

Grade 1—Unit 8

Jesus Has Risen!

Preparations for the Easter season begin as students learn about Lent. The Easter study continues with Jesus' triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem, his death, and resurrection.

LESSONS

1. Jesus Forgives Us
2. People Praise Jesus
3. Jesus Dies
4. Jesus is Alive
5. Jesus' Life

Unit 8: Jesus Has Risen!

Unit Information

SUMMARY

This unit provides an overview of the Easter season, beginning with Lent and ending with Jesus' resurrection.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Psalm 147:1 (main memory verse)

Ecclesiastes 3:4*

Matthew 6:9-13 (memory verse)

Matthew 21:1-11; 27:27-28:16

Mark 11:1-11; 15:1-16:8

Mark 11:25*

Luke 19:29-44*; 23:1-24:12*

John 12:12-19; 19:1-20:18

2 Corinthians 5:15 (memory verse)

2 Corinthians 5:17

**texts used in lessons*

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Lent: A Time of Penitence

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and continues for 40 days (plus six Sundays) before Easter. This tradition was started by the early church as a time for penitence, a time to identify with the death of Jesus and focus on our need for forgiveness. The 40 days symbolize the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness after his baptism and prior to beginning his ministry.

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

When Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, he made a dramatic statement. The people who were watching understood the symbolism. Kings rode donkeys when coming on peaceful missions. Those who witnessed Jesus riding a donkey treated him like a king. They lined the road with branches and threw down their coats.

By riding a donkey, Jesus was also fulfilling prophecy: "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9).

But not everyone was pleased with Jesus. The Pharisees who told Jesus to keep his disciples quiet probably didn't join the throngs in shouting Hosanna. Even in this account of joyful acclaim, the threat of impending doom is present. But Jesus told the Pharisees that if his followers kept quiet, even the stones would cry out. Jesus knew that love would triumph over evil.

Darkness Covered the World

Jesus' death was the result of love. Jesus made choices that led to his death. He did not run when the authorities came to the garden of Gethsemene. He did not justify his actions before Pilate or the leaders of the Sanhedrin.

Jesus' death reminds us that we make choices, and not all of our choices will lead to happy endings. Jesus chose to do what God wanted him to do. He knew it would not be easy.

The tomb where Jesus was taken after his death was different from gravesites of today. Tombs were either caves or openings dug into stone cliffs. Often, heavy stone doors were rolled in a gutter to close the openings of a tomb. No wonder Mary was surprised, when she arrived, to find the stone rolled away from the entrance!

Jesus Is Risen!

Though gospel accounts of the resurrection vary, they share three common elements: the empty tomb, the announcement of the resurrection to women, and the disciples meeting with Jesus. It is particularly significant that all of the accounts mention women. Women were not valued members of Jewish society. Jesus gave women dignity and a new sense of value. It is no wonder they mourned his death and risked going to the tomb, even though it was guarded by Roman soldiers.

The belief in the resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith. Jesus touched people and changed their lives—not only with the way he lived, but with his death and resurrection. We no longer need to fear death.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Lent is a time to think about our wrong choices and to identify with Jesus' suffering.
- Jesus died because he loves us.
- Jesus rose from the dead.
- Easter is a time to celebrate new life.

WORSHIP

1. Use the Lenten candle ring in Lesson 1 as a class worship experience.
2. Lesson 2 provides an opportunity to praise Jesus through making noise. Extend this into a worship experience, with students identifying many different ways in which we can praise Jesus. Do some of the suggestions.

BULLETIN BOARD IDEAS

Lesson 2, Extend the Lesson, includes instructions for glitter praises that can be posted on the bulletin board.

MEMORY PASSAGES

This unit offers the following verses for students to memorize. You may copy and clip the following verses for students to take home.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.
Matthew 6:9-13

And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves
but for him who died for them and was raised again.
2 Corinthians 5:15

Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God!
How pleasant and fitting to praise him!
Psalm 147:1

MEMORY VERSE CONNECTIONS

Make this memory verse connection during Worship #2 and Lesson 2, steps 5-7:

Read Psalm 147:1, "Praise the Lord! How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting."

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

Observing students and their interactions is one of the best ways to discover if students are practicing the lessons. Look to see if they cooperate with each other, if they use caring words, and if they practice peacemaking skills.

A quiz is also included, at the end of the unit.

Jesus Has Risen!

LESSON 1: JESUS FORGIVES US

Objective

Students will understand that Jesus forgives us when we make wrong choices.

Key Concepts

- Jesus forgives.
- Lent is a special time to think about Jesus' forgiveness.
- Lent is a special time to think about how we live.

