

# Home Front



easter bundle

# Mini Chicken & Waffles

Easter  
Brunch  
Menu

Mini Chicken  
& Waffles



## FAMILY TIME RECIPE

**These Mini Chicken and Waffles are quick and easy to make and will be a fun appetizer for your Easter brunch this month.**

*Prep Time: 15 min. Cook Time: 10 min. Yields: about 20 nuggets*

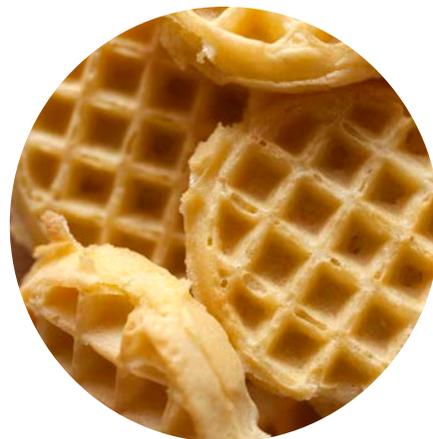
### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 sp. ground black pepper
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1 c. panko or prepared breadcrumbs
- 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp. water
- 1 c. vegetable oil
- mini waffles (about 20)
- syrup
- toothpicks

\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for "metric kitchen."

### WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Place flour in a resealable bag and add salt and pepper.
2. Place chicken pieces in bag with the flour and toss to coat. This works best in small batches.
3. Put panko or breadcrumbs on a rimmed plate and set aside.
4. Whisk egg and water in a medium bowl.
5. Remove a piece of chicken from the flour, dip in the egg mixture, then dip in the breadcrumbs, gently pressing crumbs into the chicken. Set chicken on a clean plate.
6. Repeat with remaining pieces of chicken.
7. Heat vegetable oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat.
8. Place chicken pieces in pan and brown on each side, about eight minutes total.
9. Use a spatula to transfer the chicken "nuggets" to a paper towel-lined plate. If desired, add more salt to chicken.
10. While chicken cools, make or toast mini waffles.
11. Assemble by placing a chicken nugget on top of a mini waffle and poking a toothpick through both.
12. Drizzle syrup over nuggets and waffles and serve.



# BROWN SUGAR BRIE



CUTLERY



## FAMILY TIME RECIPE

**Cooking for people I love is one of my favorite ways of serving.** It really gives meaning to the phrase “cooking with love” when I get to watch the people I adore enjoy what I made for them. This appetizer never fails to put a smile on friends' faces. It is constantly requested at family get-togethers, and is sure to be a crowd pleaser, especially at your Easter brunch!

Prep Time: 10 min.

Cook Time: 25 min.

Serves: 10-12

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 1 wheel of Brie cheese (13.4 ounces)
- 2 (11-ounce) cans refrigerated French bread dough
- 1/2 cup butter (1 stick), melted
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup pecans

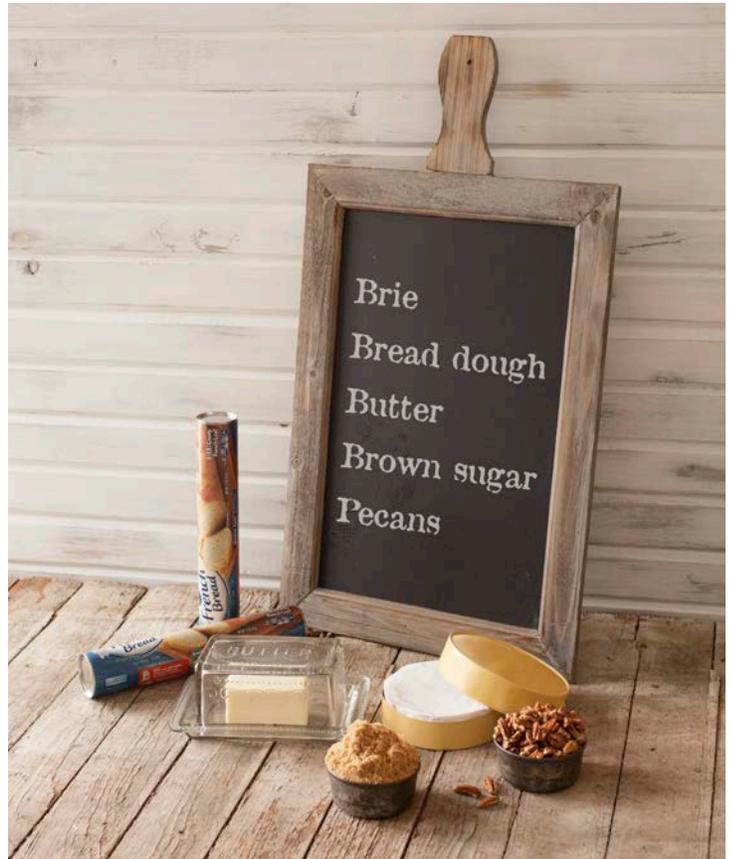
\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for “metric kitchen.”

### WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Remove paper wrapper from the wheel of Brie (leave the skin). Place it in the center of a baking dish.
3. Form a circle of French bread dough, wrapping it around the Brie.
4. With a knife, poke 10 holes in the bread.
5. Pour the melted butter evenly over the bread.
6. Sprinkle the brown sugar over the bread, and press it into the dough as you go.
7. Sprinkle the pecans over the whole dish.
8. Bake for 25 minutes, or until bread is golden brown.
9. Slice and serve warm.

by Rachel Howard

Rachel is in her freshman year at Biola University in La Mirada, CA. She began volunteering in the Children's Ministry Department at Mariners Church in Irvine, CA, when she was in the fourth grade. She has a passion for cooking and baking, and loves using her culinary gifts to serve others.



# Resurrection Rolls

These rolls aren't just a delicious treat; they're a great hands-on way to think about Easter. Each treat ends up hollow, representing the empty tomb left after Jesus rose from the dead. Your children will be amazed by the transformation!

