



St Paul's



Easter Village Trail

Introduction

Easter is a wonderful time of celebration. We enjoy time off work and school. We enjoy hunting for eggs and eating chocolate and hot cross buns. But what's it really all about? Do you know the true story of the first Easter? As you follow our trail around the village, you'll find 13 different pictures, each of which shows something that happened at the first Easter. You can read the story below. The challenge is to write down the letters you'll find on each poster and rearrange them to make a mystery phrase.

The Easter story is the story of what happened to a man named Jesus 2000 years ago. You may have heard of him – we celebrate his birthday at Christmas. But the little baby born in a stable whom we remember at Christmas grew up. Jesus taught people about God and the right way to live. But Jesus wasn't just a good teacher. He did many amazing things, things that only God can do, like healing sick people without medicines and stopping a storm just by telling it to be quiet! And Jesus said that he had come into the world to save people, to make it possible for us to be friends with God and go to heaven. The Easter story tells us how Jesus carried out **God's Rescue Plan**.

1



At Easter-time, we see lots of pictures of chicks and bunnies, but not so many donkeys! Jesus and his close friends went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, an important Jewish festival. But Jesus didn't walk into the city. He told two of his disciples to bring him a donkey. He even told them where they could find it. Jesus then rode the donkey into Jerusalem.

2



A big crowd welcomed Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem. They had heard about the things that Jesus had been doing. They were excited because long ago God had promised to send a special King who would rescue his people and rule over them forever. God had also said that he would come riding on a donkey. The people cut down palm branches to wave and put them on the road in front of Jesus. They shouted praises to God. But not everyone was happy. The religious leaders in Jerusalem did not like Jesus. They saw how many people were following him, and they were jealous and angry. They wanted to get rid of Jesus.

3



Jesus and his disciples gathered together for the special Passover meal. Before they ate, Jesus filled a bowl with water and washed his disciples' feet. This was a dirty job – imagine how filthy people's feet got, wearing sandals on the hot, dusty, dirty roads! Foot washing was a job for a servant, not a king. But Jesus was showing his disciples how to love and serve each other. He is the King who came to serve, not be served.

4

Jesus had 12 disciples, special friends who had been with him since he had started travelling and telling people about God. But one of them, Judas Iscariot, had decided to turn against Jesus. Judas had been to talk to the religious leaders. They had given Judas 30 silver coins to betray Jesus so they could get rid of him by killing him. Jesus knew that Judas planned to do this.

5

Jesus knew that he was going to die soon. At the Passover meal, Jesus picked up a loaf of bread and thanked God for it. Then he broke it into pieces. He gave it to his disciples, telling them that his body would be broken like the bread. In the same way, he took a cup of wine and thanked God for it. He gave it to his disciples to drink, saying that when they drank wine they should remember that his blood was shed for them. He told them to do this as a way to remember him – Christians today still do this.

6

After the meal, Jesus went to a garden to pray. The disciples went along too. Jesus prayed, "Father God, I don't want to suffer and die, but what you want is more important. I am ready to give my life." Jesus knew that the only way that he could rescue people and make it possible for them to be friends with God, was if he died in their place. He loves us so much that he was willing to take the punishment we deserve from God for all our wrongs.

7

The religious leaders sent some soldiers to take Jesus away. Judas showed them who to arrest by giving Jesus a kiss. This was the signal to the soldiers. Peter, one of the disciples, wanted to protect Jesus and tried to stop the soldiers, but Jesus said, "No. I must allow this to happen." All the disciples ran away, and the soldiers arrested Jesus.

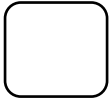
8

Jesus was taken to the religious leaders. They said, "You say you are the Son of God. We do not believe you!" They sent Jesus to the Roman leader. He couldn't find any reason to kill Jesus, but the crowd shouted, "Kill him on a cross!", so he handed Jesus over to the soldiers. The soldiers hurt Jesus and mocked him. They made him wear a crown made of spiky thorns because he had said he was God's King.

9

The soldiers made Jesus carry a huge wooden cross to a place called The Skull. There they nailed Jesus to the cross. Even though Jesus had never done anything wrong, he was punished like a criminal. As he died on the cross, Jesus shouted out, "It is finished!" What was? Jesus had done what was necessary to pay the price for our rebellion against God. He had carried out God's great rescue plan. Jesus' death wasn't a terrible mistake. It wasn't the nails that kept Jesus on the cross. It was love. His great love for us. That's why the day we especially remember this is called *Good Friday*.

10



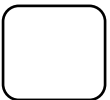
When Jesus died, something strange happened a distance away in the Temple. There was an enormous curtain in the Temple which kept people out of the most holy part of the Temple. It showed that people couldn't just be friends with God. The way we live, not treating God as God and not loving others as we should, means that we can't be friends with God. But when Jesus died, the curtain in the Temple split into two pieces. The tear started at the top (where no one could have reached) and tore all the way to the bottom. Jesus had taken our punishment, so the way back to God was now open.

11



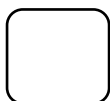
After Jesus died, some of his friends gently carried Jesus' body and laid it in a tomb carved out of rock. They sealed it shut with a huge stone. The religious leaders sent soldiers to guard the tomb to make sure no one could get in. Jesus' friends were very sad. How could this have happened? Wasn't Jesus the Rescuer? The King God had promised? It wasn't supposed to end like this. Yes, but this wasn't the end....

12



Three days later, just before sunrise, God sent an earthquake – and an angel from heaven. When the soldiers saw the angel they fell down with fright. The angel rolled the huge stone away, sat on top of it and waited. When some women arrived at the tomb to wash Jesus' body, they found the tomb was open and Jesus' body was gone. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He is alive again!" The women were the first to see Jesus, then the disciples did, and then hundreds more people.

13



A lifebelt?! What's that got to do with Easter? Well, what do you use a lifebelt like this for? That's right, for rescuing someone. Someone who can't save themselves from the water. We all need rescuing, not from drowning, but from God's punishment for the way we don't treat him as God and for the way we don't love other people like we should. Jesus came to be God's Rescuer King. The true story of the first Easter doesn't end at the empty tomb. We can become a part of the story of Easter, by recognising our need of rescue and asking Jesus to be our Rescuer. Now, that's something worth celebrating this Easter!

Congratulations on reaching the end of our Easter Village Trail. Now, rearrange the letters you've collected to work out the mystery phrase. Don't forget to add the bonus letter!

n



Easter Village Trail

Answer Sheet

Make a note of the letters in the egg on each poster. We'll throw in an N for free!

1.		8.	
2.		9.	
3.		10.	
4.		11.	
5.		12.	
6.		13.	
7.		Bonus	n

Now rearrange the letters to work out the mystery phrase (Clue: it's what Easter's all about).

_____ , _____

Hand in your completed answer sheet to enter the prize draw for Easter goodies by

- bringing it to one of our Easter services (Good Friday 10am or Easter Sunday 10am)
- emailing it to easter@litleeatonchurch.co.uk (by 10pm on Saturday 31st March)
- posting it through the letterbox at 138 Alfreton Road (by 9am on Easter Sunday)

The Prize Draw will take place at the 10am Easter Sunday Service.

Name: _____

Email Address/Mobile Number: _____

If you would like to know more about Jesus, the Rescuer King, please do get in touch or come along to any of our services. Details can be found on our website or Facebook page.

Your details will not be used for any other purpose than contacting you if you win a prize, and will be deleted/destroyed afterwards.