Text: Mark 11:25

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- Calendar
- Ingredients for pax cakes (see list on p. 218)
- Mixing bowls, measuring cups, utensils
- Napkins
- Electric skillet
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: 1 large candle (Christ candle), 6 smaller candles (may be battery-operated)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: colored-paper footprints

Teacher Preparation

- Gather supplies needed for making pax cakes in class. Cover a table with newspapers or a plastic cloth, to protect the surface. If you prefer, prepare the cakes ahead of time.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Lent is a special time. Bring out the calendar and point out the date for Easter. Count back 40 days. Explain to the children that the 40 days from that date until Easter day are called Lent. Lent is a time when many Christians think about Jesus' life and how he suffered and died for us. On Easter day, we celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead. But during Lent, it is time to think about our own lives and things we have done that we are sorry for.

Allow a few moments of silence, asking the children to reflect on things they have done that might make them, or others, sad. Then explain that Lent is a time when we think about the forgiveness that Jesus offers. It is also a time when we might ask for forgiveness from someone.

LESSON STEPS

1. Introduce pax cakes. Explain to the students that *pax* is Latin for "peace." When we think about forgiveness, it helps us feel more peaceful. A long time ago, in England, people began to remember Lent by having a "pax cake" service. When people

ate pax cakes together, they forgave each other for any quarreling they might have done in the past year. It helped everyone to feel at peace with each other.

2. Make pax cakes. Gather children around a table to make pax cakes, following the recipe below. Invite them to add ingredients and help mix the batter. (Or do this lesson step ahead of time.)

Pax Cakes

Beat one egg. Add and beat until smooth:

1 cup sour milk or buttermilk
2 tablespoons salad oil
½ cup whole wheat flour
¼ cup wheat germ
¼ cup white flour
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon soda
½ salt

Grease heated skillet or griddle. (Electric skillets work well in classroom settings.) Pour batter from pitcher onto hot griddle in silver-dollar-sized dollops. Turn pax cakes when bubbles show. Fry on second side until brown. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or cinnamon/sugar mixture.

Makes 55-60 pax cakes.

Variation: Use 1 cup white flour, instead of combining whole wheat flour, wheat germ, and white flour.

3. Have a pax cake service. Distribute cakes so that each student has four. Then do the following steps:

(Distribute napkins and serve the first pax cake.)

Say, “As you are eating this first pax cake, think of the members of your family. Have you quarreled with your mother, your father, your brothers, or sisters? Forgive and forget these quarrels as you eat, because they have been forgiven.” *(Eat in silence.)*

(Serve the second pax cake.)

“As you eat this second pax cake, think about your friends. Have you quarreled with any friends in school, at church, or at home? Forgive and forget these quarrels as you eat, because they have been forgiven.” *(Eat in silence.)*

(Serve the third pax cake.)

“As you eat the third pax cake, think about the times you have been thoughtless and cruel to helpless creatures—wild animals, birds, or pets that depend on you for food and comfort. Ask God to forgive you. Now forget these cruelties as you eat, because they have been forgiven.” *(Eat in silence.)*

(Serve the fourth pax cake.)

“As you eat the last pax cake, think about other persons you may have quarreled with this past year: teachers, neighbors, brothers or sisters, coaches.

Forgive and forget these quarrels as you eat, because they have been forgiven.”
(*Eat in silence.*)

“Listen to what Jesus said: ‘And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.’ (Mark 11:25). God continues to love us, even when we are weak and selfish.”

(*Close by saying the Lord’s Prayer together.*)

EXTEND THE LESSON

(*These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30 minutes.*)

• **Introduce a Lenten candle ring**, made by arranging six smaller candles around a large candle. On the first day, six candles will be lighted before beginning the session, and one will be extinguished. The next day, five candles will be lighted before beginning, and one more will be extinguished, etc. Light only the Christ candle on the day you talk about the resurrection.

Day One (6 candles lit): When we are unkind to each other and hate each other, the world becomes a darker place. (*Extinguish one candle.*) Jesus taught us to love each other.

Day Two (5 candles lit): When we are “grabby” and want everything for ourselves, the world becomes a darker place. (*Extinguish one candle.*) Jesus taught us to share with others.

Day Three (4 candles lit): When we are afraid, the world seems dark and frightening. (*Extinguish one candle.*) Jesus is the light of the world.

Day Four (3 candles lit): When we are jealous of others, the world becomes a darker place. (*Extinguish one candle.*) Jesus taught us to look out for the good of others.