*Each part of the recipe represents how Jesus' body was prepared for burial.*

(Yields 8 rolls)

- ✦ 8 large marshmallows
- ✦ ½ c. melted butter
- ✦ 4 tbsp. sugar/cinnamon mixture (half sugar, half cinnamon)
- ✦ 1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls

FOR AN EASY METRIC CONVERSION CHART, SEARCH THE INTERNET FOR "METRIC KITCHEN."

**1.** Heat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

**2.** Open can of crescent rolls and separate into triangles.

→ *The rolls represent the linen wrapping used in covering the dead.*

**3.** Dip one marshmallow into melted butter.

→ *The marshmallow represents Jesus' body, and the butter reminds us of the oils used to anoint Him.*

**4.** Roll the marshmallow in the sugar/cinnamon mixture.

→ *The mixture represents the spices used in burials.*

**5.** Place the dipped and coated marshmallow in the center of the crescent triangle. Fold and pinch the edges tight. The marshmallow may drip as it melts. Put each crescent-wrapped marshmallow on a slightly greased or parchment covered cookie sheet.

→ **6.** Bake the rolls as directed on the package.

*The oven represents the tomb.*

*During baking, the marshmallow melts, leaving only the puffed crescent roll. This represents how Jesus rose from the dead, leaving nothing in the tomb but linen wrappings.*



*Kids in the Kitchen features simple, kid-friendly recipes that encourage families to spend time together while creating yummy treats.*



## KIDS IN THE KITCHEN



# NEW LIFE

## CHICKS

Celebrate spring and fresh starts by making these new life chicks. Allow your children to place the eyes, beaks, and feet of these adorable snacks and enjoy eating them together as a family!

Yields 12 servings

Prep/Total Time: 25 min.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 doz. eggs
- 24 capers
- 6 baby carrots
- ½ c. mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. white vinegar
- 2 tsp. yellow mustard
- ¼ tsp. salt
- black pepper to taste

\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for "metric kitchen."

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Hard-boil the eggs.

*No-Fail Hard-Boiling Method:*

Place the eggs in a single layer at the bottom of a large saucepan. Cover with at least one inch of cold water. Bring to a simmer over low heat and cook for one minute. Cover with a lid, turn off the heat, and allow the eggs to sit in the hot water for 15 minutes. Then pour out the warm water and cover the eggs with cold water. This will chill the eggs and make them easier to peel.

2. Cut a thin slice from the bottom of each egg so it sits flat. Cut off the top third of each egg.
3. Carefully remove the egg yolks and place in a small bowl; mash with a fork. Add the mayonnaise, mustard, vinegar, salt, and pepper; stir until blended well.
4. Spoon mixture into the egg white bottoms; replace tops.
5. Cut 24 feet and 12 beaks from the baby carrots.
6. Gently press the capers into the filling for eyes; add beaks.
7. Place feet in front of chicks.
8. Chill until serving time.



# “He is Risen” Treats



*I love these treats because they're fun, easy, yummy, and a great way to remember and celebrate Christ rising from the dead. As you make these treats with your kids, encourage them to participate. Remember that it's OK if things get a little messy; just have fun together. This activity will help illustrate modeling to your children and remind you of how much they follow what you do. As you go through each step, demonstrate how it should go and then let your kids follow your example. Then switch!*

by Carrie Rowe

THESE WOULD MAKE A GREAT TREAT TO GIVE TO A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR AND INVITE THEM TO CHURCH WITH YOUR FAMILY THIS EASTER!

## DIRECTIONS:

- Cut a small piece of washi tape (or paper) and fold it around each toothpick to make a tiny banner.
- Write *He Is Risen!* on each banner. Set the banners aside.
- Break the graham crackers into squares. Set aside six squares.
- Crumble the rest of the graham crackers into a bowl and set aside.
- Spread one tablespoon of peanut butter on each graham cracker square.
- Cut off one-quarter of each mini doughnut and place the doughnut in the middle of a graham cracker, in the peanut butter.
- Place a mini cookie in the peanut butter on the side of the hole in the doughnut.
- Sprinkle crumbled graham crackers on the remaining peanut butter to create “dirt.”
- Poke a banner into the top of the doughnut.
- Repeat with the remaining doughnuts, cookies, and crackers.

Yields 6

## INGREDIENTS:

- 5 whole graham crackers
- 6 tbsp. peanut butter
- 6 mini chocolate doughnuts
- 6 mini cookies or a similar small, round food
- decorative (washi) tape or paper
- scissors
- 6 toothpicks
- permanent marker

\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for “metric kitchen.”



*Bird's Nest*  
**Dessert**

## KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

**I love birds. They're a constant reminder to me of God's faithfulness.**

If God provides for them, how much more will He take care of me? This Bird's Nest Dessert can serve to remind your family that when you feel stretched to the end of everything that's comfortable to you, God will meet you there and transform you as you step out in faith. You are valuable to Him!

**Gather everyone in the kitchen to help**—this is a simple recipe, so even your youngest child can help. You'll love watching your creations start to take shape and turn into little nests.

by Debbie Guinn

Prep Time: 10 min.

Cook Time: 25 min.

Yields: 24

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 2 large egg whites
- pinch of salt
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 14 oz. bag shredded coconut
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. flour
- mini candy Easter eggs

\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for "metric kitchen."

### WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Place egg whites in large bowl, add salt, and whisk until frothy. Whisking would be a great way for kids to help.
3. Add sweetened condensed milk and vanilla and mix well.
4. One at a time, fold in coconut, sugar, and flour.
5. Line cookie sheet with parchment paper.
6. With wet hands, place heaping tablespoon of mixture onto lined cookie sheet.
7. Press mixture together and then push your finger into the center to form a nest. Make the indentation big enough to hold a few mini candy eggs. This would be another great place for kids to help.
8. Bake for 25 minutes or until edges are golden brown.
9. After nests cool completely, invite your kids to place the candy eggs inside.

**Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?**  
Matthew 6:26

# MINI COCONUT CREAM PIES



## KIDS IN THE KITCHEN



**Kids seem to especially enjoy things that come in miniature size.** These Mini Coconut Cream Pies are no exception! There are plenty of opportunities for your children to help out while preparing this treat. Be ready to allow them to complete some of the steps and encourage them to ask, “What needs to be done?” along the way!

Prep Time: 20 min. Cook Time: 10-15 min. Yields: 24 mini pies

### WHAT YOU’LL NEED

- 1 (16.5-ounce) roll refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- 1 box (3.4-ounce) instant coconut pudding, prepared according to package directions and chilled
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups sweetened coconut
- whipped cream for topping
- green food coloring
- mini jelly beans

\* For an easy metric conversion chart, search the Internet for “metric kitchen.”

### WHAT YOU’LL DO

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Grease a 24-cup mini muffin tin.
3. Divide sugar cookie dough into 24 even pieces and roll each piece into a ball.
4. Place dough in prepared muffin tin cups.
5. Bake dough until golden brown and set (10 to 15 minutes).
6. Remove from oven. Cool 10 minutes.
7. While cookies are cooling, place the coconut in a large plastic storage bag with several drops of green food coloring. Shake the bag until all the coconut is the desired color of green.
8. Spread coconut evenly on a cookie sheet, and place in the 350° F oven for 10 to 12 minutes until slightly toasted.
9. Carefully loosen the cookie cups with a knife and remove from the muffin tin.
10. Transfer cookie cups to a cooling rack and cool completely.
11. Spoon a generous teaspoon of chilled pudding into the center of each cookie cup.
12. Top each cup with a dollop of whipped cream.
13. Place jelly beans on top of whipped cream and sprinkle generously with coconut.

## CAPTURING THE SEASON

# Identity Crosses



Our children are bombarded with lies from the world—lies telling them they're worthless, ugly, shameful, and simply not enough! However, because of what Jesus did on the cross, they can have a new identity—an identity found in Him.

As parents, we have the God-given privilege to instill His truths into the lives of our children. We can use our words to affirm them and remind them of who God says they really are.

This month, encourage each member of your family to make an identity cross. While you create your crosses, talk about God's amazing love for us. Read John 3:16, and marvel together that God would be willing to give His one and only Son for us to be in relationship with Him.

Allow the crosses you make to remind you of the great sacrifice Jesus made for each of you. Let them remind you that Jesus is alive, and because you're His chosen children, He's with you today.

by Richelle Paris



## Directions:

1. Cut the yarn, string, twine, or strips of fabric into short sections (each about six to 12 inches long).
2. Put a dab of glue at the top of your first stick and start wrapping a section of yarn, string, twine, or fabric around it.
3. Once you finish wrapping one section, put another dab of glue on the stick and repeat with another section. Repeat this process until you've completely wrapped the stick, creating your own unique design while you work. Then wrap the other stick in the same way.
4. Form the two wrapped sticks into a cross and tie them together to hold them in place.

## What You'll Need:

- ✦ 2 sticks for each family member (small branches, twigs, craft sticks, etc)
- ✦ Yarn, string, twine, or strips of fabric (various colors)
- ✦ Craft glue or hot glue gun

## CAPTURING THE SEASON



# empty tombs

*Each season leading up to a “holy day,” our family pauses to consider what God might want to do in us and through us in the waiting before the sacred days of Christmas or Easter. We choose different themes to guide our actions. For example, we might “Be the Gift” to our family and friends, “Journey” in our faith to see what will “Spring Up” when we surrender our lives to Him, or “Look to the Cross” as we anticipate the resurrection of Jesus and consider His suffering. These themes help us to focus on what God may be doing in one area of our lives. The themes also help us to focus on the true meaning of the season and how it affects our lives.*

**These themes include the tradition of planting seeds.** This gives us a physical reminder of the spiritual growth happening in our lives.

**This month, as you immerse your family in the environment of MODELING,** you’ll plant your own seeds as you create a physical representation, or model, of the empty tomb Jesus left behind when He rose from the dead. Jesus gave us the ultimate model of sacrifice and humility, and this will challenge our families and point them toward growth in their journeys with God.

## CAPTURING THE SEASON

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- » 4" flowerpot » 12" flowerpot dish
- » permanent marker or paint pen
  - » 6 twigs » twine
- » small rocks or gravel » large rock
  - » soil » small piece of gauze
  - » wheat berries or grass seed
  - » spray bottle filled with water

- **Together, as a family, brainstorm words that describe what it looks like to be Christlike.** Using a permanent marker, write those words around the rim of the flowerpot dish. Some examples might be *humility, love, kindness, patience, or self-control*. These words will serve as reminders of what you're modeling.
- **Lay the flowerpot on its side in the dish.** Use the small rocks and gravel to hold it in the position you want. Place the rest of the small rocks and gravel on the bottom of the dish.
- **Make mud by mixing the soil with some water,** and use the mud to cover the gravel. Also place a thick layer of mud over the flowerpot "tomb."
- **Make three crosses out of the twigs** by breaking the twigs into smaller pieces and using the twine to tie the pieces together. Stick the crosses into the mud covering the tomb.
- **Place the gauze inside the tomb** to serve as the "burial cloths" found inside the empty tomb. Place the large rock near the front of the tomb to serve as the stone that was rolled away.



