

# The Church Celebrates

## EASTER

UNIT  
**4**  
LESSON  
THREE

### From Our Hearts to God

*Lord, sometimes we pray for things to help us enjoy life. But we thank you today for life, so that we can enjoy many things. Following your ways can make us happy and wise. You make it possible for us to live forever with God. Thank you! Amen.*

## MY WORLD

Time for a look back. Go to Lesson Two of this unit and write one question that you can ask the class. Write the answer here as well:

Question:

Answer:



## GOD'S GUIDING WORDS

Christ died to free us from sin once and for all. An innocent person died for those who are guilty. Christ did this to bring you to God...

*1 Peter 3:18*

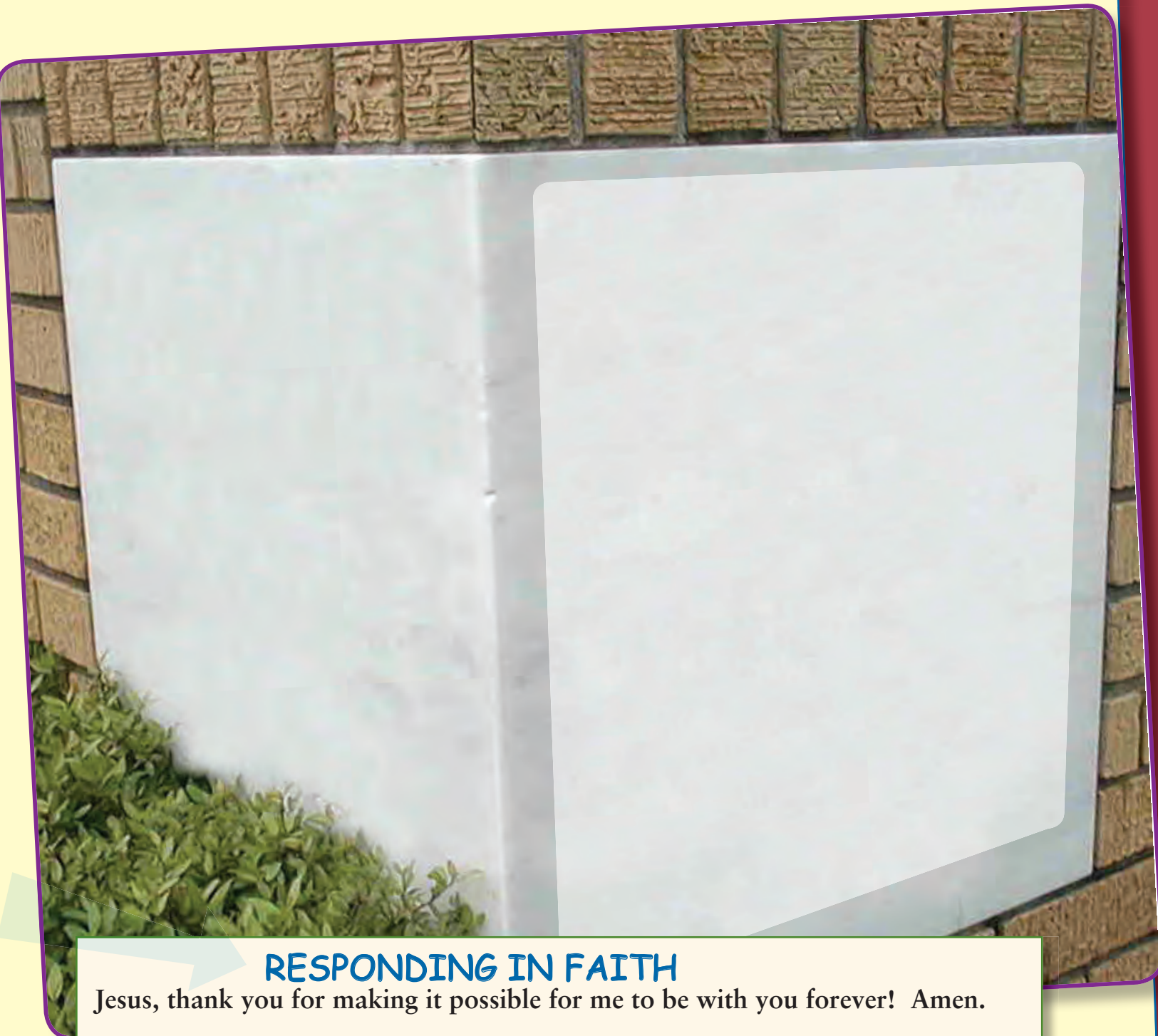


# Getting Closer to God

Jesus has been compared to a rock. He is the rock that became the cornerstone of the new relationship with God. When a building is being erected, the cornerstone is the first stone laid in the corner where two walls begin and form the first part of the new building. Later, it would be placed anywhere but was thought to be the most important stone, often marked with names and dates to dedicate it.

God was building a new creation. Jesus holds it together for us.

