



# STORIES **AND** RITUALS

## LESSON 30

### Stories & Rituals: The Bible in Broad Strokes

Text copyright © 2014-2015 by the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

#### *Writers*

Lindsay Barrett-Adler  
Jan Berry Schroeder  
The Rev. Sarah Hedgis  
Victoria Hoppes  
Andrew Kellner  
Andrew Kuhn

#### *Editor*

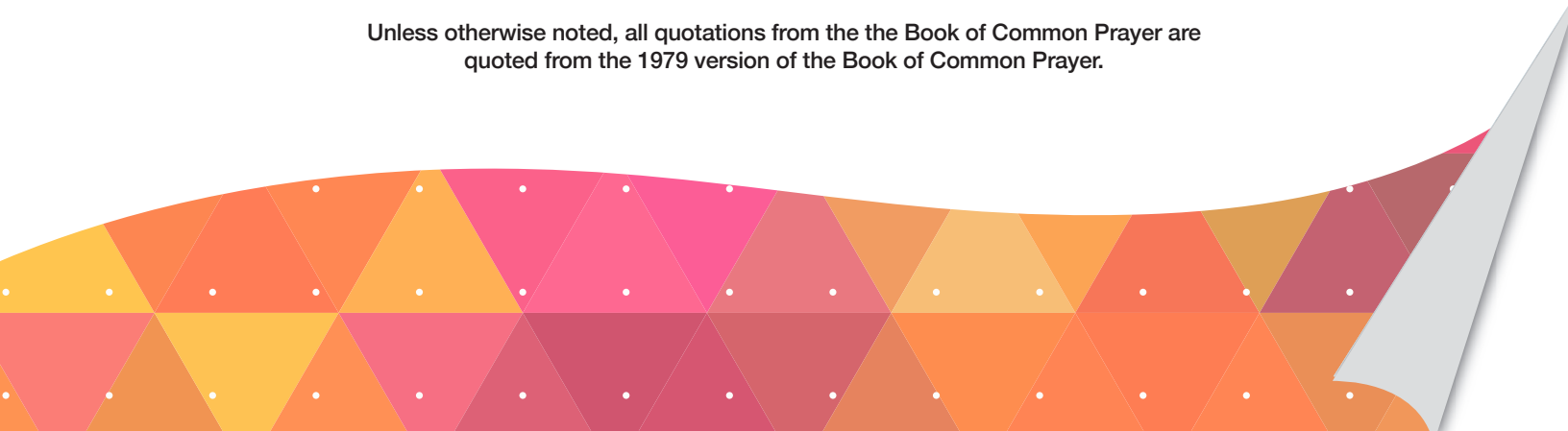
Victoria Hoppes

---

All rights reserved. Permission is granted to reproduce this resource for parish use only. No part of this curriculum may be reproduced in any other manner without written permission from the publisher. For permission information, contact the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania at [www.diopayouth.org](http://www.diopayouth.org).

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is quoted from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the the Book of Common Prayer are quoted from the 1979 version of the Book of Common Prayer.



# Jesus' Crucifixion

**Texts: John 20:1-18**

**Big Idea: We find new life through Christ's resurrection.**

## Lesson Objectives

### Participants will:

1. Identify this lesson's story by playing a game.
2. Recognize that we find new life through the resurrection by engaging in a re-telling of the resurrection story.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of the resurrection by making paper flowers.

### ACTIVITY (TIME)

---

Dive In (10 minutes)  
**Group Check-In**

---

Community Builder (15 minutes)  
**Roll Away**

---

The Story (15 minutes)  
**The Tomb Is Empty**

---

The Ritual (15 minutes)  
**He Is Risen!**

---

Dig Deeper (10 minutes)  
**I'll Fly Away**

---

Wrap it Up (5 minutes)  
**Closing Prayer**

---

### MATERIALS NEEDED

---

- Nothing

---

- Double-sided tape
- Marbles • Cups or bowls
- Timer • Table

---

- Copy of Lesson Sheet 30.1

---

- Soft, instrumental music (optional)
- Method for playing music (optional)
- Large Cross • Chenille sticks
- Tissue paper (in at least 3 colors)
- Ruler • Scissors

---

- Copy of the song "I'll Fly Away"
- Method for playing music
- Copies of song lyrics (optional)

---

- Nothing

---

# LESSON OVERVIEW



## What's the Story?

John. Jesus' resurrection is one of the few stories that can be found in all four of the Gospels, making it an important story for Christians to know and tell. Each of the Gospels tells the story a little differently, but they also have a similarity: in each story, Jesus' followers see an empty tomb and are told the good news that he is risen.

