

## New Life

**AS SPRING BEGINS**, the snow melts, and we begin to see glimpses of green among the treetops. Birds fill the air, winging their way to their northern homes for the summer. The first of the flowers peek above the ground, reaching toward the sun's warmth. Across the forest floor is a mat of old, brown leaves that fell from the trees in the autumns before. Compared to the bright colors of the emerging flowers, the old leaves seem dull and quite ugly. But the leaves, like everything in God's creation, play an important role.

Each fall deciduous trees (the ones whose leaves fall off) prepare for winter. Essentially, they sleep for the winter. If trees still have leaves when there is snow, it can be a little dangerous; the branches can get too heavy and might break. And with less sunlight to feed the tree, the leaves are not really needed any more and fall to the ground. But the leaves' role does not end there.


As fallen leaves gather under the trees, they help to keep moisture in the soil and protect it from washing away when it rains or when the snow melts. They help to provide insulation for the spring flowers as they begin to grow, and animals use them to help keep their homes warm in the winter. And as the leaves age, they begin to break down, feeding thousands of insects whose job it is to help the leaves decompose. Decomposing leaves put nutrients back into the soil to feed the trees and other plants around them and give them new life.

With spring also come Good Friday and Easter. It's the time of year when we remember and celebrate what Jesus did for us through his death and resurrection. Jesus died so that our sins can be forgiven. He gave us the gift of a new life. He is risen!

### Try This!

Go out to explore creation and look for signs of spring. Make a list of everything you find. What do they all have in common?

### Dig Deeper

Read John 3:16, 1 Peter 1:3, and Romans 6:9-11. Think about how these verses relate to Easter. Often at Easter we see eggs, flowers, lambs, and bunnies. What do all these things have in common? What do they have to do with Easter? 



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