

an example before you begin for each type (Jesus in the manger vs. Santa). After a few minutes, visit each station and go through some of the cards (be mindful of the time, do enough to get the point across). Please note, that although nowhere in the Bible does it mention the Christmas tree, the wreath, candles, etc., over time these traditions have been incorporated into the Christmas story as symbols. The evergreen tree represents life, the round wreath represents God's endless love, and the candle represents Jesus being the light of the world. Have students answer questions in the lesson. Discuss their symbols and scenes, asking which would remind us of the "reason for the season," Jesus? Share your favorite ornament and explain why. Some Christmas carols that are Jesus centered: O Come All Ye Faithful, Silent Night, We Three Kings, Away in Manger, O Holy Night; Non-Jesus carols: Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, Frosty the Snowman, Jingle Bells, Deck the Halls. 12 min.

3. Have students take turns reading **Our Story**. Even better – perform it! Select five children to be the parents, the kids, and a narrator to read it OR have them act out the story as it is being read. Then ask class what happens in their homes during the Christmas season. Is it similar to this story? What are some of their traditions? Did they agree with Ani's reaction? Ask if they have ever given their parents advice. Did they listen? 7 min.
4. Introduce the **Faith Word** and show the class a picture (a Christmas card or the Armenian miniature depictions of Jesus in the textbook) or an actual Nativity figurine).
5. **God's Word**. Read the Scripture passages from Luke 2: 1-20 and Matthew 2:8-11. Tell students to listen carefully to the story. Have them complete the CLOZE activity by filling in the blanks from the Word Box. (Answers: Bethlehem, Mary, donkey, baby, wrapped, manger, inn, shepherds, sheep, star, angel, afraid, Lord, kings, gold.) 10 min.
6. **We Learn About God**. Read the English translation of *Khorhoort Medz*. Ask the class who or what they think this hymn is about. What is the Mystery? (the birth of Jesus) Have them write it on the line. Play or sing the sharagan so the students hear the melody. Have them practice the lines in their text. 10 min.
7. Read **Our Armenian Way**. As a class, practice saying the two parts of the Christmas greeting. Divide the class into two and have the first group offer the greeting and the second group offer the response. Reverse. 6 min.
8. **Handmade With Love**. Class Nativity Cards
Have students design their nativity cards. They should include a message like "Jesus is the reason for the season" or "Merry Christmas! With Jesus's love," etc. (write these message ideas on the board for children to copy) and sign the card and write the year. Have the cards color copied and use them to send Christmas cards to the parish elderly and homebound. You might even have them passed around in a basket in church as Christmas messages of love to parishioners.
9. Clean-up. Close with the prayer: "Dear Jesus, You are the gift of love and peace to all of us. You are the reason for this glorious season. Amen." 15 min.

Unit Four: Celebrating Jesus: The Church Year

Lesson Four: Easter

Key Concepts

1. We remember and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.
2. The Gospels each contain a narrative on Jesus' resurrection; Matthew 28: 1-10; Mark 16: 1-8; Luke 24:1-12; and John 20: 1-17.
3. As with all Christian churches, the Armenians have special traditions and customs for Easter.

Objectives

During this lesson students will

1. Choose or think of the best words to complete a spring-themed poem.
2. Discuss why they like the season of spring.
3. Participate in a reader's theater story about the true meaning of Easter.
4. Read and discuss the Scripture reading based on Matthew 28: 1-10; Mark 16: 1-8; Luke 24: 1-12; and John 20: 1-17.
5. Read about and discuss Jesus' resurrection and new life.
6. Explore Easter in the Armenian Church.
7. Practice giving and receiving the Easter greeting.
8. Prepare an "Easter Basket of Love for Jesus".

Materials Needed

Crayons, markers and or coloring pencils

Children's Bible

One hard-boiled egg

Onion skins

2 copies of the blank eggs copied onto card stock

Glue

Scissors

Ribbon

Paper basket supplies: you may use paper plates (2), paper bag, construction paper, OR buy decoratable baskets from a craft store.