In John's account of the resurrection, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene in the garden. First, Mary approaches the tomb early in the morning to find that the stone is rolled away and it is empty. She gathers Peter and another disciple and brings them to the tomb, telling them about what she has seen. They see the tomb, and then leave, and Mary finds herself alone. Then, Jesus approaches her, though she doesn't recognize him at first. Instead, she mistakes him for the gardener. It is only when Jesus calls her name that she recognizes it is her Lord. Jesus instructs her to find the disciples and tell them that he is risen from the dead.

The story of the resurrection is one that needs to be told to the world. However, it is a story that causes many people to wonder: did this really happen? Is it possible for someone to actually rise from the dead?



## What's the "Big Idea?"

Today's lesson focuses on the big idea that *we find new life through Christ's resurrection*. We live in a culture that is obsessed with death. We watch movies, read novels, and even play video games that are filled with zombie invasions, the paranormal, the apocalypse, and more images of death and dying. However, we know that resurrection brings us new life. How can we help young people (and everyone in our faith communities, for that matter) understand that the resurrection is powerful in this way? And, how can we help people see beyond the physical resurrection of Jesus and find the hope of new life that comes from the resurrection in their everyday lives?



## What's the Symbol?

Though we may tell the story of Jesus' resurrection at many times during the year, the church typically celebrates this triumph on Easter Sunday. Many churches fill their worship spaces with colorful spring flowers and plants as a symbol of the new life that we receive through the resurrection. Find large, colorful flowers. Using plants that are just budding reinforces the theme of new life.



## What's the Ritual?

Today's ritual will invite participants to think about how the resurrection brings us new life. This will happen while they make a paper flower. Then, participants will be invited to take a flower to give to someone that needs to hear this good news that comes from Jesus' resurrection.



## Setting Up Your Space

Set up your "altar" area. Cover a large table with a piece of fabric or linen. On the altar place some candles, a large cross, and a vase of flowers or budding plants. Prep any materials needed for the ritual. If you are using the Community Builder or Dig Deeper activities, prep any materials needed.

## DIVE IN (10 MINUTES)

### Group Check-In

#### Materials:

- Nothing

#### During the session:

- Open your session with a quick prayer. Use this one or a prayer of your own:  
**Holy Lord, open our eyes, ears, and hearts to see your love and faithfulness in the world around us. Help us see your love for us in your Word. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**
- Let's start our time together by sharing some of the great and not-so-great things that have happened to us this week. What were the high points and low points of your week? Go around the group and invite everyone to share.

## COMMUNITY BUILDER (15 MINUTES)

### Roll Away

#### Materials:

- Double-sided tape
- Marbles
- Cups or bowls
- Timer
- Table

#### Before the session:

- Set up for the game. A long, plastic table works best for this game. Cut a strip of double-sided tape that runs the width of the table. Place the piece of tape on the table top. On the end of the table, set up two cups or bowls. Fill each with marbles.

#### During the session:

- Split the group into two teams. Invite each team to line up behind one of the cups or bowls of marbles.
- **Today we are going to see how many marbles your team can successfully roll across the table. One at a time, you will take one marble and roll it across the table. In order to successfully roll the marble, it must stick to the tape on the other side. You will have one minute to complete this challenge.**
- Set a timer for one minute. At your signal, the first person in line must grab a marble from the cup or bowl and roll it across the table. Then, they must run to the back of the line, and the next person comes forward to roll a marble. Then, they run to the back of the line and the next person comes forward.
- Once a marble is rolled, the person must run to the back of the line—regardless of whether or not the marble stuck to the tape.
- Play continues until the one minute is up. At the end of one minute, count up how many marbles each team stuck to the tape. The team with the most marbles gets a point.
- Reset the marbles, teams, and timers. Play the game again for another minute. The team with the most marbles on the tape gets a point.

