when winter is approaching, where the crops have died, where many people are poor – or even an inner-city church in a poor area without parks, flowers etc - which of our traditional ways of describing Easter could be slightly odd for them?*



In small groups, look at [Handout 2](#) and discuss which words / phrases in the hymns are based on our society's interpretation and tradition of Easter, rather than the actual Bible story? Are there phrases that are odd, not just for people living in other parts of the world, but for people living in suburban, inner-city areas?

Feedback in the big group.

**Input:**

*Now we have thought more about how some of the "obvious" Easter symbols get their meaning from how our country and society view certain symbols and seasons.*

*Sometimes we don't realise how things we take for granted are perceived by others. Like the fact that in some cultures flowers and candles mean "death" and would never be used as a symbol of a happy occasion. And in Japan, a theologian has described beauty as a field of grass, with plain straws side-by-side in a display of simple unity and co-operation, bending in the same direction when the wind blows. A symbol of a true "community".*

*This can be seen as the opposite of a bouquet of colourful and eye-catching flowers, where every flower competes for our attention with its beauty, but will wither and die much sooner than most other plants, and isn't very resistant to change or hard conditions...*

**MAIN EXERCISE** (30 mins)

In small groups, Look at Handout 5 and discuss your thoughts about the two definitions of "beauty" they represent. Can you think of other things or environments that aren't traditionally seen as beautiful, but have a meaning to you that makes them beautiful? What is "beauty" in a modern city?

If you want, use the thoughts and ideas from all the previous exercises, and use Handout 4 to write your own Easter Hymn! Don't try and make "poetry" just scribble words you come to think of, and see how you get on...

**SUGGESTION FOR SHORT CLOSING WORSHIP** (5 mins)

In our modern society it's easy to think that we need to be certain ways on the outside (slim, young, fashionably dressed) to be beautiful. And maybe we act like bright flowers, who try to outshine each other for the short time our beauty lasts. And maybe seeing ourselves as a part of a sometimes plain community – a field of grass – can make us see our strengths and ordinariness as a beauty in itself?

Invite everyone to take a flower from the bouquet, hold it for a while and say a silent prayer, and then lay the flower down at the foot of the cross, as a sign of that we want whatever gifts we have to be used for the good of God's kingdom.



# SESSION 3: COCONUTS & SHORTBREAD

**Material needed:** Flipchart, coloured flipchart pens, paper, copies of the handouts  
*Optional: Coconut for illustration purposes, Something edible for the closing worship. Several bibles (if you do the game)*

## WELCOME (10 mins)

Welcome people, ask them to briefly introduce themselves to the people they're sitting next to. Then use one of the following **ICE BREAKERS**:

**CHAT:** What is your favourite meal to serve friends? How long does it take you to cook it?

OR

**GAME:** In small groups, use Handout 7 and see if you can 'decipher' the ingredients for the Biblical Cake! Use several Bibles per group to save time.

### **INPUT:**

*Look back at the last session and remind people of how using agricultural symbols from the spring season isn't necessarily to talk about the true meaning of Easter. We can use this way of thinking when we look at other parts of the Easter story too. When Jesus held the Last Supper, he used bread and wine. These are mentioned a lot in the Bible, so we can assume it was staple food at the time, for both rich and poor. Bread and wine is common in our society too, but maybe not as much as during Jesus' time....*

## MAIN DISCUSSION part 1 (20 mins)

In groups, try and imagine what Jesus would have used if the Last Supper had taken place today, in Glasgow? What is the kind of simple staple-food that is accessible and affordable and from our own culture? Brief feedback in the big group. Humorous suggestions should be encouraged!

### **Input:**

*On some Caribbean islands, bread is very expensive and a product you don't buy often since bread has to be bought and transported from far away and spoils quickly in the heat. Wine is also a luxury and not readily available or used. The local churches on these islands once realised that the story of the Last Supper got a different meaning in their culture, since Jesus was portrayed as someone who used very exclusive and expensive items to share with the disciples – not a meal ordinary people could easily copy. So the local churches, in their local Bible translations, replaced the words "bread and wine" with "coconut" which was the local staple food. "Eat this coconut, this is my body..."*

*This symbol however gave the story added dimensions, since a coconut has both the "bread" (coconut flesh) and the "wine" (coconut milk) in the same object. And coconuts lasts a long time, are cheap to buy for all, are brown and plain on the outside but has goodness inside etc... Maybe a symbol like that, which is contemporary and understandable can give a new meaning to the Bible story...*



## MAIN DISCUSSION part 2 (15 mins)

If we assume that bread and wine are still contemporary symbols to use in Holy Communion – does it make a difference (in how we perceive the act) what kind of bread and wine we use? Or how we serve it?

