

EVENT KIT

ALLELÜIA TO THE LORD

A Parish Easter Event
for Families and
Friends



ALLEGRO TO THE LORD

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About the Event Kit

Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

2 Corinthians 2:14

Christians pull out all the stops when it comes to celebrating Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday. New clothes, well-attended worship services, spirited music, Easter breakfasts and lilies—lots and lots of lilies—signify that Easter is truly special and that our Risen Savior is worthy of our very best offering of praise and worship. Yet, just one week after Easter Sunday, congregations statistically record their lowest attendance of the year. Though the lingering fragrance of lilies still permeates our places of worship, many Christians quickly return to business as usual.

Easter, however, is not merely a special occasion that comes once every year. It is a life-changing miracle that has both a temporal and eternal impact on the life of every believer. By his death and resurrection, Jesus redeemed us from the power of sin and death and gave us a new life connected to him. With this new life comes an exciting mission! We are called to follow Jesus and imitate him in all we do and wherever we go. The theme verse for this Easter Event Kit is 2 Corinthians 2:14, which tells us that “through us, [Jesus] spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.” All who follow Jesus are part of a lifelong “Easter Parade” on a route that permeates the streets, homes, schools

and all the places we work and play each day. And Jesus himself “leads us in triumphal procession.” In our following of the Risen Jesus, one word remains on our lips from Easter. That word is Alleluia. It is a word that means “God be praised.” All of us in our “Easter Parade” from the Day of Easter into the weeks that follow proclaim “Alleluia to the Lord,” which is the theme of our Easter Event Kit

So, what does it look like (or smell like!) when followers of Jesus “spread the fragrance of the knowledge of him” and spread the words of “Alleluia to the Lord.” This kit will guide you through an Easter event designed to teach and practice what it means to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection every day of our lives by following him and inviting others to join us. The event is tailored to be an intergenerational experience for your congregation or school, and members of your community. It can also be adapted specifically for children. Included are ideas and resources in a variety of categories from which you can pick and choose depending on your interests, participants and schedule. Categories include:

Worship

Music

Drama

Object Lessons

Crafts

Snacks/Meals

Service Projects

There is a lot of material in this kit. Don’t let it overwhelm you! You can customize your event according to the time and resources you have available.

If an in-person gathering is not possible, materials in this kit can also be adapted for home-use. Take-home resource kits with craft supplies can be made available. Videos can be pre-recorded with a leader(s) guiding participants through segments of the event. Dramas, object lessons, worship elements and music can be pre-recorded and links to videos can be provided.

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Get Organized

Advance Preparations

Depending on the activities you choose to incorporate into your event, you will need leaders and helpers for the following.

In many cases, volunteers can lead more than one activity. Don't feel you have to do something from every category. Assess your resources and plan accordingly.

Event Coordinator

Crafts

Dramas

Object Lessons

Music

Worship

Service Projects

Snacks/Meals

Publicity

Visitor Follow-up

Supply Coordinator

Registration

Choose a date and time frame for your event.

Choose target audience(s).

Select activities from various categories included in this kit.

Create a schedule (*samples included*).

Gather/purchase supplies needed. (*To cut costs, you can ask members of your church/school to donate supplies or funds in advance.*)

Evaluate cost of materials and decide on each participant's fee (*if any*).

Advertise in a variety of ways (*e.g., social media, flyers, posters, ads, signs, word-of-mouth*) and develop registration procedures.

The Event Coordinator should meet with volunteers/leaders in advance of the event so all have a good understanding of the theme and goals of the event, and to ensure all volunteers have plans to incorporate the theme (including theme verse, 2 Corinthians 2:14) and teach key points in the course of every activity.

Develop a follow-up plan to connect with visitors after the event.

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Sample Schedules

The following samples offer ideas for incorporating the activities in this kit into your schedule. You may extend or reduce the length of your event or change the hours as you desire. You may also opt to serve lunch or dinner instead of (or in addition to) a snack.

Sample A (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Worship
- 9:30 a.m. Crafts
- 10:45 a.m. Snack
- 11:00 a.m. Crafts
- 12:15 p.m. Service Project/Easter Egg Hunt
- 1:30 p.m. Closing Worship

Sample B (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and introduce the theme (*including theme verse*)
- 9:30 a.m. Crafts
- 10:45 a.m. Song Time, Drama and/or Object Lesson
- 11:05 a.m. Snacks
- 11:30 a.m. Song Time, Drama, and/or Object Lesson
- 12:00 p.m. Crafts
- 1:15 p.m. Service Project/Easter Egg Hunt

Sample C (9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and introduce the theme (*including theme verse*)
- 9:30 a.m. Crafts
- 10:45 a.m. Song Time
- 11:05 a.m. Snacks
- 11:30 a.m. Drama/Object Lesson
- 12:00 p.m. Crafts
- 1:15 p.m. Service Project/Easter Egg Hunt

Sample D (9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

8:30 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Worship

9:30 a.m. Crafts

11:00 a.m. Drama and/or Object Lessons

11:30 a.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m. Song Time and Object Lesson or Drama

1:00 p.m. Service Project/Easter Egg Hunt followed by Ice Cream Social

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Worship

You may choose to begin and end your event with worship time. The following is a sample outline for worship and ideas for responsive readings, cheers, recitations and prayer. You may also choose to use elements of the worship outline throughout the course of your schedule (*e.g., music time, drama time, etc.*) The theme verse should be taught at the beginning of your event and reinforced throughout the day, along with the cheer, “Alleluia to the Lord.”