Day Five (2 candles lit): When we don’t tell the truth, the world becomes a darker place. (*Extinguish one candle.*) Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

Day Six (1 candle lit): Because of people’s hatred, selfishness, fear, jealousy, and lying, Jesus died on the cross. (*Extinguish last candle.*) To Jesus’ friends, the world seemed like a very dark place.

Day Seven: Jesus did not stay dead. On Easter, he was raised from the dead. Because he loved people enough to suffer and die, we too can be free. We are forgiven for the bad we have done. We can forgive others. The large center candle is the Christ candle. (*Light center candle.*)

• **Make Footsteps to Easter.** For each school day during Lent, place one footprint in the room, creating a path. Think together of something to write on each footprint that gives us an idea of how to live like Jesus taught us, making right choices.

Jesus Has Risen!

LESSON 2: PEOPLE PRAISE JESUS

Objective

Students will understand that everyone can praise Jesus.

Key Concepts

- People gathered to praise Jesus as he rode along the street.
- Jesus liked to be praised.
- We can praise Jesus today.

Text: Luke 19:28-40

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- Simple instruments (enough for one for each student): kazoos, tamborines, cymbals, rattles, or anything else that makes noise (*These will be used again in Lesson 4.*)
- For Extend the Lesson: construction paper, glitter, glue

Teacher Preparation

- Practice reading or telling the Bible story with expression.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Praising others. Have the students sit in a circle. Then move around the circle, telling each child something that they do well, and praising them for it.

After this activity, explain that it is good to let others know when we appreciate them. Ask if the children can think of people outside of the classroom that they appreciate. How can they tell these people that they appreciate them? (*Invite ideas.*) Add that when we let others know they are appreciated, we can call it *praising* them. Encourage the students to find people to praise today.

LESSON STEPS

1. Praising Jesus. Ask the students to think back over the life of Jesus that you talked about in the last unit. What are things we appreciate about Jesus' life? What can we praise him for? (*Children may mention the miracles of healing or that Jesus is light. Some might mention things that were not included in the lessons. Follow these responses with discussion, for those who might not be familiar with the stories.*)

2. Read the Bible story. Introduce the story by telling the children that in Jesus' time, people wanted to praise him, too. So one day, when Jesus was riding into town, people lined the streets and praised him! Ask the students to listen for the different ways people praised Jesus.

Read or tell the story from Luke 19:28-40, then reread verse 38. Ask the students

to tell in what different ways people praised Jesus. *(They might repeat the verse, note that coats were placed on the ground, or remember another version of the story when palm branches waved.)*

3. Respond to the Bible story. Invite the students to think of things for which they might praise Jesus. List their ideas on the board.

Tell the children that now you are going to praise Jesus by making noise! Hand out an instrument to each student, and ask them to think about the things listed on the board as they make noise. March around the room, praising Jesus with noise.

After collecting the instruments, remind the students that Jesus has done many wonderful things. We can praise him at any time, even in silence.

4. Remind the students to think of someone they can praise throughout the day.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30 minutes.)

- **Make glitter praises.** Invite students to think of a one-word praise for Jesus. Write responses on the board, so the children have the correct spelling. Have them write a word in glue on construction paper, then sprinkle glitter on the glue. When dry, hang the praise words on the bulletin board.
- **Create praise songs,** using familiar tunes. Students may play their instruments along with the singing.

Jesus Has Risen!

LESSON 3: JESUS DIES

Objective

Students will learn that Jesus died.

Key Concepts

- Jesus died because he made some people angry.
- Jesus' disciples were sad that he died.
- Sometimes we are sad, too.

Text: Luke 23:6-56; Ecclesiastes 3:4

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- For making crosses: 2 craft sticks per student, glue
- For Extend the Lesson: paper, crayons, markers, posterboard

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story from Luke 23:6-56 in your own words, or using the paraphrase from Lesson Step 2.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Things change for Jesus. Ask the students to remember why they praised Jesus last time. What things were written on the board? If you did the “glitter praise” activity in Extend the Lesson, what are the words written in glitter?

Ask if the children remember how people praised Jesus as he rode into town. (*People placed their coats on the ground and they shouted out words of praise.*) Add that only a week after the people shouted praises to Jesus, Jesus died.

LESSON STEPS

1. Some people didn't like Jesus. Tell the students that even though many people praised Jesus, and we want to praise him today, there were people who did not want to praise Jesus. Many religious leaders did not like Jesus, because they thought he was trying to make trouble. In fact, some of the leaders were so jealous of Jesus that they wanted to get rid of him!

