

Easter Sunday
April 1, 2007
Children's Service Sermon
Rev. Scott Carlson

Welcome. Today I want to show you how to make a cross, then I am going to tell you a story, Okay?

(Show how to make a palm cross)

Hold onto your cross while I tell you a story. I am going to need your help at different times during the story, are you willing to help me? Great.

When Jesus lived on earth, many people loved him and believed that he was God's son. We believe that today. That is why we are here in worship. But some religious leaders, who lived during the time of Jesus, were jealous of him and didn't like him. Every time Jesus talked about God they got mad.

HOW DO YOU LOOK WHEN YOU GET MAD? SHOW me a mad look.

Here is why they got mad. Jesus talked about God as if God was a good friend. He talked about God saying God was his father. In fact, Jesus called God, "Daddy". Religious leaders didn't like that.

As more and more people listened to Jesus talk, as more and more people were healed by Jesus, as more and more people started to believe in Jesus, the religious leaders got more and more mad. Finally, they were so mad at Jesus; they got together and tried to find a way to kill him. But they had to be careful, because of all the people who liked Jesus.

Their chance came, when one of Jesus' friends, we call them disciples, his name was Judas. Judas went to the religious leaders and said he would give Jesus to them. They were so excited; they agreed to give Judas money to betray Jesus.

Later that night, Jesus sat down with his disciples in a room where they shared a special meal together. Jesus took bread, he broke it and gave it to them and said, "This represents my body, whenever you eat. Think about me." Then he took a cup, and he said, "This represents my blood, whenever you take a drink, think about me and how much we are friends." Every time we have communion here at church, we think about that last supper Jesus had with his disciples.

After they had that last supper, what we call communion, Jesus knew he would die soon, so he went to a garden to pray. He asked his friends to pray with him. LET'S BOW OUR HEADS, like we are praying with Jesus.

Do you know what happened? His friends fell asleep. NOW, I WANT ALL OF YOU TO PRETEND THAT YOU FELL ASLEEP. Take slow deep breaths, like a person sleeping does.

"Get up!" That is what Jesus said to his sleepy friends. They blinked their eyes and shook their heads. "It's time to go," Jesus said. "Go where?" Wondered the sleepy disciples. Then all at once they heard a sound . . . Stomp - stomp - stomp. Soldiers were marching. LET'S MARCH OUR FEET TOO.

Judas told the religious leaders where to meet Jesus. The religious leaders got some soldiers and they came out to meet Jesus. They had big swords and big heavy clubs. They grabbed Jesus and took him away.

After a quick trial, they hit Jesus and spit on him. They nailed Jesus to a cross and left him to die. LET'S STRETCH OUT OUR ARMS LIKE JESUS did on the cross.

The people who didn't believe in Jesus laughed at him and made fun of him as he hung on the cross. But do you know what? Jesus loved them anyway. He even prayed for the people who were hurting him. He said, "Father (which means God) forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing."

Jesus' friends didn't know what to do. They didn't understand why Jesus died. They didn't know that by dying, Jesus showed us how much he loved God. Almost all of Jesus' friends became scared and ran away and hid. HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO HIDE FROM SOMEONE? They were hiding from the religious leaders.

As Jesus hung on the cross, the sky got really dark. LET'S COVER OUR EYES to make everything dark. The earth started to shake and rumble. LET'S STOMP OUR FEET to make the earth rumble.

And then Jesus died. Everyone was afraid. One of the soldiers who nailed Jesus to the cross, looked at Jesus, and he said, "Wow, he really was the son of God!"

Let's be quiet for a moment and remember that Jesus died for us. Jesus died to show us how much God loves us. Let's pray and thank God for Jesus, Okay?

PRAY TOGETHER

After Jesus died, Joseph, a friend of Jesus, took Jesus' body and put it in a tomb or a cave. Then he rolled a big stone in front of it, so no one could get in. Jesus' friends cried together for two days.

Next Sunday, when we come back, we will see what happened next okay? Great. I hope that as you go through the week, and as you look at your cross, you will be able to remember the love that Jesus has for you. I hope it will help you remember the story of Jesus. Thanks for coming today.

Palm Sunday
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