**At the end of each day this month, as you gather as a family, take time to remember and call out ways you saw your family members modeling Christlikeness to others.** Each time a person shares an answer, she gets to plant a few seeds into the soil. You'll need to moisten the soil daily with the spray bottle. As you see the grass grow on the tomb, talk about what God is "growing" in your lives and how you can model that for others.

by Courtney Wilson

# Old Rugged Cross



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

twine or tie wire  
 2 (14") branches  
 2 (7½") branches  
 1 (17") branch

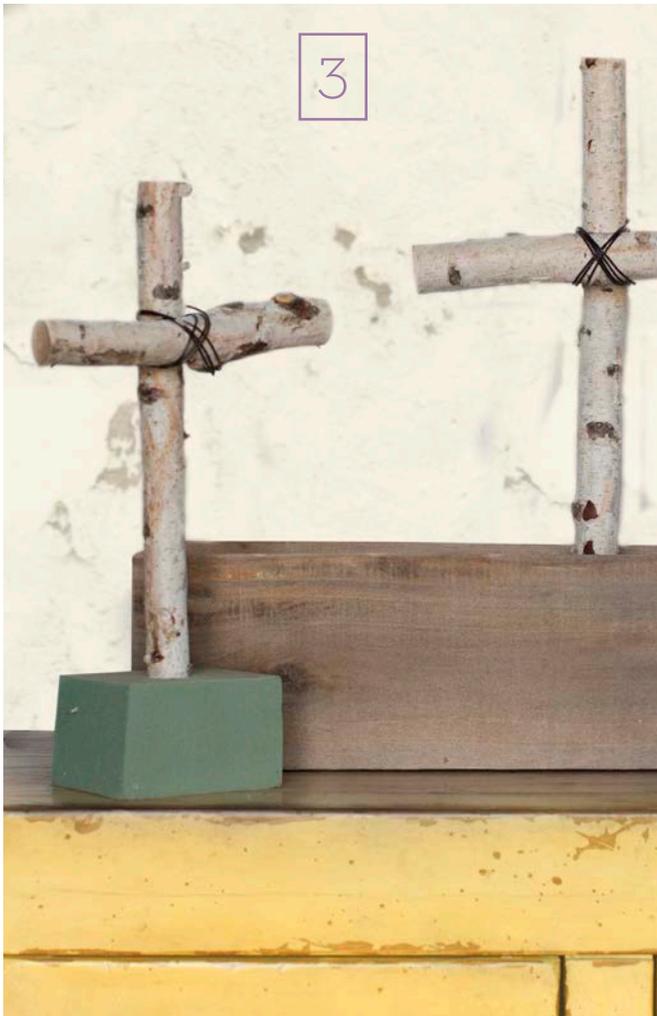
1 (9½") branch  
 crate or container  
 3 pieces of floral foam  
 dirt, moss, and flowers

Make one large cross by taking the 9½-inch branch and laying it across the 17-inch branch. Have your children help you hold the branches in place as you tie them together with the twine or tie wire. Then make two small crosses using the 14-inch and 7½-inch branches.

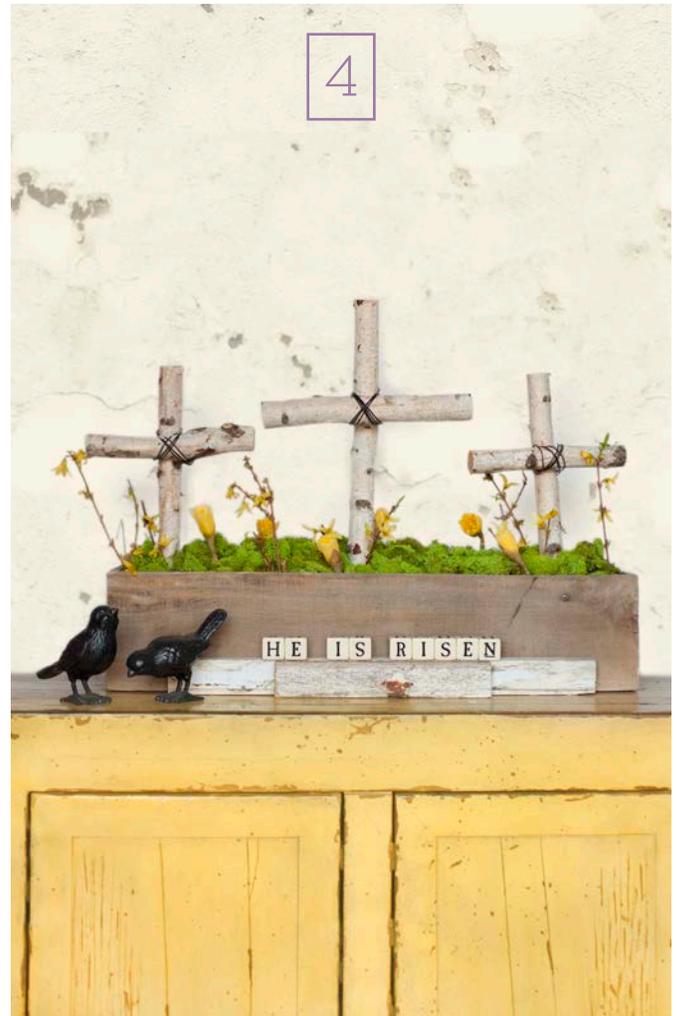
## CAPTURING THE SEASON

**As Christian parents, it can be difficult to make sure our families stay focused on Jesus at Easter.** It's easy to miss the true meaning and significance of the holiday with all the egg hunts and chocolate bunnies surrounding us. Although these traditions aren't necessarily "bad," it's most important to remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection—the foundations of our faith! This month, capture the season by making these crosses to help keep your focus on the sacrifice Jesus made—the one that took Him out of everything comfortable. Remind your children that Jesus didn't stay on that cross. He rose again and lives today!

*by Debbie Guinn*



Place the floral foam in the bottom of the crate or container and stick the crosses into the foam.



Fill the container with dirt, moss, and flowers. Place it in a prominent place in your home, and let it remind you of how much Jesus loves each one of you!

# BLESS OUR NEST



## CAPTURING THE SEASON



**These decoupage eggs will make a beautiful Easter decoration in your home.** Covered with the pages of a hymnal, they will serve as a great reminder of the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross. The word “hymn” is derived from the Greek language and means “a song of praise.”

