

IN THEIR SHOES

Step into the shoes of six people in the Easter story and look at what happened through their eyes. This resource brings to life some of the lesser known or briefly mentioned people in the story.

This resource contains:

- Six scripts to bring these characters to life
- An outline of possible services, showing you how to include these characters in your Easter services.

You choose which characters to introduce, and which approach will best suit your church.

The Six Stories:

1. Hannah, Samuel and Isaiah: noisy children in the temple: Matt 21:12-17
2. Benjamin and his jar of water: Luke 22:7-23
3. Sarah sits by the fire: Luke 22:54-62
4. Claudia's Dream: Matt 27:11-26
5. Marcus and his surprising discovery: Matt 27:38-55
6. Crispus spreads rumours Matt 27:62-28:15



Top tips:

- Decide how many characters you want to introduce, and over how many weeks.
- Give the chosen scripts out to people of a range of ages, enough in advance that they can practice their roles.
- Create any props you would like to go along with each script. This is optional, as the scripts stand alone. Costumes can be as simple as a white sheet wrapped around with a dressing gown tie. Avoid using tea towels as headgear, as this is not appropriate for some cultures. Alternatively, you can make your characters wear oversized name badges that the congregation can read.

Suggested Structure:

Here is a suggested way to include these six characters in your service. They are a guide, so adapt this to suit your church family.

- Palm Sunday: character 1 and 2
- Easter Friday: characters 3, 4 and 5
- Easter Sunday: character 6





Suggested Service Outlines

Palm Sunday (approx 1 hour long service)

Timing	Item	Details
2mins	Welcome	
2mins	Prayer	
10mins	1-2 Songs	
10mins	Story #1 Hannah, Samuel and Isaiah: noisy children in the temple (Matt 21)	<p>You will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A narrator• As they enter the church, give every child a slip of paper with the words, “Hosanna” written on it and tell them to listen for when “Hosanna” is said in the story and then to stand up and shout this word out. <p>Give each person the script in advance so they can practice their lines.</p>
5mins	Discussion	<p>In small groups choose one of these questions to discuss:</p> <p>If you had been in that crowd that day, who would you have been? One of the children, one of the leaders trying to work out what’s going on, the parents who may have been frazzled and trying to keep their children quiet?</p> <p>What do you think it was about Jesus that led the children to call out, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David?’</p>
2mins	Bible Reading	<p>Choose two people of different ages to read the passage: Matthew 21:12-17</p>
6mins	Story #2: Benjamin and his jar of water: Luke 22	<p>Choose someone to dress up and tell the story as Benjamin. Use the script, but where possible memorise as much of the story as they can.</p>



Palm Sunday outline pg 2.

Timing	Item	Details
6mins	Short reflection	<p>Invite someone to share a brief reflection on one or both of these stories. Ask them ahead of time to read the passage/s and think about something to share. You may like to choose two people of different generations.</p> <p>Here are some suggested key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be prepared. Both the children and the man with the water jar recognised the moment when it came.• The children recognised Jesus for who he was, while the religious leaders didn't. This is upside down to what we might expect.• The man with the water jar recognised that the disciples needed his room and without hesitation gave it to them.• We can be on the lookout for what God is doing, recognise where we see God at work and be ready to say yes to the opportunities that come our way.
4mins	1 song	
6mins	Communion	<p>During the lead up to Jesus' death and resurrection, communion or the Lord's supper takes on particular significance. You will need to decide how your church tradition will take communion with all generations present. We encourage you to consider how you include children and families in this.</p>
4mins	1 song	Optional, depending on time.
3mins	Prayer to close Blessing or benediction	



Suggested Service Outlines

Easter Friday (Approx 70mins long)

Timing	Item	Details
2mins	Welcome	
2mins	Prayer	
10mins	1-2 Songs	
10mins	Story #3: Sarah sits by the fire (Luke 22)	You will need: - a Narrator, Sarah, Peter, Leah, Darius - The sound effect of a rooster crowing Give each person the script in advance so they can practice their lines.
5mins	Reflection	Invite people to think in silence, or invite one person to share their story: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you ever gone back on your word, been brave in your opinions but later turned scared?• Are we sometimes fearful of people finding out that we are a friend of Jesus?
2mins	Bible Reading	Choose two people of different ages to read the passage: Luke 22:7-23



Easter Friday pg 2.