## COMMUNITY BUILDER - CONTINUED

- Continue playing rounds of the game in one-minute increments, until you run out of time. You may need to replace tape if it becomes un-sticky.
- **Was it easy or hard for you to stick the marbles on the tap? Why?** *[Answers will vary.]*
- **Today we are going to hear the story of Jesus' resurrection. How might this game relate to the story?** *[Answers will vary. The most obvious answer is the rolling away of the stone.]*



## THE STORY (15 MINUTES)

### The Tomb Is Empty

#### Materials:

- Copy of Lesson Sheet 30.1

#### Before the session:

- Make a copy of Lesson Sheet 30.1
- Practice reading through the story several times so you are familiar with it.

#### During the session:

- Tell the story on Lesson Sheet 30.1
- After the story, ask: **What is this story telling us about God?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: God is with us, God brings us new life through Jesus, God is alive, etc.]*
- **What is this story telling us about humanity?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: We don't always recognize the places where Jesus is alive, we proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection to others, we receive new life through the resurrection, etc.]*
- **What is this story telling us about the world?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: The world seeks new life through the resurrection, the presence of God can be found in the world around us, the world needs to hear the good news of Jesus' rising, etc.]*
- **The story of Jesus' resurrection is an important story for the world to hear. It is a significant story for Christians because this story reminds us that the death and resurrection of Jesus brings us new life. It brings us new life in God and in community with each other. There are many places and people in the world that need to hear the news of Jesus' resurrection. What are some places/people that you can think of that should hear this message of new life?** *[Answers will vary.]*

# THE RITUAL

## (15 MINUTES)

### He is Risen!

#### Materials:

- Soft, instrumental music (optional)
- Method for playing music (optional)
- Large Cross
- Tissue paper (in at least 3 colors)
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Chenille sticks

#### Before the session:

- If you have time, cut squares of tissue paper into 12" x 12" squares. Cut enough squares so that each person can make at least one paper flower (there should be three squares per flower.)
- If you do not have time to cut squares of tissue paper, participants can do so during the activity.

#### During the session:

- If you are playing music, begin playing it softly.
- **In today's story, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. We heard about Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene in the garden. Take a moment to imagine the scene that unfolded. How do you think Mary felt, seeing Jesus in the middle of the garden?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: happy, surprised, shocked, excited, unsure, scared, etc.]*
- **As the church, we celebrate Christ's resurrection at Easter. In many churches, the worship space is decorated with flowers, symbolizing new life. Today we are going to start by making paper flowers to symbolize the new life that the resurrection brings.**
- Give each participant three squares of tissue paper and a chenille stick. If necessary, invite them to cut 12" x 12" squares from the paper.
- Stack the three squares on top of each other. Squares should be stacked neatly; ends and sides should be as aligned as possible.
- While they are stacked, fold the squares of tissue paper accordion-style. Each fold should be approximately 1" wide. Fold the paper until you run out of tissue.
- Take the accordion-folded paper and fold it in half. Do this in each direction in order to create a flexible crease (this helps with unfolding the paper later).
- Bend the chenille stick in half. Wrap the bend around the paper, at the crease. Twist the sides of the stick together to close them and make the flower stem.
- Starting at either the top or the bottom, fan out the tissue paper so that none of the sheets are stuck together. This should be done carefully, so that the paper does not tear.
- Once the paper is unfolded like a fan, create the petals of the flower by pulling them away from each other. Again be careful to do this in a way that does not tear the paper.
- Once everyone has made their flower, continue. In a moment, I will invite you forward with your flower. Place your flower by (or on) our cross.

- 6**
- Invite participants forward to the altar to place their flowers by the cross.

## THE RITUAL - CONTINUED

- The story of the resurrection doesn't just end with Jesus appearing to Mary. Instead, Jesus invites Mary to go find his followers and tell them that he is raised! Jesus instructs her to go and tell the good news that he is alive!
- There are many people in our world today who need to hear this good news of resurrection, too. Think of one person you know who may need to hear this news that God brings us new life. Give participants a moment to think.
- Jesus calls us to share this news of new life, too. I invite you to come back to the altar and take one of the flowers. Give the flower to the person on your mind. When you give them the flower, tell them about the life that comes through the resurrection!
- Invite participants back to the altar to take a flower.