**Take some time to go over the words of these songs with your children.** Many of these hymns have a remarkable story of faith attached to their history. Your family may enjoy looking up the songs and reading together what caused the authors to pen the beautiful words that make up these special prayers that are still relevant today. Then enjoy decoupage your eggs together!

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- papier-mâché or plastic Easter eggs
- Mod Podge (matte finish)
- small paint brush
- small dish or bowl
- old hymnal found at used book stores, thrift stores, or online

### WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Cut or tear a few pages from the hymnal.
2. Cut out the titles of the hymns and set aside. Tear or cut the rest of the pages into small pieces.
3. Brush a generous coat of Mod Podge on both sides of a paper piece.
4. Place the paper piece on the egg and use the brush to smooth it out, removing air bubbles and wrinkles as you go.
5. Continue adding Mod Podge-coated paper pieces until the egg is completely covered.
6. Mod Podge the hymn title on top of the other pieces so it stands out.
7. Place finished eggs on a cooling rack to dry.

by Debbie Guinn

# jelly bean prayer jar

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- » glass jar or vase
- » jelly beans (traditional colors)

**This month, in preparation for Easter, choose a time each day to gather and pray as a family.** Before you start, read Matthew 6 together. Explain to your children that Christ modeled how we should pray. Share with them that your prayer time this month will be guided using jelly beans. Each color of jelly bean will correspond with a particular part of the Lord's Prayer. Use this exercise to teach your children how to pray in simple and specific ways.

For the first several days, you may want to model the time of prayer by leading it for your family. Then encourage your children to take turns leading as they feel comfortable (and if they're old enough). Repeat each day until Easter Sunday and watch your jar fill with delicious prayers.

**Finally, celebrate by eating the jelly beans on Easter and take time to remember all of the ways God heard and answered your prayers throughout the month.**

You may also:

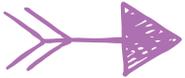
- Allow each child to have his own prayer jar
- Have toddler-age children repeat after you while you pray



*This, then, is how you should pray: "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. And 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*

## JELLY BEAN PRAYERS



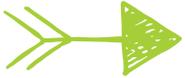
**Purple (the color of royalty): "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,"**

Identify God's attributes and offer a prayer of praise. God knows and loves us intimately because He's our Father, but he's also holy, high, and lifted up and worthy of our praise.



**Yellow (like mustard from a mustard seed): "your kingdom come,"**

Discuss and dream together what heaven and spending eternity there will be like. Thank God that He loves us and wants to spend eternity with us. Pray for others to come to know Him and be able to spend eternity in His kingdom too.



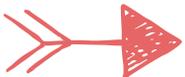
**Green (the world God created): "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."**

Pray for your world, your leaders, your community, your church, and your neighborhood. Pray that God's will would be done here as it is in heaven.



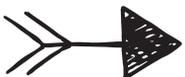
**White (the Bread of Life): "Give us today our daily bread."**

Thank God for being your Provider. Brainstorm as a family the specific ways God has met your needs, and praise Him. Pray that your family will continue to trust and depend on God for everything you need.



**Red (Jesus' blood): "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."**

Recognize the sacrifice Christ made on the cross. Be mindful of people you need to forgive and perhaps ways you may need to ask for forgiveness. Confess and ask for forgiveness.



**Black (darkness): "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."**

Pray to have your eyes opened to ways you may be tempted. Ask God to help you always see another path to take. Use this time to share with your children an age-appropriate temptation that you may struggle with, and ask your child to share too.



**Orange (enthusiasm): Amen!**

Amen literally means "so be it." Take this time to pray and thank God for sending Jesus to take the punishment for our sin. Celebrate together that Jesus didn't stay dead—He rose from the dead, and He's alive today. Encourage your children to repeat after you when you say, "He is risen; He is risen indeed." Then, all together, shout, "So be it!"

by Kelli Coltman

# Empty Tombs



## CREATE

**Understanding why Jesus had to die can be difficult for children.** Thankfully, His death for our sins isn't the end of the story. We can share with our children that Jesus isn't still dead. We can remind them that He went to the cross willingly because He loves us so much and wanted to take the punishment for our sins.

Take a moment to read Luke 24:1-8 with your children. Explain to them that Jesus is more powerful than death. He rose from the dead, and He is alive! If they believe this—if they believe He died to take away their sins—they can live with Him forever, even after their lives on this earth are done.

**This month, as a fun way to remember that Jesus has the power to conquer death, help your children create these empty tomb clothespins.**

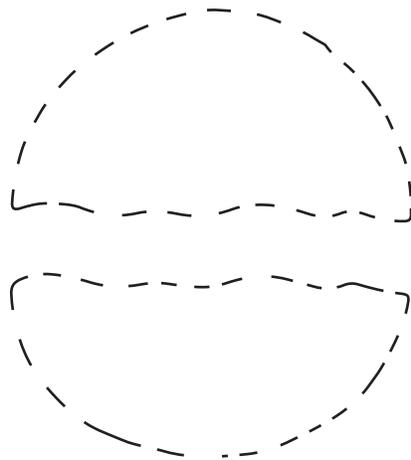
**WHAT YOU'LL NEED:**

- clothespins (1 per person)
- glue stick
- card stock (1 sheet for every 2 people, preferably white or beige)
- crayons or markers
- scissors

