

The Easter Message – From Death to Life

*From: FROM...(Understanding the Resurrection), by Beverly Ann Beckman & Kathy Counts.
Originally reprinted by Kym Farmer.*

I have used these core ideas and images for a very successful children's presentation, both to help them understand the crucifixion/resurrection experience and to make a delightful presentation to the adults. The words are read by a Narrator, with appropriate dramatic pauses between the phrases. Props are created ahead of time, and the children use them in a few practice sessions. They can then arrange themselves in order across the front platform; or come out one by one as their part is spoken.

Props can be made so that they can be held by the present child; or, if you have a larger number of children, they can hold the "cover-up prop" while the other children reveal their "new-life" selves at the appropriate moments. **Note: Most of these props must be specifically made for and fitted to each child.** Start far enough in advance and get firm parental commitments – so that this detail can be tended to.

FROM the darkness that covers the earth...

(Child stands behind a black piece of foamcore board, taped to hinge across the center.)

Comes NEW LIFE – the blazing sunrise

(Child lets go of top half of board, which falls forward revealing the bottom half of sun in brilliant orange. Child extends arms out to side, forming (with pointed hat on head) 3 more rays of sun, made from brilliant orange fabric like nylon. (Rings sewn on at appropriate points on the fabric are hooked by the child's finger.)

FROM – the winter trees so still and bare...

(Child is standing with head down, arms stretched upward like tree branches. Arms are covered with dark brown or gray knee socks; around the toe area green felt leaves have been sewn on. These are all tucked into the child's closed fist, and therefore hidden.)

Comes NEW LIFE – brilliant green leaves

(Child flings up head and springs hands open, wiggling the now revealed green leaves.)

FROM – the bulb under the earth...

(Child is standing behind a large foamcore board, indicating bulb underground and grass above. Green sprouts stick up above the board. Child's head is completely hidden.)

Come NEW LIFE – a pure white lily

(Child pops head up revealing a green posterboard collar of leaves. Surrounding child's head is a posterboard lily shape, encircling the head, rising up to the top of the head, and curling back down like a lily petal.)

FROM – the egg that looks so still...

(Child is standing behind a large piece of foamcore board that is cut into an egg shape in 2 pieces, which have been hinged together with a brad or nut & bolt. The egg has a handle attached in the back of each piece, so that the child can hold it closed.)

Comes NEW LIFE – a fuzzy baby bird

(Child swings the egg open at the hinge to reveal her head: a band of fuzzy yellow feathers at the top, a beak over the nose and mouth. Child cheeps.)

FROM – the cocoon on the little twig...

(Make a poncho of 2 types of non-wrinkle knit fabric: brilliantly colored swirls for the front and dark brown for the back. Child sticks arms through side holes, then is curled around a branch, crouching on the floor with back to the audience until part it read.)

Comes NEW LIFE – a beautiful butterfly

(Child stands up, releases the branch and turns to face audience, stretching out arms and gently flapping them, revealing brilliant front and wafting across the stage like a butterfly.)

FROM – the grave in the side of the hill...

(Make a large rocky hillside with large pieces of painted cardboard, such as from refrigerator cartons, etc. Paint to look like a tomb. Make a separate piece of large cardboard for the rock that covers the tomb's opening. This opening (and rock) must be large enough for a child to pass through, and therefore this structure will have to be reinforced in some way.)

Comes NEW LIFE – the risen Christ

(Child dressed as an angel rolls back the stone. Child dressed as Jesus in a white robe with elastic gold headband steps through the opening and raises arms triumphantly to bless the audience.)

It is at this point that the ENTIRE ADULT CONGREGATION will rise in a THUNDEROUS STANDING OVATION: so prime your kids to join hands and bow, then exit to musician playing song such as, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today."