***THE EASTER CODE***

**Lenten Worship Series – Easter**

***Code Word:* Gain**

**April 9, 2023**

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| **WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINE**S  Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. Sermon manuscripts are included as a *sample* and not to be preached verbatim. |

**[*Project* “Easter.QRCode”***(in Graphics file)* ***or below words on screen as people enter*]**

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| ***Code Word:* Gain**  ***The gospel story reveals that Jesus followers have gained a mission and a purpose in our lives; to go into the world and make disciples.*** |

**Call to Worship**

Let us relive the joy of the first Easter by reading from the gospel of John:

**[*Put scripture below on screen.*]**

**11**Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb **12**and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

**13**They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” **14**At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

**15**He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

**16**Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

(John 20:11-16a, NIV)

**Leader: He is risen.**

**All: He is risen indeed!**

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| **SB#218/HC#233/SS#181 – Christ the Lord is risen today** | TB-248 – Easter Hymn  HC-233  SS-181 | HTD3-T9 (4 vs.)  HCD22-T13 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **HC#204 – See, What a Morning** | HC-204 | HCD19-14 |
| **HC#209 – Come People of the Risen King** | HC-209 | HCD19-T19 |
| **SB#358/HC#241/SS#30 – Crown Him with many crowns** | TB-162 – Diademata  HC-241  SS-30 | HTD1-T8 (4 vs.)  HCD23-T11 |
| **SB#276 – Thine is the glory** | TB-746 – Maccabeus | No CD |

**Invocation**

**Announcements and Offering**

***The Great Commission***

**Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20**

[Scripture can be read by one person, split up into a responsive reading, or as a “readers’ theater using *The Voice* version - <https://www.biblegateway.com/> ]

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| **Children’s Moment – Gain** |

**Message: *Code Word:* Gain**

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| ***Code Word:* Multiply**  **“Go into all the world and make disciples.” - (Matthew 28:19)** |
| **EXPLAIN:** During the Lenten season we have had the opportunity to intentionally fast and pray for the salvation of others. The goal and focus of ‘Multiply’ was to share our faith and to develop an *urgency of salvation* mindset for those who do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ; and to invite congregants to fast/pray for salvation of others.  Today we celebrate the opportunities of sharing Christ with others and the victories of those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior! |
| **The cross should be removed from the prayer box replaced by a rock depicting the open tomb to reflect the resurrection.** |
| * Refer to the prayer box on the holiness table with the prayer cards contained highlighting the different colors and what they represent. [praying for salvation, witnessed, accepted Christ] * Pastoral Prayer * Sing chosen song/s from the lists below [upbeat song/s preferred—praise/celebrate.] |

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| **SB#89/HC#161/SS#48 – O for a thousand tongues to sing (My Great Redeemer’s Praise)** | TB-59 – Azmon  TB-75 – Grimsby  HC-161  SS-48 | HTD3-T4 (4 vs.)  No HT CD  HCD15-T11 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#73/HC#141/SS#28 – All hail the power** | TB-306 – Coronation  HC-141  SS-28 | HTD5-T5 (4 vs.)  HCD13-T11 |
| **SB#261/HC#99/SS#56 – Lord, the light of Your love is shining (Shine, Jesus, Shine)** | TB-822 – same  HC-99  SS-56 | No CD  HCD8-T19 |
| **SB#326/HC#81 –Thou Christ [O God] of burning, cleansing flame** | TB-294 – Send the fire  HC-81 | No CD  HCD7-T11 |
| **SB#391/HC#171 – Stand up and bless the Lord** | TB-149 – Falcon Street  HC-171 | HTD3-T12 (3 vs.)  HCD16-T11 |
| **SB#971/HC#181/SS#154 – Onward, Christian soldiers** | TB-188 – same  HC-171  SS-154 | HTD2-T10 (3 vs.)  HCD17-T11 |
| **SB#819/HC#202 – O Church, arise** | TB-777 – same  HC-202 | No CD  HCD19-T12 |
| **SB#938/HC#277 – We have caught the vision splendid** | TB-394 – Austria  HC-277 | HTD1-T2 (3 vs.)  HCDT26-17 |
| **SB#960/HC#271 – In the Army of Jesus (I’ll Stand for Christ)** | TB-692 – same  HC-271 | HTD4-T7 (4 vs.)  HCD26-T11 |
| **HC#209 – Come People of the Risen King** | HC-209 | HCD19-T19 |
| **HC#250 – Hear the Call of the Kingdom** | HC-250 | HCD23-T20 |

