



Inspire

Just Be...Joyful!

Set Free

Right outside our back door a bird has built a nest in the rafter. One morning as I went outside to deal with some garbage, I heard a strange sound—a fluttering and a flapping. I glanced up to see a bird dangling upside down from its nest. A string she had added to the nest was caught around her leg and she couldn't fly away. She was trapped!

I watched it try to frantically escape but it would fly as far as the string and then would drop, hanging upside down. Over and over it did this. When it grew tired it would fly up to the nest but it waned desperately to fly away. I knew that if we didn't do something, this bird would eventually die.

My 14-year-old son, Sam, climbed up on a step ladder, with scissors in hand. The bird flitted about. Very nervously and carefully he took the scissors and quickly snipped the string. Instantly the bird soared free. Sam did for the bird what it couldn't do for itself. Sam served as a savior.

That is the Easter story. We were trapped in our sin and no matter what we do we cannot escape. Ever since Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and eat from the forbidden tree in Genesis 3, sin has been like the string on the bird's leg, keeping us trapped and unable to fly. All of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). God says that wages or payment for sin is death (Romans 6:23). When Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with fig leaves because of the shame they felt, it didn't work. God provided a better covering—an innocent animal paid the punishment for their sins (Genesis 3:21) by giving its life to provide their clothing.

Thankfully, Romans 6:23 doesn't end with **the wages of sin is death**. It goes on to say **but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**. Wages are earned; gifts are given. Just as my son cutting the bird free from its tether was gift, so too Jesus dying on the cross in our place for our sins is a gift, the greatest gift ever given.

He not only died but He rose again. That is the joyful news. On the first Easter morning when the women went to the tomb, they didn't find a body but an empty grave! Christ died but He rose again—that is where the victory is won. In the Garden of Eden, God told the serpent that he would strike the heel of the woman's offspring, but that the offspring would crush his head (Genesis 3:15). When Jesus rose from the grave the enemy of our souls was defeated. **Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death** (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Rejoice in the fact that because of Jesus' saving act, we have been set free from death and sin!

INSPIRATIONAL IDEAS from the Territory

Bellflower Temple, CA enjoyed a family movie night *Over the Moon* online. Coloring materials, family activities and popcorn were delivered to participants' homes.

El Centro, CA held a women's event weekend (all virtually). It started with Leader's Recognition on Thursday, WM Virtual Meeting on Friday, Arts & Crafts Time on Saturday and concluded with Women's Ministries Sunday service.

In Homer, AK a lady organized a coffee get-together for those who felt comfortable to meet up. They prayed, laughed and shared how God is working in their lives.

In Pendleton, OR the corps officer started a new initiative of choosing 5 women each week, one per day of the work week to write to personally and gift a new devotional book to.

Phoenix Kroc, AZ hosted a 3-part adventure-inspired Zoom call series. During each meeting they had the opportunity to take virtual tours to some of the world's most beautiful places, ventured into God's creation and shared in His Word together.

San Diego Citadel, CA did a Zoom travel tour.

In Sitka, AK the ladies spent one month learning Tlingit especially through singing.

South of Market Street, CA (Soma) The weekly Zoom Bible study has branched out into a "Casserole Brigade" when one of the corps members is ill, recovering from surgery, etc.

Commissioner Colleen Riley—Territorial President of Women's Ministries

Colonel Donna Igleheart—Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries

Major Beth Desplancke—Territorial Women's Ministries Program Secretary

Be sure to check out our website for more resources: <https://usw-womensministries.org/>

30 Days of Joy in April

Spend the month of April filled with joy and rejoicing in the fact that Jesus rose from the dead!

1. Matthew 26:36-75
2. Matthew 27:11-56
3. Matthew 27:57-66
4. Matthew 28:1-10
5. Mark 16:1-18
6. Luke 24:1-12
7. John 20:1-18
8. Psalm 16:1-11
9. Psalm 30:1-12
10. Psalm 47:1-9
11. Psalm 51:1-12
12. Psalm 65:1-13
13. Psalm 97:1-12
14. Psalm 126:1-6
15. Isaiah 25:1-9
16. Habakkuk 3:12-19
17. John 15:1-11
18. John 16:16-24
19. Romans 5:1-11
20. Romans 6:1-11
21. Romans 8:18-30
22. Romans 10:9-11
23. Romans 15:5-13
24. 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
25. 1 Corinthians 15:12-34
26. 1 Corinthians 15:35-55
27. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
28. 2 Timothy 1:9-12
29. James 1:2-12
30. 1 Peter 1:3-9

Share the Joyous New of Easter

Here are some ideas to communicate the real Easter message with your family, church and WM members, friends and neighbors.