## DIG DEEPER (10 MINUTES)

### I'll Fly Away

#### *Materials:*

- Copy of the song "I'll Fly Away" • Method for playing music • Copies of song lyrics (optional)

#### Before the session:

- Find a copy of the song "I'll Fly Away" to play during this activity. Any upbeat version of the song will work. You can download the song on iTunes or Amazon, or stream it using a service like Spotify. You can also find many different versions of the song on YouTube (one favorite version, by the band Jars of Clay, can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bu8U8nley7U>)
- Set up a method for playing the music. If you are using a video, you may wish to project the video on a screen.
- If desired, print copies of the song lyrics for participants to reference while listening to the song.

#### During the session:

- There are many different songs that talk about the resurrection and the new life that it brings. Let's listen to one of these songs together. As we listen to the song, think about what words, phrases, or images of new life are in the lyrics.
- If you have copies of song lyrics, hand them out to the group. Play the song "I'll Fly Away" for the group to hear. If you have time, and if you need to, play the song again.

## DIG DEEPER - CONTINUED

- Process the experience by asking the following questions:
  - **What are some of the words, phrases, or images in the song that remind you of new life?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: “to a home on God’s celestial shore,” “no more cold iron shackles on this feet,” “I’ll fly away,” images of flying to a place with no pain or suffering, etc.]*
  - **How do resurrection and new life bring hope to people?** *[Answers will vary.]*
  - **Can you think of any other songs we sing (or ones you may have heard) that tell us about the resurrection and the new life it brings?** *[Answers will vary.]*
  - **Why do you think it’s important for us to talk about resurrection and new life?** *[Answers will vary, but may include: it brings us hope, it brings happiness, people don’t hear about resurrection much, etc.]*
- Our culture talks a lot about death. Think about all of the movies, novels, or even video games that talk about the apocalypse, or zombies, or other things that relate to death. We aren’t very good at talking about the resurrection! However, it is through Jesus’ resurrection that we find new life. So, talking (or even singing) about the resurrection is an important thing for us to do!

## WRAP IT UP (5 MINUTES)

### Closing Prayer

Invite the group to share any prayer concerns or requests they may have for the week. Close your time together in prayer. Use the following or pray your own prayer:

**Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus to overcome death and to open to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that all who celebrate the joy of our Lord’s resurrection may receive new life through your life-giving Spirit. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**



# Lesson Sheet 29.1

## The Tomb Is Empty

A story from the Gospel according to John:

Early in the morning, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene approached Jesus' tomb in the garden. It was still dark, but Mary could see that the stone in front of the tomb was rolled away. She ran and found Peter and another disciple, and she brought them to the tomb. "They have taken the Lord from his tomb," she said, "and I don't know where he has gone!"

Though they were running together, the other disciple ran faster and made it to the tomb first. He looked inside the tomb and saw the linens that Jesus' body was wrapped in, but the disciple was scared and didn't walk inside the tomb. Peter walked past the disciple, went inside the tomb, and saw the linens, too. Peter also saw the cloth that covered Jesus' face, but it was folded neatly. The other disciple finally got courage, and he entered the tomb. He also saw the face cloth. Because they didn't yet understand that Jesus was supposed to rise from the dead, both disciples left the garden, and Mary was left by herself.

Mary stood outside the tomb, and she began to cry. As she cried, she bent over to look in the tomb. There were two angels in white, sitting where Jesus' body had been laid. One was sitting at the head, and another at the feet. The angels asked Mary, "Why are you crying?" Mary responded, "Because they have taken away Jesus, and I don't know where to find him!" Right after she finished saying this, Mary turned around. Jesus was standing next to her, but she didn't know that it was him. Instead, she thought that he was the gardener.

The man asked her, "Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Still thinking that it was the gardener, Mary responded, "Sir, if you have taken his body away, tell me where he is, please! I will get him." But Jesus said to her, "Mary." Mary turned around and realized that she was talking to Jesus! She shouted, "Teacher!" and jumped up to give him a hug.

Jesus said to her, "Don't hold on to me. I still haven't ascended to be with my Father. But instead, go find the disciples and tell them that I have risen. Tell them that I will be going up to be with my Father: my God, and your God."

So, Mary Magdalene left the tomb and found the disciples. She said to them, "I have seen the Lord! He is alive!" Then, she told them what Jesus said to her in the garden.