**Leader: 8**But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

(Acts 1:8, NIV)

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| **Drama – Two Times Two Times Two, Etc.** |

**Benediction**

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| **HC#309 – Go in Peace, Go in Love** | HC-309 | HCD29-T19 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#861/HC#149/SS#41 – In Christ alone** | TB-132 – same  HC-149  SS-41 | No HT CD  HCD13-T19 |
| **HC#128 – My Tribute** | HC-128 | HCD11-T18 |
| **SB#358/HC#241/SS#30 – Crown Him with many crowns** | TB-162 – Diademata  HC-241  SS-30 | HTD1-T8 (4 vs.)  HCD23-T11 |
| **SB#241 – And can it be** | TB-445 – Sagina | HTD4-T13 (4 vs.) |

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| **Lent 2023 - Easter Sunday** | |
| **DRAMA**  **Two Times Two Times Two, Etc.**  **By Martyn Scott Thomas**  © Copyright 2022 by Martyn Scott Thomas. All rights reserved. Used by permission. | |
| **Topic:** | The Great Commission |
| **Scripture:** | Acts 1:8 |
| **Synopsis:** | Two disciples make an evangelism plan. |
| **Characters:** | Peter – Jesus’s disciple  Andrew – Jesus’s disciple (Peter’s brother) |
| **Props/Costumes:** | Modern or Biblical dress. |
| **Setting:** | Bare stage. |
| **Running time:** | 3 minutes |

[*Peter and Andrew are pacing back and forth, avoiding each other, but occasionally bumping into each other.*]

**Peter:** [*stops and looks at Andrew*] Do you have anything yet?

**Andrew:** [*stops*] No. Do you?

**Peter:** I have an idea for Jerusalem.

**Andrew:** Well, that’s a start. Let’s hear it!

**Peter:** We split up into teams of two and start in the Temple and spread out from there. I figure we can cover all the city in about three weeks.

**Andrew:** The Temple is huge. Do you know how many people visit there in one week’s time?

**Peter:** That’s why we all start there. We can get a big chunk of the city’s population without having to travel too much.

**Andrew:** And then what? Roam the streets?

**Peter:** Well, we can concentrate on the markets and other common areas.

**Andrew:** Impossible!

**Peter:** What do you mean? It could work. [*pause*] Maybe it’ll take a little more than three weeks, but it could work.

**Andrew:** Probably more like three months or three years. And that’s just Jerusalem.

**Peter:** His instructions were pretty clear. He wouldn’t have charged us with this unless we could do it.

**Andrew:** Peter, there are only eleven of us now that Judas is gone. Jerusalem I can see, but all of Judea and Samaria, not to mention, “to the ends of the earth.” It’s impossible.

**Peter:** But we’ll be replacing Judas soon.

**Andrew:** Great. Twelve. There’s still only so much we can do. We’d need to double our numbers. Perhaps triple. Who knows, maybe ten times.

**Peter:** [*realizing*] That’s it.

**Andrew:** That’s what?

**Peter:** We need to double our numbers, then triple, and then keep multiplying.

**Andrew:** What are you talking about?

**Peter:** It’s so simple. We multiply.

**Andrew:** [*aside*] Nobody told me there would be math.

**Peter:** We were commissioned to be witnesses for Jesus to everyone, everywhere, starting in Jerusalem. But we can’t do that alone.