2. Tell the Bible story. Opening your Bible to Luke 23:6-56, tell the story in your own words, or use the following:

Some people didn't like Jesus, especially some government and religious leaders. They thought Jesus was trying to make people go against them, by the things he said and did. They wanted Jesus to be out of their lives.

One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, made a deal with the leaders. He said he would take the leaders to Jesus, and then they could arrest him. And that's what he did.

After Jesus was arrested, people asked him questions about things he had done. Some people accused him of bad things, but Jesus didn't say anything. They accused him of other things, like pretending to be the Son of God. They knew it would be wrong to pretend to be the Son of God, but they didn't realize that Jesus really *was* the Son of God! The leaders decided that Jesus should be put to death. First, though, they needed permission from Pilate, the governor. They told Pilate that Jesus said he was King of the Jews.

Pilate asked Jesus questions, but he didn't find anything wrong with him. He said that Jesus didn't deserve to die.

The people got angry. They shouted that Jesus *must* die! Pilate was afraid that a fight would break out, so he finally said the people could do with Jesus whatever they wished.

The people took Jesus outside the city, to a place called The Skull. There, he was nailed to a cross and left there until he died. A sign was put on his cross that said, "This is the King of the Jews."

Before Jesus died, he prayed, "Forgive them, Father, because they do not know what they are doing."

Then the sky got dark for three hours, even though it was in the middle of the day. The people who knew and loved Jesus were very sad and mourned his death.

3. Make crosses. Have the students make crosses by gluing together two craft sticks. (*You will decorate these in the next lesson.*)

4. Grieving is okay. Some children may have experienced sad times in their lives, too. Have the students hold their crosses as they share their moments of grief, if they choose.

Make sure their names are on the backs of the crosses, and put them in a place where they can be seen throughout the day. Tell the students that the crosses can remind them that it's okay to be sad when bad things happen.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30 minutes.)

- **Write a class poem or litany** expressing sadness. What things make us sad? How do we feel when we are sad? Write the poem or litany on the board for children to copy, and allow time for them to illustrate their papers.

- **Make a class poster.** During the day students can write or draw on a large piece of posterboard things that have made them sad.

Jesus Has Risen!

LESSON 4: JESUS IS ALIVE

Objective

Students will understand that Jesus rose from the dead.

Key Concepts

- Jesus rose from the dead.
- Jesus spoke with the women who came to find him.

Text: Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:1-10

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- Instruments from Lesson 2
- Examples or photos of “new life”: baby chicks, colored eggs, spring flowers (*optional*)
- Craft-stick crosses made in Lesson 3
- Colorful tissue paper, markers, glue

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story from Matthew 28:1-10 in your own words, or using the paraphrase from Lesson Step 2.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

The cross is a symbol for Jesus. Review the stories in this unit so far. Ask the students how people praised Jesus (*lined the streets to praise him*). Have another instrumental parade to praise Jesus.

Ask the children what happened only a week after the people praised Jesus (he was crucified). Hold up a cross made in the last lesson and explain that the cross has become a symbol for Jesus. Where have the children seen crosses before? (*At church, on jewelry, etc.*) Every time they see a cross, they can think about Jesus.

LESSON STEPS

1. Jesus’ body was placed in a tomb. Tell the students that though Jesus died on the cross, he did not stay there. After Jesus’ death, a friend named Joseph took Jesus’ body and placed it in a cave called a tomb. The opening of the tomb was covered with a big, heavy stone. The leaders placed guards at the entrance of the tomb, because they thought someone might steal Jesus’ body.

2. The Easter story. Opening your Bible to Matthew 28:1-10, tell the story in your own words, or use the following:

Early in the morning, three days after Jesus died, two women went to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary, wanted to put spices on Jesus’ body. But as they got near the tomb, there was a big earthquake! An angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled away the stone that covered

the entrance to the tomb. And then the angel sat on the stone! He was very bright and wore white clothes. The guards were terrified and fell over.

The angel spoke to the women and said, “Don’t be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen from the dead!” The angel invited the women inside the tomb, to see the place where Jesus’ body had been. Sure enough, Jesus was not there!

The women were so excited! They ran to tell Jesus’ other disciples. And all at once, Jesus was standing in front of them! He greeted them, and the women bowed down to him and worshipped him. Jesus was alive!

3. Respond to the story. Ask the students to show with their facial expressions how different people in the story felt: How did the women feel as they came up to the tomb? How did the guards feel when they saw the angel? How did the women feel when they saw that Jesus was no longer in the tomb? How did they feel when they saw Jesus alive? You might want to try this again, this time asking students to stand up and act out the emotions.