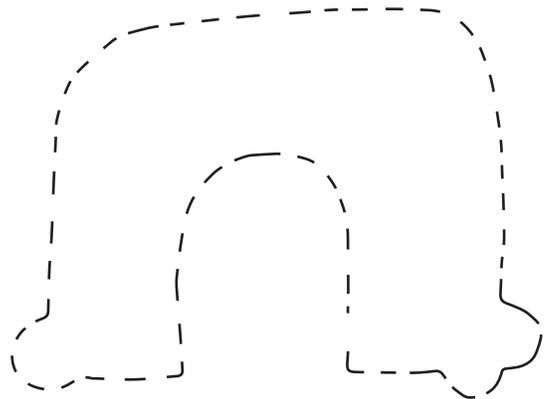
**WHAT YOU'LL DO:**

1. Cut out the stone and tomb templates provided on this page.
2. Cut out a purple "He Is Risen!" banner for each empty tomb clothespin you plan to make.
3. Using the stone and tomb templates, trace the shapes onto card stock and cut them out. You'll need one set of shapes for each clothespin.
4. Invite the children to color their stones and tombs.
5. Glue a banner to the back of a tomb so the text shows (see photo).
6. Lay a clothespin on its side and glue the tomb to the *bottom piece* of the clothespin, on the *back* (see photo).
7. Glue the top half of the stone to the *top piece* of the clothespin, on the *front*, and the bottom half of the stone on the *bottom piece* of the clothespin, also on the *front* (see photo).
8. When you press open the clothespin, you'll reveal the banner that declares, "He Is Risen!"

STONE



TOMB



# LITTLE LOST SHEEP



## CREATE



“ I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD. THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP. ”

JOHN 10:11

**PARENTS** Take some time this month to read "The Best Time of Year" in our Storytelling article (page 8). The story talks about a lost sheep and how the farmer or shepherd searched for the sheep and rescued it. After reading, ask your children, "Why do you think the Bible refers to Jesus as our Shepherd?" Then ask them why we might be referred to as sheep. Remind them that our Good Shepherd, Jesus, answered the question, "What needs to be done?" by giving up His very life for us.

**As a family, create this Little Lost Sheep to serve as a reminder that Jesus loves us and is willing to do whatever it takes to make us a part of His family.**

#### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Sheep template download (available at [dcc.is/sheeptemplate](http://dcc.is/sheeptemplate))
- variety of white buttons
- 2 small black buttons
- 1 sheet black felt
- hot glue gun
- hot glue sticks
- 8" x 10" piece of burlap
- 8" x 10" picture frame
- fine-tip permanent marker

#### WHAT YOU'LL DO

1. Download the sheep template and cut out each piece of the pattern.
2. Cut the legs and the head of the sheep out of black felt using the templates as a guide. Set these aside.
3. Take the glass out of the frame and glue the burlap to the backing of the picture frame.
4. Take the body template and center it on the burlap. Trace around the template using a fine-tip permanent marker.
5. Glue the felt legs onto the burlap.
6. Glue a single layer of buttons onto the board to fill up the body of the sheep. Make sure to cover the top edges of the legs.
7. Then add another layer of buttons, overlapping the first to fill in the gaps.
8. Glue the head of the sheep in place slightly overlapping the buttons.
9. Glue a black button onto a white button and glue in place on the head for each of the eyes.

by Stephanie Reindel

Stephanie joined the HomeFront team in January 2015 as the designer and photographer. She and her husband, Joel, have been married a year-and-a-half and love their dog, Scout. Stephanie enjoys using the creative talent God has given her to help put HomeFront into the hands of parents looking for new and fun ways to spiritually nurture their children.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

# Resurrection Eggs

Resurrection Eggs are plastic Easter eggs that each contain a small item (such as a cross or rock) related to the resurrection of Christ. Usually each item corresponds with a Scripture reading focusing on Easter. Resurrection Eggs can be found in many Christian stores and online, and you can also find instructions online for making your own. They're a great, creative way to help children celebrate the truth and power of Easter.

Use your own set of Resurrection Eggs and the following prompts to start meaningful conversations with your children. Each prompt corresponds with an item inside an egg. You can open one egg each day or open them all during a family night. The eggs can be used in many fun ways, and the best part is that they'll keep the focus of Easter where it should be—on Jesus.

by Alissa Goble

## PARENTS:

Some of these questions require thought and vulnerability. They might take some family members out of their comfort zone. Remind your family that in these moments, God often meets us in bold and exciting ways. Cultivate a safe sharing environment, and always begin your time together in prayer.

## GET YOUR CHILDREN TALKING:

1

### DONKEY Matthew 21:1-3

The donkey's owner gave the donkey to the disciples right away when they told him that Jesus needed it.

**Q** If you could give Jesus anything, what would it be? Why?

2

### COINS Matthew 26:14-15

Money was important to Judas—so important that it played a significant role in his betrayal of Jesus.

**Q** What is one thing in your life that might distract you from loving Jesus?

3

### PURPLE CLOTH Mark 15:17

Purple is the color of royalty, and Jesus is the King of Kings.

**Q** We also call Jesus by other names, including Savior, Friend, Healer, and others. What name do you like the most? Why?

4

### CUP Matthew 26:27-28

The evening before He was arrested, Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover meal together. Jesus used the bread to represent His body that would be broken on the cross and the wine to represent the blood that He would shed the very next day.

**Q** How do you feel when you think about Jesus willingly giving His life for yours?

5

**THORNS OR CROWN** Matthew 27:29

Think about how Jesus must have felt being mocked by the very people He came to save.

**Q** Has anyone ever made fun of you? How did you feel?

6

**SCOURGE** Mark 15:15

Pilate listened to the crowd; he didn't do what he knew was right.

**Q** Why is it sometimes easier to listen to people around us than to Jesus? What can we do to hear Him more?

7

**CROSS** John 19:17

Picture yourself in the crowd walking alongside Jesus as He carried His cross.

**Q** What would you say to Him?

8

**DIE** Luke 23:34

Jesus forgave the soldiers who gambled for His possessions.

**Q** Is there someone in your life you need to forgive? How could you take steps to let that person know that you forgive him?

9

**NAIL** Luke 23:33a

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they hammered nails in His hands and feet.

**Q** When you think about the pain Jesus suffered on the cross for you, how do you feel? What do you want to say to Him?

10

**SPEAR** John 19:34

The soldiers wanted to be sure Jesus was dead.