**Andrew:** That’s what I’ve been saying.

**Peter:** We’ll need hundreds, if not thousands, of witnesses.

**Andrew:** Again, [*pointing around the room*] twelve.

**Peter:** We start in the Temple.

**Andrew:** You already said that.

**Peter:** And then we’ll gain more.

**Andrew:** More what?

**Peter:** More disciples.

**Andrew:** What are you talking about?

**Peter:** As we tell people about Jesus, either they will believe us or they won’t.

**Andrew:** So?

**Peter:** So those that do believe will be added to our numbers.

**Andrew:** There you go with math again.

**Peter:** Now instead of twelve disciples, we’ll have twenty-four or more.

**Andrew:** And if those twenty-four can make at least two more disciples,

**Peter:** [*continuing*] we’ll have forty-eight.

**Andrew:** [*catching on*] Then we keep multiplying and covering all of Jerusalem in a shorter period of time.

**Peter:** And eventually, all of Judea and Samaria,

**Andrew:** And the ends of the earth. But do you really think it can work?

**Peter:** There’s only one way to find out.

**Andrew:** Wait a minute. Peter, how long do you think this will take?

**Peter:** I don’t know. But that really doesn’t matter.

**Andrew:** Why not?

**Peter:** We were told to be his witnesses. I don’t think that has a time limit. There will always be some that have never heard of Jesus.

**Andrew:** So, our job will never be done?

**Peter:** [*confidently*] Not as long as I have breath.

**Andrew:** We’d better get started then.

**Peter:** Let’s go tell the others! [*exits*]

**Andrew:** [*following*] Wait until they find out there’s going to be math.

[*Blackout*]

***THE EASTER CODE***

**Children’s Moment – Easter**

***Code Word:* Gain**

**April 9, 2023**

**by Katie Laidlaw**

**Synopsis:** The Code Word series focuses on 7 topics, from the perspective of scientists working in “The Code Lab” in order to find the secret ingredients to living out the power of the resurrection.

**Costume:** lab coat, goggles/glasses, gloves, mustache

**Set-up/Staging:** Small table or rolling cart with props.

**Props:** Large glass bowl filled with water, 2 12-inch pieces of string, salt, 2-4 ice cubes, spoon.

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| **Easter – Gain** |

**[*Invite children to come to the front, either having them stand or sit for the lesson.*** (I personally recommend having the children stand, as this helps keep them attentive, engaged, and involved in the lesson—especially with the dynamic of the congregation “watching them.” In this more public/formal setting, sitting provides a more relaxed/informal mindset, allowing the children to disengage and merely be present in the moment.)**]**

**Script:**

This is our last day of research in The Code Lab! I am so glad you all have been helping us with our research. We have learned quite a bit!

We have been on a mission here in the lab the past several weeks. What is a mission? [*Allow children to respond*]

Did you know that as friends of Jesus we have a mission to complete? Jesus has given us the mission to go into the world and show people His love, so that the people who aren’t friends with Jesus already can become friends with Him.

What are some things we can do to help other people become friends with Jesus? [*Allow children to respond*]

When we show people kindness, generosity, patience, love, gentleness, and so much more, we cause a reaction! When we show these things to people who don’t know Jesus, they wonder why we act the way we do, and they sometimes want to know why we are so different from other people who are unkind, selfish, impatient, hateful, or mean.

Watch this!

[*Drop some ice cubes into the bowl filled with water. Ask two kids to try and pick up the ice using only a piece of string.*

*After kids try (unsuccessfully), lay the string over the ice cubes and spoon some salt over the top. Pull on the string. Ice should stick to it. Lift cube out of the water.*]

When we add a little bit of warmth through kind words and actions—just like the salt did—we can bring people to Jesus and fulfill the mission Jesus has given us.

We can give our all to Jesus and become great friends with Him first. As we do this, we can begin to fulfill the mission in showing God’s love to others. The Holy Spirit will help us as we try to find the warmth that being friends with Jesus gives.

Acts 1:8 (NIRV) says, **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me…from one end of the earth to the other.”**

[*Pray.*]

Great work, friends! We have really enjoyed your work in The Code Lab! Happy Easter!

**Main Points:**

* Jesus has given us the mission to go into the world and show people His love.
* When we are different from the world, people will notice and wonder why.
* The Holy Spirit will help us show God’s love to the world.

**Questions:**

* What is a mission?
* How can we help others become friends with Jesus?

