

**Focus:** Spread Peace and the Good News of Jesus

**Materials:**

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth  
CD-Easter Season-Cycle C  
Bible: Children's Everyday Bible  
Optional CD for Activity 1: America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs  
Book: God Calls Samuel -Big Book

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

*Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about last week was Easter Sunday. Did you have a party? Easter is the most holy and important celebration in our church. Jesus died, but through the power of God, he lives again with God in Heaven.*

*In today's Gospel, we will hear about a visit Jesus made to his disciples and his blessing to them and each of us.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

*Say: Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Let us pray. God of Love, we believe and we trust in you.*

*Help us to walk in the light of faith. In the name of your son, the Risen Lord, we pray.*

*Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*Our Easter celebration is more than 1 day. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus for 7 weeks! We have a couple of special songs for the Easter season. This is the first one.--Join in the Dance, track: 1, from Easter Season Cycle C*

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.

*Join in the dance of the earth's jubilation! This is the feast of the love of God.*

*Shout from the heights to the ends of creation: Jesus the Savior is risen from the grave!*

*1. Wake, O people; sleep no longer, greet the breaking day!*

*Christ, Redeemer, Lamb and Lion, turns the night away!*

*2. All creation, like a mother, labors to give birth.*

*Soon the pain will be forgotten, joy for all the earth!*

*3. Now our shame becomes our glory on this holy tree.*

*Now the reign of death is ended; now we are set free!*

**Memory Verse**

*Say: Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Peace be with you.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *This verse is what Jesus would say when he greeted people. He wanted everyone to know that God will take care of them, if we open our hearts to him and love him and obey his teachings. He doesn't want us to worry or be afraid. God wishes us peace.*

**Sing Alleluia for Easter Season:**

*"Hallelu, Hallelu" Track 2 on CD Labeled EASTER SEASON CYCLE C,*

Say:

We haven't been able to sing Alleluia during Lent, but now it is Easter and we celebrate that Jesus is Risen!

*Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah,  
Praise ye the Lord!  
Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah,  
Praise ye the Lord!  
Praise ye the Lord, Hallelujah, repeat 2 times  
Praise ye the Lord!*

*Repeat three times*

**Gospel Story**

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of John.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

**Read:** Children's Everyday Bible, pp. 313-314, *Jesus Appears to the Disciples and Thomas Stops Doubting*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

**Discussion Starters:**

- *Why are the disciples afraid?*
- *How does Jesus greet his friends?*
- *Why does Thomas doubt Jesus?*
- *What helps Thomas to believe in Jesus?*
- *What does it mean to live in peace?*
- *Where is peace needed most in the world today?*
- *How can people bring the gift of peace to others?*

**Reflection on Reading:**

*In today's gospel the Risen Lord appears to his followers. They are gathered behind locked doors, afraid. Jesus greets his friends by saying, "Peace be with you." The peace of the Holy Spirit is given to the disciples and they are blessed with the power to forgive sins.*

*Jesus' greeting, "peace be with you," calms the fears of the disciples. They are given the courage to go out and be peacemakers in the world. Followers of Jesus today are still given the same task—to spread forgiveness and peace throughout the world.*

## Gospel Activity

### Activity 1:

#### **Spreading Peace**

Have the children stand in a circle. Start with one child and ask him/her to pick one person on either side of them to shake hands with saying, "peace be with you." In turn, the chosen child will pick another child and so on until everyone has had a chance. You might want to play some music, while the children are spreading peace. (Suggestion: "I've Got Peace Like A River", track 4, America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs.)

### Activity 2:

God has asked his people to spread peace since creation began. There is a story in the Old Testament of the Bible, the stories from before Jesus came. This is the story of a little boy named Samuel, let's listen to what happens to him.

**Read book:** The Big Book-God Calls Eli

After the story is done. Ask the children what they think God told Samuel to do.

God told Samuel that he had a great job to do, Samuel would become a great king of God's people and rule with peace and wisdom.

What are some things that God would tell Samuel to tell the people of Israel to do to live in peace and love?

How do we know if God is asking us to do something? Sometimes when we pray God will ask us to remember someone who is having a hard time and pray for them. Sometimes we hear a story about Jesus and it reminds us of something that is happening in our lives right now. Forgiving others, settle an argument, share your toys with someone who you didn't share with before, etc.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

## Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, made you, loves you and calls you by name?*

*Do you believe in Jesus, the Son of God, who has risen and lives with us?*

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who brings us all together in peace and unity?*

## Sending Forth

Say: *Spread God's peace to everyone you meet, especially when we go back to church. Spreading peace helps others believe the miraculous story of the Jesus.*

## Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "Rejoice in the Lord" track 3 from Easter Season Cycle C while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.