**Q** What would you say to someone who said he needed proof that Jesus is real?

11

**ROCK** Matthew 27:59-60

Joseph gave Jesus something very valuable as an act of worship and blessing.

**Q** Can you think of someone in need whom we could bless as an act of worship?

12

**EMPTY** Matthew 28:6

Celebrate! He isn't in the tomb—He's alive!

**Q** What are some ways we can honor Jesus' sacrifice for us?

# OPERATION SNEAK ATTACK



*The Rizo family*

**When I was a young girl, I relished my great grandmother's Easter tradition of saving up her spare change and hiding it in the Easter eggs.**

I fondly recall running wild in her backyard, picking up eggs and shaking them as they dropped into my basket. We would finish the afternoon by sitting on the floor, lining up our piles of money, and counting our loot. Whoever walked away with the most was declared that year's winner.

I enjoyed finding Easter eggs and wanted to pass this tradition on to my children. As I began to prepare for Easter back in 2012, I felt like something

was missing. My husband and I had recently moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to help with a new church focused on missional living. We had spent the previous two years studying what this means and now it was time to develop it in our family's culture. How could we tangibly celebrate the resurrection of Christ with not only our kids, but also our neighbors and friends? And with that simple question, Operation Sneak Attack was born.

The evening of Easter began with the Mission Impossible theme song blaring through our van's speakers. Our hearts started to race as we drove

## TRADITIONS

down the road. Joyous sounds filled our van. We were dressed as ninjas, ready to surprise our first targets.

So as to not be quickly seen, we parked our car at the corner and walked quietly to our friend's home. Each child hid three eggs.

I raced back to the car with kids in tow while my husband taped a handwritten note to the front door:

"You've been egged! The Rizo kids hid 12 eggs in your yard. Enjoy the hunt, but do not be discouraged when you find the empty egg. It is a simple reminder of Jesus' empty tomb. For He is risen!"

My husband knocked loudly on the door and made a mad dash back to us.

**As we drove away, the kids' endless laughter wrapped around my heart.** In that moment, I felt the impact of "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). This sparked a movement in our family. Daily we speak over our kids the words, "Be kind to one another, considering others better than yourself" (from Philippians 2:1-4). Operation Sneak Attack has taken these verses and allowed our kids to experience authentic love in action.

## HERE ARE A FEW STRATEGY STARTERS FOR YOUR OWN MISSION

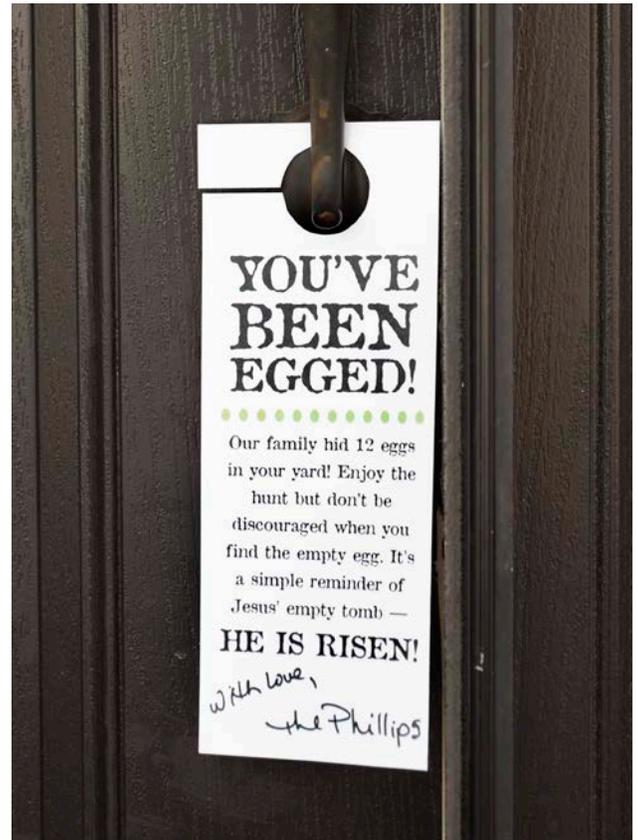
**1. It begins with relationships.** Open your home, meet your neighbors, invite them over for dinner, and hear their stories. As Dan Allender writes in his book *Leading Character*, "We are to have a character that invites others to see the goodness of Christ and to be a character that intrigues and compels others to discover what it means to be forgiven and set free to live with passion and joy."

**2. Listen carefully.** Are your neighbors fighting a battle behind closed doors? If you hear of a need, that's your cue to pray, "Lord, how can we bless them and point them to you?" If your friend is struggling to buy food, you may want to buy some of the essentials and leave them on her doorstep. If your neighbor is in financial need, you can tape an envelope of cash to his door. Perhaps it is as simple as inviting the widow(er) over for weekly tea, dropping off flowers, or asking him/her to read books to your children. It doesn't have to be much to bless, encourage, and love those around you. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer stated in *Life Together*, "It is God's love for us that He not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear. So it is His work that we do for our brother when we learn to listen to him."

**3. Plan out your own special mission with your kids.** Get your kids involved and allow them to own a part of your family's tradition. Play together. Laugh together. Serve together. Your family will grow up with these memories and others will be deeply blessed by them, too.

by Jacqueline Rizo

*Jacqueline is a freelance writer by night and homeschool mom by day. She graduated from Ozark Christian College with her bachelor's degree in Christian Ministry. She has spent the past 15 years serving alongside her husband, Sergio Rizo. They have four children: Josiah (11), Lydia (8), Eliah (7), and Clara (5). She has a passion for journaling and the art of storytelling. Her heartbreaking story of loss was featured on USA TODAY. She transparently shares her life and love for Jesus in venues around Nashville, TN. You can easily find her on her blog: [todaywrittenbymom.com](http://todaywrittenbymom.com).*



If you and your family would like to start the tradition of Operation Sneak Attack by egging a friend or neighbor, go to [dcc.is/egged](http://dcc.is/egged) to download your own "You've Been Egged" doorknob hangers.



