

The background is a dark blue-tinted stained glass window. It features several hands in various colors (red, blue, green, yellow) reaching out and grasping each other. The hands are rendered in a stylized, blocky manner with thick outlines. The overall composition is abstract and symbolic, suggesting themes of support, connection, and care.

**OPEN GRAVE.  
OPEN DOORS.**

**amenable**





**AS EASTER APPROACHES,  
HOW CAN YOU CARE FOR THOSE AROUND YOU  
INTENTIONALLY AND THOUGHTFULLY?**

Growing up, you may have heard one, if not all, of these three phrases from adults: eat your fruits and vegetables, stay hydrated, and sleep 7 to 8 hours a night. It may be something that you've heard over and over again yet wasn't the easiest to live by. Similarly, welcoming newcomers into the church and caring for the usual fold can seem like an obvious part of Sundays. However, more often than not, **it's easier to focus on one group or the other than to care for everyone, including those who may fall in between.**



A stylized, painterly illustration of a rabbit's face, rendered in various shades of blue, green, and brown. The rabbit is looking forward, with its ears slightly down. The background consists of abstract, angular shapes in similar colors, creating a textured, layered effect.

# BEYOND BUNNIES: WHY WE CELEBRATE?



Easter is one of the most important Christian holidays, if not THE most important. Church leaders and members may feel the added pressure of how to get Easter 'right'. **As Easter approaches, how can you care for those around you intentionally and thoughtfully?** The Good News has already been given to us (see what I did there? Matt 28:5-7), but how are you communicating the good news to those around you? Caring for others may seem obvious and easy, just like consuming fruits and vegetables, but it may be easier said than done.

Because Easter is such a big holiday, Easter morning can be chaotic. Rather than relishing the fact that Christ has risen and defeated death, you may be tempted to rush out of service to avoid the large crowds to minimize small talk with others. When you reflect on your interactions, you may be subconsciously avoiding people who seem new to not engage in small talk. Or you may only share surface-level conversation that doesn't invite other members of your church into your life. Do either of those (or both) resonate with you? If so, do not fret, as this year's Easter is another chance for you to remember why we celebrate and how reminding yourself of that reason can encourage you to start a conversation with strangers or extend a warm handshake to familiar faces at church.

Easter is often viewed as the perfect time to invite non-believing family members, friends, coworkers, and neighbors to hear the gospel for maybe their first time. So what's the big deal about Easter? Why exactly is it the perfect time? **Easter is the most succinct summary of the Gospel—it provides the clearest evidence that Christ not only died for us and our sins but rose from the grave to help us see what new life in Him entails.** Death, the reality of our sins that none of us can evade (Rom 6:23), has no power over us as death is swallowed up in victory by the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor 15:55).

What's even better is that Christ not only came to save us (e.g., the reason why we celebrate Christmas), but through the resurrection, Christ has personified what it means for us to live a new life in Him. As Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15, because Christ has risen, our afflicted lives are not pitiable (v. 19). We have eternal hope in God that He will accomplish what He has promised, which is backed up by the resurrection of Christ<sup>1</sup>. God is faithful: this is only a fraction of the implications of Easter in a believer's life, and it offers us a starting point for caring for others intentionally and well.



# MORE THAN OPEN DOORS: NEXT STEPS.

Now that we're on the same page of why Easter is so important, Easter shouldn't be that different from a typical Sunday. Sure, maybe your church should have more parking spots and seats available for the influx of visitors, but the central message shouldn't be any different. Continue preaching the gospel, perhaps with an extra emphasis on the power and hope we have through the resurrection.

Eating fruits and vegetables, staying hydrated, and sleeping 7 to 8 hours a night seem pretty straightforward. Isn't that how Scripture's commands feel to us at times? They're almost so simple that we wrestle with how to actually apply them. **Easter doesn't have to be complicated; we can take the pressure off ourselves and respond to God's grace by taking one step of faith at a time.** Think of it this way: as children of God, it's not about the have tos but rather the get tos<sup>2</sup>. We get to join in the works of God by being hospitable, welcoming, and gracious to others. In your context, how can you show the love of Christ to those around you this Easter? Is there someone you...

- Can pray for?
- Can encourage?
- Should forgive?
- Should ask for forgiveness?
- Can share the gospel with?
- Can invite to church for Easter?



We are called to be faithful in the everyday that's been given to us, and this means to obey Him by **loving others well**. Easter is a great time to live out the calling that's been given to each of us as followers of Christ. Let's not overthink how to better care for your fold as well as the newcomers of your church. There's a time and a place for a week-by-week plan<sup>3</sup>, but this should ultimately start simple—considering the discomfort that people may feel stepping into the church.

An illustration in a painterly style showing two hands holding a book. The hands are rendered in shades of blue and grey, with visible brushstrokes. The book has a dark red cover and white pages. The background is a deep blue with abstract, dark blue outlines suggesting a larger scene or environment.

ONE BODY,  
MANY PARTS:  
CULTURAL  
CONSIDERATIONS.



Visiting a new church can feel intimidating, especially on a big holiday: each church has their own culture and nuances that a visitor may not be familiar with. All gatherings of people, including workplaces and schools, have their own culture, but the stakes can feel higher in a church because of the spiritual implications. Do people dress up for church or is it more casual? What's considered the norm at your church that someone new walking in may be unfamiliar with? How can they feel included and seen? And how exactly do we navigate cultural diversity? The context of your background and church may be different, but you can take measures to help others feel welcomed and accepted at your church.

Regardless of the differences in background, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, how can you emphasize how faith in Christ unites all of those differences (Gal 3:28)? For some, it may be growing in relationships by getting to know others better and deeper. Let's move past the shy hellos and how are you's to really getting to know someone. For others, it may be growing in awareness that we are united yet diverse (1 Cor 12:12) and consciously stepping into situations that you might not otherwise seek out. **Stepping outside of our comfort zone can be uncomfortable, but it can also be an opportunity for us to emulate Christ.**

How can you extend the love of Christ by intentionally including people who you may not have naturally clicked with? With those who share different interests and views as you? Is there someone who comes to your mind as you read this? Is there someone that you may not naturally feel inclined to get to know?

Through His life and resurrection, Jesus has bridged the gap and exemplified what it means to live a life that loves Him and others. Christ first reached out to those who were in need of a savior, and we are called to point others to Christ. What does this look like in your context? It's important to remember that what seems obvious may not be the easiest to commit to and live out, but through the power of resurrection living in us (shout out to the Holy Spirit), Christ's love can be personified through the life of your church and you. With intentionality and commitment to display the faithfulness of God in your life, you can be the hands and feet to those who thirst and hunger for the living God, whether they are new to your church or have been members for years. **As you think about Easter Sunday coming up, how can you welcome those who may be hearing the gospel for the first or for the thousandth time?**



## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> [desiringgod.org/interviews/what-makes-easter-so-special](https://desiringgod.org/interviews/what-makes-easter-so-special)

<sup>2</sup> [lighthousesouthbay.org/resources/sermons/the-blessing-of-love-galatians-327-47/](https://lighthousesouthbay.org/resources/sermons/the-blessing-of-love-galatians-327-47/)

<sup>3</sup> [weareamenable.com/preparing-your-church-for-easter-a-week-by-week-plan/](https://weareamenable.com/preparing-your-church-for-easter-a-week-by-week-plan/)

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