

DECORATING EASTER EGGS

We decorate eggs at Easter time because they symbolize the promise of new life from the Lord. Here is a collection of ideas for decorating eggs and conducting Easter egg hunts.

Reflecting the Beauty of Nature *(all ages)*

Place small, dampened leaves (such as fern or parsley) or flowers around each uncooked egg. Stretch cheesecloth or nylon stocking around the egg and tie the ends with string. Then place the eggs in one of the natural dyes (suggested below). Slowly bring the eggs to a boil, then simmer for at least 30 minutes. Eggs can be cooked for several hours and even left in the dye bath overnight. The long cooking will deepen the color and dry out the eggs so that they can be displayed year after year.

Natural Dyes

Blue: red cabbage leaves

Light Green: spinach, broccoli, birch leaves

Reddish Brown: red and yellow onion skins (a plastic grocery bag full)

Materials:

Large pan that is not made of aluminum

Spoon that is not aluminum

Eggs

Vegetables for making natural dye

Vinegar

Method A:

- Add ½ cup of vinegar and enough cold water to cover the ingredients for one of these colors.
- Use pot that is not made of aluminum to boil the vegetable matter covered with water.
- Also be sure to use a spoon that is not aluminum!
- Add a teaspoon of vinegar.
- Boil for 5 minutes.
- Remove the vegetable matter, then dye the eggs.

Method B:

- Put eggs in a single layer in pan and cover with water.
- Add whatever you are using for your dye.
- Add 1 teaspoon of vinegar.
- Bring to a boil and then simmer for 20 minutes.
- For darker colors, let the eggs sit in the liquid dye for one or more hours.

Leaf and Flower Print Eggs *(use with blown eggs)*

Dip one side of small leaves, ferns, or flowers into acrylic or tempera paint poured into a coffee can lid. Blot on paper towel, then press lightly onto a blown eggshell to make several prints.

Egg Holders

To make it easier to decorate eggs, pound 3 nails into wood for an “egg holder”.

Easter Eggs with Quotes from the Word *(elementary school and up)*

Use your favorite method for dying eggs. Then use fine tip marking pens (non-toxic) to write a portion of a quotation onto the egg.

Sample quotations:

- “Joy comes in the morning”
- “Peace be to you”
- “I am with you always”
- “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord”

UKRAINIAN PYSANKY EGGS

(for older children and adults)



Families with older children may enjoy making these special eggs. This involves painting designs onto an egg with melted beeswax before dipping in special dyes. After dipping into one dye, you can paint another area with wax and then dip into another dye. The final step involves heating the egg over a candle flame and wiping away the beeswax to see your design magically appear. Geometric designs are traditional, but feel free to create your own designs. This is an enjoyable but time consuming activity! With careful handling, the eggs can be kept for many years!

Note: Pysanky kits with instructions, beeswax, dyes, and sample designs can be purchased from the Chinaberry catalog. (Online catalog at www.chinaberry.com)