Discuss if you've ever taken communion when...

- a) ...you received homemade bread / diced white sliced / communion wafers or broken a piece of a homemade loaf? Is there a difference?
- b) ...were offered organic / fair trade wine?
- c) ...you were sitting around a table, walking up to a distribution point, or kneeling around the altar? Is there a difference?
- d) ...music was played, or people were singing while accepting the bread and wine?
- e) ...the cup used was really beautiful, locally made or had another personal significance to you?

Discuss if any of these things make a difference for how people see the meaning of Holy Communion? Brief feedback in the big group.

**INPUT:**

*Even if God's presence and the religious symbolism is the same regardless of the details of how we celebrate Holy Communion, it's a part of human nature to feel a stronger connection to the original story if we can use our own experiences of eating together with others. and perhaps also use more than one sense.*

*Read Luke 24:13-48, the aftermath of the Resurrection, and see how Jesus meets the disciples after the Resurrection. Jesus asked Thomas to touch him when he doubted, and not just "believe". Jesus broke bread with the disciples on the way to Emmaus. Faith isn't only what we think or feel, it has to be nurtured by what we experience around us, whether it's in a church service, in the company of other Christians or in engaging in God's world. So the "good news" of Easter is not only remembering events a long time ago, but to see how hopeful and life-affirming events are present in our lives, churches and communities today.*

**SUGGESTION FOR SHORT CLOSING WORSHIP** (5 mins)

Use something really Scottish, like pieces of shortbread or Tunnock's wafers, and invite people to share one with their neighbour, and also share one positive thing that these sessions have made them think of.

Say a short prayer in gratitude for the time you've spent together, and the topics you have discussed.

*Tell people this sharing is not to imitate Holy Communion, but to simply remind us of the emphasis Jesus put on sharing everyday-meals with people, and to gather in good company!*



# CHOCOLATE QUIZ –

how many of these brands do you recognize?

A.



B.



C.



D.



F.



G.



H.



I.



J.



## Easter Hymn extracts

Easter flowers are blooming bright,  
Easter skies pour radiant light,  
Christ our Lord is risen in might,  
Glory in the highest!

Hark! the springtide breezes pass the news along,  
Jesus Christ has risen, fill the world with song;

He lives! His presence hath not ceased,  
Though foes and fears be rife;  
And thus we hail in Easter's feast  
A world renewed to life!

Up He sprang at Easter, like the risen grain,  
He that for three days in the grave had lain;  
Up from the dead my risen Lord is seen:  
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.

Easter buds will soon be flowers,  
Fragrant and gay;  
Winter's snows give place to showers,  
And night to day;  
Hope and joy come again,  
Life and light forever reign;  
Yea! Christ the Lord is risen, is risen!

The earth was filled with peace and light,  
When Christ arose;  
The heavens trembled at the sight,  
When Christ arose;



**JESUS IS  
RISEN!**

# Make your own Easter Hymn!

1.

On this, a ..... morning, an empty tomb has shown  
(2)

that Jesus Christ is risen, so let it now be known,

the world is free of ....., Christ took our ..... away.

(2)

(1)

We have new hope of ..... this ..... Easter Day.  
(2) (2)

2.

In cities full of ....., in lives where ..... is/are rare  
(2) (1)

Christ shows us how to ....., to ..... and to care.  
(2) (2)

So maybe Easter tells us, that .....can grow anew,  
(1)

that .....is/are resurrected, and meant for me and you!  
(1)

*This is a fun exercise, and not meant to be poetry. The numbers under the lines are the ideal number of syllables for a word, if you want to be able to sing the hymn. You can sing it to the tune **Passion Chorale**, which you can find in most hymn books. But feel free to ignore that aspect, and use any word – long or short – that comes to mind!*



UPSIDE DOWN EASTER: HANDOUT 5

**What is beauty?**



UPSIDE-DOWN EASTER: HANDOUT 6

## **EASTER SYMBOLS**

– a reference guide (information taken from various sources on the internet).

**BASKET:** The tradition was brought to North American shores by German families in the 1700s. In place of baskets, children set out their caps or bonnets, filled with straw, and found coloured, hard-cooked eggs nestled inside them in the morning. By the 1800s, candy was commonly tucked into the baskets, as well.

