

EASTER OFFERING



Easter Celebration

Three readers are needed, in addition to those providing testimonies. You will want to contact several people (all ages) in advance for their testimonies. Explain that this will precede the Easter Offering. If they would emphasize that they are participating in the Easter Offering for world evangelism so others around the world may know of the saving grace of Jesus, it would make the Easter Offering more meaningful.

Another option is to have a large offering receptacle nearby. As each person finishes the testimony, he or she places the offering in the receptacle.

Reader 1: Please join us in the traditional Easter greeting: He is risen!

Readers 2 and 3: (with congregation) He is risen indeed!

Reader 1: The following story is told in Matthew 28:1–10, 16–20. We are reading from *The Message*. (Other versions may be substituted.)

¹ After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

⁵ The angel said to the women, . . .

Reader 2: “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”

Reader 1: ⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them....

Reader 3: “Greetings,” . . .

Reader 1: . . . he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them,

Reader 3: “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”

Reader 1: ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, . . .

Reader 3: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Reader 2: It is significant that the Great Commission follows so closely after the Easter narrative. Just as the disciples joyfully celebrated the resurrection of Jesus and were commanded to “go and make disciples of all nations,” today we celebrate the salvation of a number of people of all ages from our congregation.

(Those giving testimonies are introduced by the readers. Each presents his or her testimony and places an offering in the receptacle. After the testimonies conclude, the readers continue. If you wish to receive the Easter Offering from the congregation at the front, the readers may give instructions and an exciting Easter song may be played and/or sung as the offering is received.)

Reader 3: We celebrate with these who have shared their testimonies this morning, and we celebrate Easter with you. The story of the change Jesus made in your life is important to share. Tell someone about it this week.

Reader 2: And celebrate that you have helped make a difference in lives around the world by giving to the World Evangelism Fund. This important offering helps the Church of the Nazarene reach thousands of people globally, allowing them to learn of Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection power.

Reader 1: As we go from this holy place, let us participate joyfully in the Easter greeting again—He is risen!

Readers 2 and 3: (with congregation) He is risen indeed!

Gail L. Sawrie • Editor