# HOLY WEEK

**“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51).** Such a simple verse, but have you ever taken a moment to consider the weight of these words? “Resolutely”... Jesus was determined. He knew full well what awaited Him in Jerusalem and yet, in firmness and determination, He went anyway. That is service. Jesus chose to “give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

**Jesus is a perfect example of service.** He demonstrated both in His life and His death what it means to love other people and to continually ask the question, “What needs to be done?” During Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter), spend some time each day in God’s Word. Reflect on the perfect example of Jesus and think through ways we can better serve the people God brings into our lives.

## PALM SUNDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 21:1-11. Jesus sent His disciples to find a donkey. Then, in full humility, Jesus sat on that donkey as He entered the city of Jerusalem. As He rode, the people shouted at the top of their lungs, “Hosanna!” and “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” The people cried out and laid their coats and palm branches on the ground as the donkey click-clacked along the path.

### DO IT

Close your eyes and picture this scene. Jerusalem’s roads are dusty and dirty. Huge crowds press along the main street. People are crying. There are shouts of celebration and excitement. The scene must have been absolutely overwhelming. Now think about Jesus as He sits on the donkey. He is entering this city because He loves these people. Jesus not only loves these people, but He also loves you and me. He is willing to die so that all of us can have life. Open your eyes. How did Jesus model what it means to be a servant as He rode into Jerusalem?

## MONDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 21:12-13. Jesus reminds us that the church is meant to be a place of prayer and of praising God. Jesus was angry that people had turned His house into a place of greed and profit.

### DO IT

Jesus still cares about His church today. He wants churches around the world to be places of prayer and praising God. Spend some time in prayer for the church around the world. Ask God to help people in every country hear about Him and to be able to worship Him. Use the Global article on page 32 and spend time praying for the church in Greece.

## TUESDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 26:6-13. This woman was willing to give up incredibly costly perfume in order to serve Jesus. She gave what she had to demonstrate her love for God.

### DO IT

We can serve God by allowing Him to use our time, talents, and treasures. What is something you are willing to give today to demonstrate your love for God? Spend time thinking about something each person in the family can give out of their love for Jesus. Examples might include donating toys to a family in need, baking cookies and giving up your time to share them this Easter, giving money to the church, or other creative acts of service.

## WEDNESDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 26:14-16. Judas was Jesus' friend—he walked with Jesus, learned from Jesus, and shared life with Jesus. And yet, Judas was so fixated on money and wanting more that he was willing to do the unthinkable and sell his friend's life for 30 silver coins.

### DO IT

What have you let get in the way of your friendship with Jesus? Judas was willing to give his friend's life away for money. What about you? Walk around the house as a family and point out things that can get in the way of your friendship with Jesus. For example, as you walk past the TV, say something like, "TV can be a fun way for our family to relax, but watching too much TV can get in the way of listening to God and doing what He has called us to do." Walking past a clock could prompt you to say, "It's easy to feel like there isn't enough time to talk to Jesus or to serve other people, but what is the truth about our time?"

## MAUNDY THURSDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 26:17-30. This was the last supper that Jesus shared with His friends. At this meal Jesus introduced the practice we call "communion" or "the Lord's supper." Today we celebrate communion with others as a way of remembering Jesus and this last meal He ate with the disciples. Verse 30 says that they finished by singing together. Up until the very end of Jesus' life, He chose to be a part of His faith community and to celebrate God with them.

### DO IT

Sing a worship song together. Pick a song that celebrates Jesus' sacrifice for us. Even if you don't know all the lyrics, play it a few times until everyone catches on. Fill the room you are in with loud singing, thanking God for who He is and His great love for us. During this time, remember Jesus. Remember that last meal Jesus ate with His friends. And remember Jesus' ultimate act of service when He died for us on the cross.

## GOOD FRIDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 27:27-37, 50-54. In the greatest act of service ever, Jesus died on the cross. Jesus knew that all of us are hopelessly separated from God because of our sin. But God loves us and wants us to know Him, so He asked His perfect son, Jesus, to pay for our sin. And Jesus chose to die on the cross for us. For all of us.

### DO IT

Silence. Spend two to three minutes in complete silence. This will be a hard task for some children, but explain that what Jesus did on the cross was for each one of us. As everyone remains quiet, have them each think about how Jesus chose to serve others. Think about how amazing it is that Jesus chose to die on the cross for each of us.

## SATURDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 27:57-66. Jesus was buried in a tomb. What do you think the tomb was like? Guards were posted at the door of the tomb. Those guards may have felt silly, guarding the tomb of a man who had died. The guards may have wondered to themselves, "Why this tomb? What was so special about this man?"

### DO IT

Make a list of all the things that are special about Jesus. Think about the miracles He performed, the ways He served people, and His amazing love. Try to write out as many things as possible describing why Jesus was completely unique and special. There has never been anyone else as wonderful as Jesus!

## EASTER SUNDAY

### HEAR IT

Read Matthew 28:1-10. Jesus is risen! What amazing news! Jesus did not stay dead—He rose from the grave! What an amazing and awesome God we serve. An angel appeared to spread the word and then Jesus Himself appeared. Jesus proved that He alone is more powerful than sin and God alone is more powerful than death. Jesus is alive and this is the miracle we celebrate at Easter.

### DO IT

Celebrate the truth that Jesus is risen. Just as the angel declared to the women, "He has risen," today declare that Jesus is risen to everyone you encounter. Begin right now by shouting the good news that Jesus is risen as loud as you can. Throughout the day, find people to share this truth with. Jesus rose so we could have freedom from sin and friendship with God, and this is the best news we will ever hear!

---

by Krista Heinen

Krista is the NextGen Associate Pastor at Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, WI. Krista helps equip and support the families at Elmbrook through resources, events, and conversations.

 Twitter @KristaHeinen