**BONFIRE:** The Celts practiced a religion called Druidism. They believed in good and evil spirits. It was believed that evil spirits captured the sun god and that was why there was winter. Every beginning of Spring, they would lit up huge bonfires to frighten away the evil spirits into releasing the sun. The lighting of bonfires are still a part of Easter celebrations in some countries today such as in Germany and Belgium. Today, bonfires represent the light coming to the world through Christ

**BONNET:** Hats are usually worn during events like Easter Parade and church services. If we want to delve into the history of Easter bonnet then we have to talk a bit about the history of Easter Parade. The Easter Parade had its beginning in New York in 1870s. Originally the church goers would carry Easter flowers from St. Thomas Church to St. Luke's Church. The social elite would attend services and parade down to give onlookers - and each other - a chance to show off their new Easter hats and bonnets.

After the Civil War, mothers and daughters who had donned the dark colours of mourning for such a long time began wearing colourful flowered hats and elaborate corsages as part of the Easter celebration. Their hats were adorned with blooming and fresh flowers. If the flowers were not blooming they would make them from paper, ribbon, feathers or sea shells.

**BREAD:** The Russian Easter bread (paska) is made of flour, cottage cheese, sugar, raisins, eggs, and milk. It is put in a mold and shaped in firm, square pieces, about eight inches high, with a cross on each side, and the letters J. C. (Jesus Christ) imprinted in relief. In Germany and Austria the Easter bread is made with milk, eggs, and raisins, and baked in oblong loaves of twisted or braided strands (Osterstollen). Another kind of Austrian Easter bread is the Osterlaib (Easter loaf), a large, flat round loaf marked with the cross or an image of the lamb. In some parts of Ireland people eat on Easter Sunday "Golden bread" which is very similar to our French toast.

**BUNNY:** The first recorded references to the Easter Bunny (as "Oschter Haws") are generally agreed to have come from Germany in the 1500s. In ancient times the rabbit was a symbol of fertility, equated with springtime and renewal of life, and the hare was also associated with the moon, whose cycles determine the precise date of Easter each year.

**BUTTERFLY:** In some countries "Easter Jesus" is the nickname of the Cleopatra butterfly which appears during the Easter season. Long before the time of Christ, Egyptians saw a similarity between the cloth wrappings of their mummies and the butterfly's chrysalis. For these early people and the Greeks, who placed golden butterflies in their tombs, this insect was a symbol of resurrection, new life, and immortality. In other traditions, the butterfly was a reminder of reincarnation.

**CANDLE:** The candle is used as a symbol of the light of Christ.

**CHICKEN:** The mother hen's tireless and patient care for her brood makes her symbolic of the protective mother. Her fragile, bouncing chicks bring to mind the play of defenseless toddlers ever careless, ever curious, ever innocently rushing into peril. The Easter Chick represents the frailty of human existence and our dependence on God's watchful care and mercies.

**CHOCOLATE:** In the early 1800's the first chocolate Easter egg appeared in Germany and France. In 1873 in the UK, JS Fry (now owned by Cadbury) introduced its first Easter eggs in the market. These delicious treats were made of dark chocolate and filled with sweets which soon spread to the rest of Europe and beyond. By the 1960s, the chocolate egg had become the preferred Easter gift.

**EGGS:** The origin of the Easter egg is based on the fertility lore of the Indo-European races. To our pre-Christian ancestors it was a most startling event to see a new and live creature emerge from a seemingly dead object. The egg to them became a symbol of spring. Long ago in Persia people used to present each other with eggs at the spring equinox, which for them also marked the beginning of a new year.

**FIREWORKS:** These are believed to frighten away evil spirits. They also show that out of darkness comes light.

**FLOWERS:** In ancient Rome, people thought a goddess Flora made the flowers bloom. They celebrated the Festival of Floralia by having big parades and carried garlands of blossoms through the streets to honour her every Spring. In ancient Greek, people believed that the goddess Demeter's daughter was kidnapped while picking the flower narcissus. She was allowed to visit her mother only during spring and summer. The Greeks believed that this made Demeter really happy and made the flowers bloom. They thought that winter is caused by her sadness when her daughter went away again. This flower thus holds a special meaning to the Greeks. The narcissus is also a favourite Easter flower in many parts of the world because of its bright and fragrant blossoms.

**HOT CROSS BUNS:** now eaten throughout the Easter season, were first baked in England to be served on Good Friday. The buns have a cross of icing on the top. Some people have suggested the connection to the ancient sacramental cakes.

**LAMB:** The lamb is by far the most significant of the Easter symbols. The Easter lamb, representing Christ, with the flag of victory, may be seen in pictures and images in the homes of every central and eastern European family. The ancient tradition of the Pasch lamb also inspired among the Christians the use of lamb meat as a popular food at Easter time, and at the present time it is eaten as the main meal on Easter Sunday in many parts of eastern Europe. In past centuries it was considered a lucky omen to meet a lamb, especially at Easter time. It was a popular superstition that the devil, who could take the form of all other animals, was never allowed to appear in the shape of a lamb because of its religious symbolism.