Welcome and Closing For opening worship, introduce the theme of the event, “Alleluia to the Lord,” highlighting Jesus’ resurrection and our call to spread this good news with alleluias wherever we go and to demonstrate the love of Jesus in all we do in an ongoing Easter Parade! For closing worship, recap the alleluia theme and ask participants how they can continue to march in the “Easter Parade” in their daily lives.

Recitation of Theme Verse (2 Corinthians 2:14) (*Leader should speak each line and do motions, then have participants repeat*)

Thanks be to God (*raise both hands high and look up*)

who in Christ (*make cross with fingers*)

always leads us in triumphal procession (*make cross with fingers and hold out in front of you at arm’s length while marching in place, or having participants follow around the room*)

and through us (*point to several others*)
spreads the fragrance (*big sniff, then say "ah!"*)
of the knowledge (*point finger to side of head*)
of him (*make cross with fingers*)
everywhere. (*spread arms out with sweeping motion*).

Song (*choose from songs included in this kit*)

Alleluia Cheer and/or Easter Text with Alleluias (*choose one of the following*)

Alleluia Cheer

Explain that "alleluia" means "God be praised." To praise someone is to let that person know how much we appreciate who they are or acknowledge a good thing they have done. Include examples of ways we praise others. For example, a teacher may tell a student that he/she did a great job on an art project and hang their art up for everyone to see. Explain that we praise Jesus because he is our God and does wonderful things for us.)

Ask participants to name reasons Jesus is worthy of our praise (*emphasize his best gift to us: dying on a cross to take the punishment our sins deserved and rising again to give us a new life with him here on earth and forever in heaven.*) Introduce cheer saying that the leader (L) will ask some questions and the crowd (C) will respond each time shouting: "Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!" Instruct them to jump each time they say "Jesus" and wave hands overhead each time they say "Alleluia to the Lord."

L Who is risen from the dead?

C **Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!**

L Who forgives your all your sins?

C **Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!**

L Who loves you so very much?

C **Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!**

L Who is with you all the time?

C **Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!**

L Who takes care of all your needs?

C Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!

L Who deserves praise each day?

C Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!

L Who's the leader of our Easter celebration?

C Jesus! Jesus! Alleluia to the Lord!

Reading from Matthew 28 with Alleluias

Assign the leader (L) to read the resurrection account from Matthew 28:1-10. Divide participants into two groups (e.g., *left and right sides; girls and boys; adults and kids etc.*). The first group will say "Jesus is alive" and the second group will respond, "Alleluia," where indicated. Explain that sometimes the groups say their line loudly, and sometimes softly. They should follow the leader's tone of voice (e.g., *if the leader speaks softly, the groups will respond in a soft voice, etc.*).

You may project the responsive reading on a screen, if one is available, or have handouts prepared for each participant. Another option would be for the leader to cue each group when it their turn to respond. Take time to practice group responses before you begin.

L The Bible tells us what happened on that first Easter morning, when Jesus rose from the dead. Listen as I read from Matthew 28: (*spoken softly*) Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

Group 1: (*softly*) Jesus is alive.

Group 2: (*softly*) Alleluia.

L (*loudly*) And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.

Group 1: (*loudly*) Jesus is alive.

Group 2: (*loudly*) Alleluia.

L (*a little softer*) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.

Group 1: *(a little softer)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(a little softer)* Alleluia.

☒ *(softly)* But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

Group 1: *(softly)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(softly)* Alleluia.

☒ *(loudly)* He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.

Group 1: *(loudly)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(loudly)* Alleluia.

☒ *(a little softer)* Go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.”

Group 1: *(a little softer)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(a little softer)* Alleluia.

☒ *(gradually getting louder)* So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. *(loudly)* And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him.

Group 1: *(loudly)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(loudly)* Alleluia.

☒ *(softly)* Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; *(loudly)* GO and tell my brothers to GO to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

Group 1: *(loudly)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(loudly)* Alleluia.

☒ Jesus is alive! Alleluia! Now He tells us to GO! Join his Easter celebration and tell everyone you know the Good news that he is alive! He forgives! He loves! Jesus leads our way. *(loudly)* Let’s follow him.

Group 1: *(loudly)* Jesus is alive.

Group 2: *(loudly)* Alleluia.