***THE EASTER CODE***

***Lenten Sermon – Easter***

***Code Word:* Gain**

**April 9, 2023**

**By Major Catherine Mount**

**TITLE: *Code Word:* Gain**

**THEME: The Great Commission**

**SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:16-20**

**INTRODUCTION**

**He is Risen! (He is Risen Indeed!)**

**Do any of you like to make “pro’s and con’s” lists? Whether you do or not, my guess is that you at least make subconscious decisions based on two points of view: What do I have to lose? What do I have to gain?**

**TRANSITION**

**Today is simple. It’s Easter. It is Resurrection Sunday! We are here to celebrate what God has done! And what God is doing!**

**I invite you to turn to 1 Corinthians 15.**

**WHAT HE HAS DONE! (GOSPEL)**

**This entire weekend (at least in the Christian world) has been about remembering and honoring what God has done. What has God done? He has given us the gospel, the good news!**

**GOD created us to be with Him. (Genesis 1-2)**

**OUR sins separate us from God. (Genesis 3)**

**SINS cannot be removed by good deeds. (Genesis 4-Malachi 4)**

**PAYING the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again. (Matthew-Luke)**

**EVERYONE who trusts in Him alone has eternal life. (John)**

**LIFE with Jesus starts now and lasts forever! (Acts-Revelation)**[[1]](#footnote-1)

**This is what God has done! He has made a way for reconciliation. He has made a path to be made whole! Do you believe it? Is your life changed by it? I don’t think it would be Easter if I didn’t ask every single person who is listening, “What do you believe?” Truly? Do you believe it to be true?**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-8 [Read]**

**Over the 40 days after Jesus resurrected from the dead, He appeared to over 500 people!** The resurrection and the “life after death” testimonies of Jesus is what the Christian faith is built on—Jesus defeated Satan, He conquered/overcame/demolished death itself! We no longer have to live in fear. And while he had hundreds of conversations with people after he rose from the dead, there’s a very important one for us to remember today.

**Matthew 28:16-20 [Read]**

While we know what God has done through the gospel, it’s incredibly important for us to understand what He’s *still doing* in the world today.

**WHAT HE IS DOING! (MULTIPLY)**

**In many bibles the heading for this portion of scripture is called The Great Commission. Jesus is telling His eleven closest followers: “Here is the assignment; this is what to do next.”**

**Now, I want to clarify a little bit. This isn’t the *mission* of a disciple; this is the *commission*. What’s the difference? Think of the mission as the “motive,” and commission as “the sending” and action of what needs to be accomplished.**

**Scripturally, you can think of it this way: Our mission (the law that fuels us) is the greatest commandment: love God, and love others. It’s our mission and vision statement. Our commission (Jesus’ direct words for action and application) is to multiply!**

**Verse 19 essentially says, “Go make disciples! Teach them everything I’ve taught you! Live like me! Be bold about the gospel! Love the unlovable! Be more gracious than you could ever imagine! And unleash the Holy Spirit everywhere you go!”**

**We are here today because of those eleven men. They understood the assignment! Do you? Jesus died, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and is praying/interceding for you, *right now*. For you—why? Because He loves you, and that’s what grace is—we don’t have to do anything but believe in Him. But we need to remember that the story of how God works in our lives doesn’t end there. Not only do we have a mission of how to live, but we have a commission that requires obedience and action.**

**[*The following references the “*Multiply *Challenge”*]**

**For six weeks now, members of this congregation have been specifically praying for the people in our lives who need salvation: family members, friends, coworkers, neighbors, the world. We have been praying for an opportunity to *multiply.* I keep asking myself, “How come more people aren’t getting saved? How come we don’t have more testimonies of people’s lives being transformed by Jesus?” This is not an indictment on anyone else, it’s a personal conviction.**

**What I think has happened in the church (universal)—or at least in the western church—is that sometimes we’ve put so much of an emphasis on “getting someone to church on Sunday” (the “act of worship”) that we’re missing the point of our commission! Our commission is *not* to invite people to church; the commission is to make disciples. The end goal is not to get someone to spend one hour on the weekend in a worship service, consuming music and commentary on the Bible; the end goal is a *transformed*** life that is saved by the grace of believing in Jesus, and filled with the love of the Holy Spirit!

Yes, you were *created* to worship, but remember you are also *commissioned* to make disciples. Being a disciple is so much more than going to church on a Sunday! And this commission is not just for clergy or ministry professionals—this call (or sending) is for everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Should we see the fruit of discipleship in our corporate worship settings? Absolutely! But that is only a small part of making disciples. There is so much more to be done between Sundays. So, why does this matter?