**LILY:** The lily's scepter or trumpet shape makes it a symbol of royalty. Its white colour indicates purity, innocence, hope, and virtue. The Lily of the Valley is one of the first flowers to bloom in the spring. Its fresh appearance after a long winter and its purity make it a symbol of both Christ and the Virgin Mary. This flower is associated with the Resurrection because its bulb is buried in the ground like a human corpse, and yet from this apparent death a beautiful flower arises.

**NEW CLOTHES:** Wearing new clothes for Easter is a custom common among many Christians. It may have originated from the old practice of having newly baptized Christians wear new white clothes for the Easter celebration. Like many other Easter symbols, the new clothes represent the new life offered through the death and Resurrection of Jesus.

**PAINTING EGGS:** In most countries the eggs are stained in plain vegetable dye colours. Among the Chaldeans, Syrians, and Greeks, the faithful present each other with crimson eggs in honour of the blood of Christ. In parts of Germany and Austria, green eggs alone are used on Maundy Thursday, but various colors are the vogue at Easter. Some Slavic peoples make special patterns of gold and silver. In Austria artists design striking patterns by fastening ferns and tiny plants around the eggs, which show a white pattern after the eggs are boiled. The Poles and Ukrainians decorate eggs with plain colours or simple designs and call them krasanki.

In Christian times the egg had bestowed upon it a religious interpretation, becoming a symbol of the rock tomb out of which Christ emerged to the new life of His Resurrection. There was in addition a very practical reason for making the egg a special sign of Easter joy since it used to be one of the foods that was forbidden in Lent. The faithful from early times painted Easter eggs in gay colours, had them blessed, ate them, and gave them to friends as Easter gifts.

**PALMS:** Long before the advent of Christianity, the palm tree and its leaves were seen as symbols of resurrection, immortality, and rebirth along with other resurrection symbols such as the lion and the phoenix. It is with these meanings that ancient Egyptians placed palm fronds on their coffins and Christian artists placed palm leaves in the hands of martyrs. Today the palms waved in Palm Sunday celebrations not only welcome Christ but also the great and glorious resurrection.

**PORK:** The pig offers its meat as a traditional Easter dish. This animal has always been a symbol of good luck and prosperity among the Indo-Europeans. Many traces of this ancient symbolism are still alive in our time. In some German popular expressions the word "pig" is synonymous with "good luck" (Schwein haben). Savings boxes for children in the figure of a pig (piggy banks) carry out the ancient symbolism of good luck and prosperity.

**PRETZELS:**

They were originally a Lenten food. Their twisted shape suggested arms crossed in prayer.

**ROBIN REDBREAST:** When God created the robin redbreast, He told the bird he must remain plain and grey until he earned his red badge of courage. At

Golgotha, the robin, seeking to relieve the sufferings of the Saviour, overcame his fear of the mocking crowd, flew to Christ and pulled a thorn out of his head. The blood from the thorn's wound dripped on to the robin's breast and has caused it to be red ever since.

**ROOSTER:** In many cultures, the rooster's habit of crowing at the dawning of each new morning made it a symbol of the daily victory of light over darkness and the triumph of good over evil. This habit, along with its fiery comb, made the rooster the symbol of fire; the sun; and Christ, the light of the world, who announces an end to spiritual darkness and despair. In the Far East, the rooster was painted on the doors of houses to drive off evil spirits.

**SUNRISE:** Sunrise services are a tradition in parts of Europe and America, but not in the United Kingdom as a whole. In the North of Scotland it was supposed that the sun would dance on Easter morn for joy that the savior was risen

**SWALLOW:** Flew around the cross chirping "Svale! Svale!" which is Scandinavian for "Cheer up! Cheer up!" Since this bird hibernates in the mud during the winter, his awakening in the spring is a symbol of the resurrection.

**WATER:** Pagan customs associated water with spring. It precedes the idea of Holy Water and can be traced back to the Druids. Our ancestors fetched water from a spring, a brook or a river before sunup on Easter morning. They fetched enough water to last throughout the year. It was believed that this water had properties that prevented it from tainting, along with healing and protective powers. Everyone drank a glass of Easter Water during the Easter meal to be strong and protected all year round. Bathing can also be seen as an Easter tradition, as a cleansing ritual, and a symbol for new life.



