

## Happy Birthday!

(These kids have birthdays in February or March)

Audrey Wittman	Rachel Halteman	T.J. Malanga	Jessica Taylor	Jordan Adley
Ella Broadhurst	Mattix Parente	Obinna Eruba	Ryan Kirkpatrick	Alexandra Skovera
Matthew Nino	Connor O'Sullivan	Hannah Miller	Maxwell Yorgey	Madilyn Yorgey
Benjamin Beckett	Emily Schwenk	Max Flegeal	Morgan May	Caitlin May
Grant Sullivan	Hunter Gooch	Alexa Olivier	Zachary Moll	Tyler Palucis
Caleb Gilbert	Tyiana Simon	Cameron O'Donnell	Savanna Shearer	Steven Ciralo
Ella Long	Gavin Berk	Evan Barron	Noble House	Lucas Denton
Grace Denton	Kayla Ferrara	Cole Edgerton	Aiden Barrow	Ashton Laroe
Troy Scherzer	Grey Aschliman	Noah Yost	Jevon Rose	Kyle Anderson
Kyla Kimmel	Luthien Lindgren	Brighton DeWitt	Michael Terry	Jason Kuzmission
Abigail Wile	Simran Baid	Drew McDivitt	Alanna DePaul	Alyssa DePaul
Catherine Mathews	Trevor Bert	Karly Jurewicz	Annabell Decker	Jenna Moccia
Kayla Weiss	Sharon Keib	Branden Reed	Jorianna Spencer	Ashley Buck
Lucas Sambrick	Hannah Rosenzweig	Amanda Prather	Sophia Messina	Courtney Kehler
Mia Bevilacqua Smith	Zack DeStefano	Benjamin Martin	Nathaniel Martin	Matthew Masselle Sierra



**PSALM 1: FIRMLY PLANTED**  
**Assist kids to become firmly planted by partnering with parents to help kids, Know God's Son, Learn God's Word, Do God's Work, and Share God's News.**

## Easter Fun: Tips to Help Keep Jesus in Focus

Easter is on it's way - Decorated Eggs, candy, bunnies, flowers, visiting relatives, dinners, school plays...the list goes on and on. When, how do we help our kids (and ourselves) keep Christ in focus with all that going on in our lives? Take a moment to breathe & let's do some brainstorming for ideas.

You can make a version of a single "Resurrection Egg." Take a large plastic egg & filled it with: a small cross made from sticks, a stone, & a piece of gauze. Have someone hide the egg. The one who finds the egg gets to tell the story of Jesus' crucifixion, death, burial, & resurrection using the items in the egg & leaves it empty to show that He is risen! They get a special prize!

You can also make an Easter basket with meaning:

A Lamb: This represents the Lamb of God who came to take away our sin.

In a plastic egg: Jelly Beans that are the following colors:

Black - Stands for the darkness of our lives before Jesus when we were still in sin; Red- Stands for Jesus shed blood

White- Stands for our sins that are washed away; Yellow- Stands for streets of gold in heaven; Green- Stands for growing in Jesus

Bookmarks or story books from the Bible Book Store that represent the story of Easter.

Rock candy to represent the stone that was rolled away.

Chocolate coins to remind us of the 30 pieces of silver.

An empty plastic egg in their basket and with a marking pen write "He is Risen" on the outside. The egg is empty for the "Empty Tomb."

Make the really fun kids Easter cookie recipe together that's on the back of this KidsCreek Rising.!

*Carol L- KidsCreek Administrator*



We made these Resurrection cookies with our kids as they were growing up. It's a fun way to share God's Word about the real meaning of Easter in a fun way.

### Ingredients & directions for Resurrection cookies:

1 cup whole pecans Zipper baggie  
 1 tsp vinegar Wooden spoon  
 3 egg whites Tape  
 Pinch salt Bible  
 1 cup sugar

Preheat oven to 300 degrees (this is important-don't wait until you're half done with the recipe!)

Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.

Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.

Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.

Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.

So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing.

Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps 34:8 and John 3:16.

Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the color white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isai:18 and John 3:1-3.

Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto waxed paper covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid.

Read Matt 27:57-60.

Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and turn the oven OFF.

Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt 27:65-66.

Go to bed! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a Resurrection cookie. Notice the cracked surface and take a bite. The cookies are hollow! On the first Easter, Jesus' followers were amazed to find the tomb open and empty. Read Matt 28:1-9.

**KIDS CREEK**  
PSALM 1: FIRMLY PLANTED



**An Egg Hunt Preview! Get ready. Get set...Invite your Friends!**

On April 4th from 11am to 4pm our church property will be a party. We will have thousands of people from our community enjoying the day with their families. Here is an inside scoop so you can invite your friends and family to this spectacular family event!

There will be 2 egg hunts OPEN all day. Yes, I said OPEN all day. One for walkers to age 3 and the other for age 4 to 5th Grade. Each child will come to the appropriate entrance, have his or her hand stamped, be given a colorful bag and they may enter the hunt area. They will be able to fill their bags to the top with candy filled colorful eggs. I can see the smiles now!