**WHY IT MATTERS! (YOU HAVE A PURPOSE)**

**Because YOU have a purpose! Jesus Christ lived and died and resurrected from the dead so that we could be freed from sin and have a personal relationship with Him. AND, He wants YOU to be a disciple-maker. So, how do we do this?**

**Please turn to Acts 1. This is Jesus’ last conversation with the disciples before His ascension into Heaven (His final words in person):**

**Acts 1:5-8 [Read]**

**What does it mean to be a person who multiplies? It is about being a witness. So how do we do this? Where do we do this? First, we do it through the power of the Holy Spirit. Second, we look around us and we start right there. Jesus said to the disciples: *“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). Where are we to be a witness? I’m pretty sure Jesus’ charge covers everywhere.**

**HOME, NEIGHBORS, CITIES**

**So first, Jerusalem. Like the disciples in their homes, we must be witnesses in our homes. This isn’t just for parents (although, if you are a parent, being a witness/disciple-maker of our children is paramount), this is for everyone! We ALL have a sphere of influence within our lives. Is your home an environment where Jesus is at the center? How can you orient your home around Jesus (instead of yourself)? Does what happens in your home reflect the mission that we are people who “love God and love others?” Our homes should not be a citadel where we hide; they should be “mission outposts” for the lost and weary—a place where we talk about Jesus and have spiritual conversations about what God has done (and is still doing!) in His kingdom all around us.**

**We want this more than in just our homes. Jesus said, be a witness: in our neighborhoods, in our cities, in the whole world! What kind of witness are you in your home? In your neighborhood? Do you know the easiest way to be a witness in your neighborhood? Try taking a walk and praying. Maybe you can sit in your front window and pray for your neighbors. But just imagine if every single one of us purposefully took time to prayer for our neighbors. Prayer-walking to pray for their salvation; to pray for relief from pain and suffering; to pray grace and peace.**

**Beyond prayer-walking, what if our acts of love in our cities and towns were so felt by our neighbors and fellow citizens that someone would ask us the question, Why do you care so much for others? We make choices every single day about how we interact with others. What if we all started living like witnesses to the greatest story ever told—about the redemption that is available for all people—instead of thinking about ourselves most of the time? There is more to gain in being a disciple who makes disciples, than being a believer sitting in comfort and not using the gifts the Spirit has given them.**

**When Jesus is your Savior, you are commissioned to be a disciple who makes disciples. The problem is Satan has convinced a lot of followers of Jesus that once they’re saved, they’re done. And that’s a lie. We are *saved to serve*! Why? So that He can save. If you claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ today, you are commissioned to be a disciple-maker, a multiplier of disciples. Don’t worry, He will equip you for the task. He gives us the Holy Spirit!**

**Here is an interesting statistic. “A**ccording to [Joshua Project](http://www.joshuaproject.net/), there are approximately 17,446 unique people groups in the world, with 7,400+ of them considered ‘unreached’ (over 41% of the world’s population!).”[[2]](#footnote-2) There is still work for us to do! There is still witnessing to be done. “To the ends of the earth,” and right next door, and in our own homes.

**CHALLENGE**

**This entire Lenten season we’ve been talking about Code Words that unlock the understanding of the life of Jesus, to gain an understanding of who He is. Today our word is Gain. How will you be different today? What will you Gain in your life because you know what God has done and what He is doing?**

Maybe for you today it is salvation. Or maybe today you hear the call to be a witness.

**Because of the gospel (what God has done), we have a mission to “Love God and to love others” (Matthew 22:37-39). But Jesus has more than a mission for you. He has a “Co-mission”!**

**What kind of change do you need to make in life to be a multiplier? Because the truth is you have everything to Gain, and nothing to lose. As we go into a time of prayer, consider today: Do you know Jesus as your Savior?**

**What will you do today and tomorrow to be a disciple who makes disciples?**

1. For more information on GOSPEL letters visit: https://www.dare2share.org/resources/life-in-6-words [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Joshua Project: People Groups of the World | Joshua Project](https://www.joshuaproject.net/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)