UPSIDE-DOWN EASTER: HANDOUT 7

## A Biblical Cake

### Ingredients

- 1/2 lb of Judges Chapter 5 Verse 25 .....
- 1/2 lb of Jeremiah Chapter 6 Verse 20 .....
- 1 Table spoon of Samuel 1 Chapter 14 Verse 25 .....
- 3 from Jeremiah Chapter 17 Verse 11 .....
- 1/2 lb of Samuel 1 Chapter 30 Verse 12 .....
- 1/2 lb of Naomi Chapter 3 Verse 12 .....
- 2 oz of Numbers Chapter 17 Verse 8 .....
- 1 lb of Kings 1 Chapter 4 Verse 22 .....
- Season to taste with Chronicles 2 Chapter 9 Verse 9 .....
- A Pinch of Leviticus Chapter 2 Verse 13 .....
- 1/2 Tea spoon of Amos Chapter 4 Verse 5 .....
- 3 Table spoons of Judges Chapter 4 Verse 19 .....

**Method**

Beat 1, 2 , 3 to a cream, add 4 (one at a time). Add 5, 6, 7, and beat again  
 Add 8, 9, 10 and 11 and after mixing them in follow Solomon’s advice for a good  
 boy....

...Proverbs Chapter 23 Verse 14! .....



**UPSIDE-DOWN EASTER: HANDOUT 8**

*(This is the Easter story taken from an online version of the Living Testament, slightly shortened).*

**THE EASTER STORY**

**– FROM THE LAST SUPPER TO JESUS MEETING THE DISCIPLES AFTER THE RESURRECTION**

The disciples prepared the Passover supper as Jesus had instructed them. In the evening Jesus arrived with the twelve disciples. As they were sitting around the table eating, Jesus said,

*"The truth is, one of you will betray Me, one of you who is here eating with Me."*

Greatly distressed, one by one they began to ask Him, "I'm not the one, am I?" He replied,

*"It is one of you twelve, one who is eating with Me now. For I, the Son of Man, must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for My betrayer. Far better for him if he had never been born!"*

As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, *"Take it, for this is My body."*

And He took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives. And they came to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said: *"Sit here while I go and pray."*

He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be filled with horror and deep distress. He told them:

*"My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with Me."*

He went on a little farther and fell face down on the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting Him might pass him by. Then He returned and found the disciples asleep. *"Simon!"* He said to Peter. *"Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with Me even one hour?"*

Then Jesus left them again and prayed, repeating His pleadings.

Again He returned to them and found them sleeping, for they just couldn't keep their eyes open. And they didn't know what to say.

Then Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a mob that was armed with swords and clubs. As soon as they arrived, Judas walked up to Jesus.

*"Teacher!"* he exclaimed, and gave Him the kiss, the signal he had arranged with the soldiers. They then grabbed Jesus and arrested him.

Meanwhile, all His disciples deserted Him and ran away.

There was a young man following along behind, clothed only in a linen nightshirt. When the mob tried to grab him, they tore off his clothes, but he escaped and ran away naked.

Jesus was then taken to Pilate.

Pilate, anxious to please the crowd, ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip then turned Him over to the Roman soldiers to crucify Him.



A man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the country just then, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross.

And they brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha (which means Skull Hill).

It was nine o'clock in the morning when the crucifixion took place.

Two criminals were crucified with Him, their crosses on either side of His.

And the people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery.

*"Ha! Look at you now!" they yelled at Him. "You can destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days, can you? Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!"*

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Then, at that time Jesus called out with a loud voice, *'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthan?'* which means, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" .Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed His last. And the curtain in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

Some women were there, watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James the younger and of Joseph) and Salome. This all happened on Friday, the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath.

As evening approached, an honoured member of the high council, Joseph from Arimathea went to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body. Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. Joseph then bought a long sheet of linen cloth, and taking Jesus' body down from the cross, he wrapped it in the cloth and laid it in a tomb that had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone in front of the entrance.

The next evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James went out and purchased burial spices to put on Jesus' body. Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they came to the tomb.

When they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone - a very large one - had already been rolled aside. So they entered the tomb, and there on the right sat a young man clothed in a white robe.

The women were startled, but the angel said, *"Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead!"*

The women fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered, saying nothing to anyone because they were too frightened to talk.

It was early on Sunday morning when Jesus rose from the dead. Mary Magdalene went and found the disciples, who were grieving and weeping. But when she told them that Jesus was alive and she had seen Him, they didn't believe her.

Afterward He appeared to two who were walking from Jerusalem into the country, but they didn't recognize Him at first because He had changed His appearance. When they realized who He was, they rushed back to tell the others, but no one believed them.

Still later He appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their unbelief - their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, He was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honour at God's right hand. And the disciples went everywhere and preached.