4. Easter means new life. Say, “Easter is the time we celebrate Jesus rising from the dead. And because Jesus is alive, we celebrate Easter with things that remind us of new life.” Talk about some of these symbols of new life—baby chicks; colored eggs; spring flowers. *(If you wish, show actual examples or photos of these items.)*

5. Decorate crosses. Hand out the craft-stick crosses the children made during the last lesson. Provide markers for drawing flowers or chicks or other symbols of new life. Some might want to decorate their crosses by gluing colorful tissue paper onto the crosses: Cut or tear tissue paper into small pieces. Wrap piece around pencil eraser, dip into glue, and glue to cross.



EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30 minutes.)

- **Act out the story.** Divide students into small groups of about six. Assign one to be Jesus, one the angel, two the women, and the rest to be guards.
- **Easter echo pantomime.** Have the children echo the phrases and join you in doing the motions.

Early on Easter morning *(stretch)*
Friends of Jesus went to his tomb *(walk in place)*
They found the big stone *(point)*
Rolled back from the entrance *(pretend to push)*
They looked at one another *(look at others)*
Because they were amazed *(shrug shoulders)*
They went into the tomb *(walk in place)*
And looked for Jesus *(look from side to side)*
They couldn’t find him *(shake head no)*
An angel came *(arms outstretched)*
And told them Jesus had risen *(hands cup mouth)*
They ran out of the tomb *(run in place)*
And told Peter what had happened *(point in the distance)*
Peter ran to the tomb *(run in place)*
And looked inside *(look from side to side)*
It was empty *(shake head yes)*
Later Jesus appeared *(arms outstretched)*
And told the people the good news *(hands cup mouth)*

Jesus Has Risen!

LESSON 5: JESUS' LIFE

Objective

Students will review the life of Jesus.

Key Concepts

- Jesus lived, died, and rose again.
- Jesus is important.

Text: All texts used in Unit 8

Estimated Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- 2 pieces posterboard for book cover
- 1 sheet paper (to fit cover) for each student
- Crayons, markers
- Paper punch
- 3 binder rings

Teacher Preparation

- Be ready to help students as they illustrate and write the life of Jesus. Have your Bible ready, to look up details.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Review Jesus' life by asking students to name things that happened to him. Encourage as many responses as possible and write them on the board. After you have a long list, classify the events according to the beginning, middle, and end of Jesus' life.

LESSON STEPS

1. Make a book of Jesus' life. Assign each student to write and illustrate one of the events listed on the board, for the book. Hand out sheets of paper and allow plenty of time for the children to work. (Children may work together to create a cover on one piece of posterboard.)

As students finish their pages, punch holes in them and fasten them in chronological order.

2. Read the book together, as a class.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30 minutes.)

- **Sharing favorites.** Encourage students to share their favorite stories from the life of Jesus. You may do this as a whole-class discussion or by pairing students for conversation. Why is each story a favorite?
- **Do a fingerplay.** Have the children join you in the motions, as you read the following phrases.

Changes

When Jesus talked to people,
(Hold up fingers on left hand.)

Their lives were often changed.
(Hold up fingers on right hand.)

They grew more kind and loving.
(Touch fingers together as if greeting each other.)

And their plans were rearranged.
(Use both hands to appear to be praying.)

When people read the Bible,
(Hold hands together and open as a Bible.)

Their lives are often changed.
(Point to self.)

They grow more kind and loving,
(Touch fingers together as if greeting.)

And their plans are rearranged.
(Use both hands as if praying.)

Unit 8 Quiz

Name _____

Circle the best answer:

1. What does “pax” mean?
 - a. Peace
 - b. Love
 - c. Honor
 - d. Joy

2. What do Christians do during Lent?
 - a. Think about Jesus’ birth
 - b. Think about Jesus’ suffering and death
 - c. Remember Mary and Joseph
 - d. Dream about the Garden of Eden

3. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, people lined the streets and
 - a. Were silent
 - b. Threw things at him
 - c. Praised him
 - d. Ignored him

4. Jesus died on a _____ .
 - a. Boat
 - b. Cross
 - c. Sled
 - d. Horse

5. Who did the women find guarding Jesus’ tomb?
 - a. Soldiers
 - b. An angel
 - c. The disciples
 - d. Jesus’ brother

Write the answer:

6. On what holiday do we celebrate that Jesus rose from the dead?

Answers to Unit 8 Quiz:

1. a. Peace
2. b. Think about Jesus' suffering and death
3. c. Praised him
4. b. Cross
5. b. An angel
6. Easter