Stickers, glitter, foam pieces – Easter themed

Envelope for eggs

Procedure

1. Greet students warmly and open class with the prayer in **We Pray Together**.
2. Ask: "Does anyone know what time of the year it is? What season are we in? How do you know?" Direct students' attention to the poem. Have them either choose an appropriate word from the word box or one of their own. (Suggested answers: bloom, green, born, flight, bright, kite, play, bunnies, worn, hop, there, near, Jesus) Have students take turns reading each line of the poem with their choice of word. Then have them answer the question about what they like best about spring and if it reminds them of Jesus and how. Discuss answers. 12 min.
3. Select 5 student volunteers to read the parts in **Our Story** (this is a great Reader's Theater to perform for another class, at a fellowship hour, or at an assembly). Discuss. Ask if the students could identify with any of the characters. How do their schools treat Easter? Is it called spring break or Easter vacation? Discuss their family traditions during this time of the year. 10 min.
4. Have students take turns reading the Scripture in **God's Word**. Discuss why they think the women were afraid.
5. Introduce the **Faith Word** and then read **We Learn About God**. Ask what comes to mind when the children think of Easter. What are some other symbols of Easter (lily, cross, etc.)? 8 min.
6. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Show them the hard boiled egg, the shell, the white, the yolk. Pass around the onion skins. As a class, practice saying the two parts of the Easter greeting. Divide the class into two and have the first group offer the greeting, and the second group offer the response. Reverse. 8 min.
7. **Handmade With Love**. Easter Basket of Love for Jesus
-Distribute basket-making materials-and decorate/personalize.

- Glue on a ribbon or a strip of paper for a handle.
- Distribute blank small eggs copied onto cardstock (2 sheets per student).
- Students cut out the eggs- as many as you want to use.
- Brainstorm ideas of sacrifices* to write on the eggs (look at suggestions below and write them on the board).
- Have students choose their sacrifices, write them and color the eggs.
- Place the eggs in the envelope.

At home, each morning after prayer, take an egg from the envelope and read it.

Place it in front of your basket.

Make the sacrifice during the day.

After night prayers, put the egg in the basket.

8. Clean-up. Close with the prayer: “Dear Jesus, blessed is your resurrection! Thank you for your sacrifice and love. Amen.” 22 min.

**List of Sacrifices*

Help someone today	Help with the housework
Make someone happy	Pray for someone who is sick
Clean your room	Do the dishes
Tell your parents you love them	Don't eat candy today
Play with someone who is lonely	Don't watch television today
Smile at someone	No video games or technology
ObeY in school	Thank your parents for all that they do
Set the table	Say something kind to someone

Unit Four: Celebrating Jesus: The Church Year

Lesson Five: Ascension

Key Concepts

1. We remember and celebrate on the Feast of Ascension (*Hampartzoom*) that Jesus rose to heaven 40 days after his resurrection.
2. In addition, Hampartzoom is marked by popular songs, dance, and a game called *vijagakhagh*.

Objectives

During this lesson students will

1. Participate in a group activity placing the Bible verse words about the Ascension in order.
2. Determine the theme of the lesson using context clues.
3. Discuss a story about a young boy and his uncle.
4. Read Luke 24: 50-53 and Acts 1: 1-11.
5. Examine the story of Ascension and related traditions.
6. Listen to a popular Hampartzoom song, *Hampartzoom Yayla*
7. Color and decorate an Armenian miniature of the Ascension.

Materials Needed

Helium balloons blown up with a ribbon attached (at least 16 of them) make sure you have one for every student (see option* in procedure #1)

Index cards – each containing the following underlined words: **Jesus lifted up his hands, blessed his disciples and rose up to heaven. Luke 24: 50-51.**

Hole-punch

Access to a CD of Hampartzoom Yayla song

Full color picture of Ascension (from back of this manual)