Also, outside will be a Petting Zoo, 4 different large Inflatable Bounces, Pony Rides, Fire Trucks, Horse and Carriage Rides, and a Food Tent to include Laura's Pizza, Yantzee Chinese Food, French Fry Truck, Auntie Anne's Pretzels, Chick Fil-A, Brusters Ice Cream and CoffeeHead. This year, BranchCreek will be selling drinks, large fresh baked cookies and popcorn. On the patio will be fresh Easter plants for sale and MOPS will hold a bake sale to support their ministry.

Inside, the main lobby will be filled with kids wanting their picture taken with the Easter Bunny. Others will be excited to see our 3 balloon artists make their favorite animal or shape. The main auditorium is where the Bunny Missing shows will be held at 11:30am, 12:15pm, 1:00pm & 1:45pm. We are thrilled to have this space to hold more people to view this wonderful show about our Prodigal Bunny. In the mini auditorium the magician will surprise us with his illusions at 12:00pm, 1:00pm, 2:00pm and 3:00pm. In between the magician shows, Dr. Bubbles will perform the fun science of bubbles at 11:30pm, 12:30pm, 1:30pm and 2:30pm.

There is something for everyone and a place for you to be part of this wonderful day. It really does take our entire church to fill 75,000 eggs and to welcome the thousands that will attend. Please sign up to volunteer online at [www.branchcreek.org](http://www.branchcreek.org) (click on Egg Hunt), OR on a tear off at one of the services or email [tricia.yoast@branchcreek.org](mailto:tricia.yoast@branchcreek.org) for more information.

**Consistency Matters**

Do you ever find yourself trying to play catch up? Does time get ahead of you, especially on Sundays? How does that happen? We have the best intentions of doing things right but something goes wrong usually at the last minute. That something is usually someone, maybe the pint-sized child in your family. Whew! It's enough to drive us all crazy and climbing back in bed seems like a better idea than getting ready for Church.

Soon, the race is on and it's getting the children dressed, serving breakfast, and brushing teeth and then everyone is out the door. Next, if you are lucky, everyone is in the seat of choice and buckled in. Finally, you are on your way, with ten minutes to spare before the service starts.

Arrival at church seems to be going smooth as you check the children into the computer system and identification tags are in place. But, then something goes wrong. Your happy baby starts to cry as you hand her over to the teacher in the classroom. You assure the teacher that she will be okay and then the race is on to bring your preschooler to his/her class and the same reaction happens again. Now, the frustration returns from the morning get up and go ritual and you can't figure out what is going on with your children today.

Here is what is happening. Your children may not be attending the same class every time your family comes to church. When you switch the service time that you usually attend, the children are placed in a classroom with different teachers and different classmates. This affects children at different stages of child development. At the Nursery stage, your child needs the trust of a familiar teacher each week. Children who are Nursery to Three years of age engage in parallel play. Friendships are starting to form by playing next to another child or playing with the same toys. At the Preschool and Kindergarten age level, friendships are so important. The sense of right and wrong is such an important concept that is forming within their little brains so they will challenge you when you want to take them to a room that they know is not their regular classroom. At the elementary level, the children will form bonds of friendships with their Spiritual Mentors in the classroom. Relationships are formed that may last a lifetime. They may willingly enter a new classroom, but will let you know if they feel uncomfortable with the service change.

So, maybe it would be a great time to discuss which service you will attend during your family time together. Encourage your children to participate in the conversation. Try to stick to a plan that works for everyone. I am sure you will find that consistency does matter.

Rita Baczor- Preschool Director

**KidsCreek: Spring into action - Invite - Serve - Grow**

*Spring, noun:* an elastic body or device that recovers its original shape when released after being distorted. - **No, not what I'm looking for.**

*Spring, noun:* a time or season of growth or development. - **Yes, I like that.**

*Spring, verb:* to make a leap or series of leaps. - **OK, how about we take the last two definitions and we use them in conjunction.**

It is that time of year...Spring...when the birds come north and the trees, bushes, and flowers begin to bloom. It is usually a time when we hear about starting fresh; like nature that surrounds us. I would like to think of it in terms of the two definitions with which I began this article. This spring, I'd like to ask you to take the time to look for those opportunities around you to make a leap in your personal walk with the Lord. Here are some ideas to help. A wonderful opportunity to invite friends to our campus is coming up on April 4. Invite a few friends to join you for a day of fun for the whole family at our Easter Egg Hunt - better yet, help your kids invite their friends too. Serving - I'm sure there is a place for you around Branch somewhere. If you'd like to serve with kids, just ask me and I'll point you in the right direction. And when it comes to growing, those first two steps are a great start. A tremendous way to help your entire family to grow is to do these things together. This spring (*noun*), don't just look at the growth around you, try to be part of it!

Ben Garnett - Director of Nursery, Summer Ministry, KidsCreek Saturday Night, & KidsCreek Midweek



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