Put Jesus' name in the cornerstone then put your name and the names of your family and people you know in church. These are all people who are part of the Church.



## RESPONDING IN FAITH

Jesus, thank you for making it possible for me to be with you forever! Amen.

## Our Armenian Way

During the days before and after Easter the Armenian Church has many special services that give us the opportunity to be with God in a remarkable way. Celebrating Poon Paregentan, attending Lenten services, rejoicing on Palm Sunday, going to the Holy Week services, renewing ourselves at Easter, commemorating the Ascension of the Lord to Heaven, and remembering that the followers of Christ started the Church at Pentecost, are all of the ways we Armenian Christians remember what Easter means.

### OUR SALVATION HISTORY AND THE EASTER CYCLE

- God made heaven and earth and everything on the earth.
- He created all living things. In the story of Adam and Eve we see how the first people enjoyed a life of direct contact with God in the Garden of Eden which was an earthly paradise.
- We celebrate the beauty and perfection of that paradise with the Feast of Poon Paregentan.
- God told Adam and Eve they could have everything there except they must not eat the fruit of one tree. Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God. Eve and Adam ate from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*. God punished Adam and Eve by sending them out of the Garden of Eden so they could not eat from the *Tree of Life*.
- **The Expulsion** of Adam and Eve is the first story of the **Sundays of Great Lent**.
- The Bible tells us how we can get back to a new paradise – heaven.
- The Second Sunday of Lent tells the story of the **Prodigal Son** (Luke 15:11-32). He leaves his wonderful home and father to live life in his own way. He soon finds himself without money and without friends doing a job he hates. He realizes he made the wrong choice. He decides to go back and ask for a job with his father because he knew having the worst job at his father's was better than the terrible life he was living. On his way back his father sees him on the road and welcomes him because it was as if his son had died and now was alive again. The story teaches us if we truly are sorry for the wrong things we do and the wrong choices we make and we want to put things right again, God welcomes us.



- The Third Sunday of Lent tells the story of the **Steward** (Luke 16:1-13) who was trusted to do a good job managing his employer's business. He did not and when the employer demanded an accounting of the business, the steward went to all those who owed his boss and made deals with them to collect some of what they owed. He knew his boss would fire him anyway, but he hoped he could get a job with one of the people with whom he had made a deal. Jesus tells us that if we can be clever like the steward to provide for ourselves on earth, we should also try hard to live a life that would please God. God hopes we will do right things and make right choices.
- The Fourth Sunday of Lent tells the story of the **Judge** (Luke 18:1-8) who would not bother with a widow's problem. The woman was persistent and went to him every day asking for his help. Finally the judge helped her just to get rid of her, not because he wanted to be fair. Jesus teaches us that we should always pray because God listens to our prayers and answers them fairly. He is a loving God. He cares for us and wants us to talk to him in prayer.
- The Fifth Sunday of Lent is called **Advent or the Second Coming**. The word advent means "coming." This day reminds us that Jesus will come again and that we need to always be prepared for him by living by God's rules.
- Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday which celebrates Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem and continues with many others that recall the Last Supper, Jesus' lonely prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, his crucifixion, and burial.
- Easter is the way Jesus opened Paradise to us again. He did this by his death and resurrection. **JESUS IS THE TREE OF LIFE**. When we receive Holy Communion we eat the fruit of that tree. Adam and Eve were not allowed, but we are!
- The Feast of the Ascension commemorates Jesus rising to heaven to make a place for us.
- The Feast of Pentecost celebrates the birth of the Church - us! All those who believe in Jesus are the Church.





## Taking a Closer Look

An Armenian cross often has leaves, branches, and fruit at its base, reminding us that Jesus is the Tree of Life.



## Time to Celebrate

Pop a balloon and explain how the picture inside relates to the Easter story.



## FAMILY CORNER

### Sharing Our Faith

Our lesson this week presented the Easter Cycle from Poon Paregentan to Pentecost. The children reviewed the entire cycle, created their own “cross of life” and popped balloons to find a special Easter Cycle remembrance inside.

### Living Our Faith

1. At home this week, gather up the family’s shoes and line them up creating the “steps to Easter and the steps to Church.” Write the following words on index cards or pieces of paper and on the back of the card put the number of that card. Work with your fourth grade student to put the cards in the shoes in the correct order according to the story. Then check the numbers on the back of the cards to see if your child was right on target. If not, work together to get the cards in order. (If you don’t want to use your shoes, cut the index cards in the shape of feet – perhaps tracing your child’s foot.)

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| 1. Poon Paregentan                         | 8. Palm Sunday                    |
| 2. Great Lent Begins                       | 9. The Last Supper                |
| 3. Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve | 10. Washing of the Disciples Feet |
| 4. Sunday of the Prodigal Son              | 11. Crucifixion                   |
| 5. Sunday of the Steward                   | 12. Resurrection                  |
| 6. Sunday of the Judge                     | 13. Ascension                     |
| 7. Sunday of Advent                        | 14. Pentecost                     |