Timing	Item	Details
6mins	Story #4: Claudia's Dream (Matt 27)	<p>Have someone place a large basin somewhere on the stage where people can see it. Have a couple of people bring in jugs of water and pour them into the basin. (Don't tell people why, this captures their attention!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have several people sit on bar stools on stage to share the reading of the script.• Have someone dressed as Claudia walk in from the side to say her lines (in italics in the script)• When you come to the part of the script where Pilate washes his hands, have one of the readers stand up, walk over to the basin and wash their hands.
6mins	Activity:	<p>These stories bring up lots of emotions; the disappointment and despair of Peter, the anger of the crowd, the confusion of Pilate and his wife. Give each person a square of paper about 3cm x 3cm and something to write with. Invite each person to either write or draw an emoji that describes how they feel as they hear this story. Instruct them to then fold the corners of their paper into the middle (doesn't need to be exact) to create a little parcel. Ask them to hold onto their parcel.</p>
10mins	Response and 1 song	<p>While the musicians play the next song in the background, we invite you to bring your parcel to the front and place it on top of the water in the basin. As the water soaks into the parcels, they will open to reveal what is written or drawn inside. As you place your parcel on the water, you may want to pray a short prayer, committing to God the emotions that surface for you. Maybe it is disappointment and despair like Peter, anger at injustice in defence of Jesus or against Jesus even, or confusion like Pilate and his wife. (cont on pg 3)</p>



Easter Friday pg 3.

Timing	Item	Details
	Response cont...	<p>Commit this to God and as you return to your seat, listen for what God might want to say to you in response.</p> <p>Once most people have had the opportunity, we will stand and sing a song together in response.</p>
10mins	Story #5: Marcus and his surprising discover (Matt 27)	<p>Turn off the lights in the church, if possible, just as someone walks onto the stage dressed as Marcus, a Roman centurion and tells his story.</p> <p>You may like to use images from Max7.org on PowerPoint.</p>
1min	Invitation	<p>As we leave here today let's take the words of the roman soldier with us to think about: surely, surely this man was who he said he was. Surely, he was the Son of God!"</p> <p>Let's take these words with us into Easter Saturday, the time of waiting and mourning, the time of reflection on who Jesus is.</p>
3mins	Prayer to close Benediction or blessing	



Suggested Service Outlines

Easter Sunday (approx 1 hour long service)

Timing	Item	Details
2mins	Welcome	
2mins	Prayer	
10mins	1-2 Songs	
3mins	Play "Pass the Rumour"	<p>Ask for four volunteers. Invite them to stand on the stage at the front. Whisper in the first person's ear a sentence. They then whisper the sentence into the next persons ear, and so on down the line.</p> <p>Have the first and the last person share what they heard the sentence to be.</p> <p>Today, we will meet someone who helped to spread some rumours that have lasted a long time and reached many people!</p>
10mins	Story #6: Crispus spreads rumours (Matt 27:62-28:15)	<p>Display this image of the empty tomb on the PowerPoint.</p> <p>You will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrator, Pilate, Jewish leaders <p>Give each person the script in advance so they can practice their lines.</p>
5mins	Small Group Discussion	<p>Invite people to talk in small groups about one of these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you heard anything untrue said about Jesus? What was it?• What do you think stopped the Jewish authorities for recognising that Jesus had come back to life?• What do you think happened to Crispus after this story? Do you think it changed his life in anyway?



Easter Sunday pg 2.

Timing	Item	Details
2mins	Bible Reading	Choose two people of different ages to read the passage: Matt 27:62-28:15
6mins	Short Reflection	The Jewish authorities who were the leaders of the religion, had a choice to make. They could have chosen to accept what had happened. They could have investigated it and asked questions. Instead, they wanted to stop the news from getting out, so desperately that they bribed some soldiers with a large amount of money. They refused to look at what happened and admit that, like the Centurion at the cross, “Surely, surely, this man was who he said he was. Surely, he was the Son of God!”
4mins	Song	Sing a song that declares that Jesus is the Son of God.
4mins	Response	Give each person a length of gold ribbon to symbolise the empty tomb and the blazing light! (You could place these on chairs before the service). Pass around marker pens. Give people time to write on their ribbon a word of response. The centurion said ‘Surely’, the guards said ‘Give us the money’, the Jewish leaders said ‘No’. Choose a word to describe your response to Jesus. You could draw a ?Question mark? If you have questions about if Jesus truly did rise to life. Invite people to take their ribbon home and place it in their Bible or a book as a reminder.
2mins	Prayer to close Blessing or benediction	