

April 3-5's | W1

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2026, Week 1

Today's Bible Story: Easter • Matthew 26:31-32, 36, 47-50; 27:1-2, 11-66; 28:1-8

Jesus is alive.

Key Question: Who wants to be your friend forever?

Bottom Line: Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Memory Verse: "I have called you friends." • John 15:15 NIV

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

Roll Away the Stone Relay

Large Group (20 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Worship

Bible Story

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

Memory Verse with Motions

Easter Bingo!

1, 2, 3 Hopscotch

Journal and Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

Memory Verse Card



Bible Story

Easter • Matthew 26:31-32, 36, 47-50; 27:1-2, 11-66; 28:1-8

Jesus is alive.

Key Question

Who wants to be your friend forever?

Bottom Line

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Memory Verse

"I have called you friends." • John 15:15 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Roll Away the Stone Relay | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need

-  Large playground ball or hula hoop 1
-  Painter's tape 1



EveryChild Tips

- If rolling is difficult, allow children to push the ball with their feet or carry the hula hoop.
- Play as one large group instead of two teams to reduce pressure and focus on the fun of the movement.

20 min

Groups

5 min

Memory Verse with Motions | Made to Move

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Create a start and finish line in an open area of your room with tape.

During the Activity: Divide the children into two teams. Have the first child in each line roll the "stone" (ball or hula hoop) across the room to the finish line and then roll it back to the next person in their line. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

After the Activity: Introduce the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Hello, friends! I'm so happy you're here! Happy Easter! Come stand with me. We're going to play a game with this big, round stone! (*Hold up ball or hoop.*)"

During the Activity: "In our story today, we will hear about a big stone that was rolled in front of a tomb. Let's play a game and pretend to roll that stone! We'll make two teams. When I say, 'Go,' the first person in each line will roll the stone all the way to that wall and then roll it back to the next person. Ready, set, go! (*Cheer for the children as they play.*) You are doing a great job rolling that big stone! Way to go, teams!" (*Repeat as desired.*)

After the Activity: "That was so much fun! That big stone reminds me of our Bible story today. It's a special story that makes me want to shout, 'Hip, hip, hooray!' Let's go hear about the stone in our story."

Note: You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Say the Memory Verse and demonstrate the motions for the children.

During the Activity: Teach the Memory Verse motions. Invite the children to do them with you several times.

After the Activity: Connect the Memory Verse to the Bottom Line.

What You Say:

What You Need

- Optional EveryChild Supplies:- Several
"Memory Verse Hand Motions"
PDF
- Optional EveryChild Supplies:- Several
Cardstock
- Optional EveryChild Supplies: Several
VELCRO® dots
- Optional EveryChild Supplies: Scissors 1



EveryChild Tips

- Invite children to say it with you or repeat words after you.
- Set out the picture cutouts made from the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF for children to hold up or point to as an alternative to saying or repeating the verse out loud.

Before the Activity: "Friends, come stand with me! Let's learn our brand-new Memory Verse. It's what Jesus told His friends. It goes like this: 'I (*point up*) have called you (*point to others*) friends,' (*hook index fingers twice*) John 15:15." (*Open hands like a book.*)

During the Activity: "Now, let's learn the motions! The first part says, 'I, Everyone, point up. (*Point up.*) Great! The next part says, 'have called you.' Now, point to others. (*Point to others.*) Good job! And the last part says, 'friends.' Let's hook our pointer fingers together, like this. (*Hook index fingers twice.*) Awesome! Let's put it all together. Ready? 'I (*point up*) have called you (*point to others*) friends.' (*Hook index fingers twice.*) John 15:15. (*Open hands like a book.*) Let's do it again!" (*Repeat several times.*)

After the Activity: "Wow! Jesus calls us His friends. That's because **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Who wants to be your friend forever? **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!"**

5 min

Easter Bingo! | Made to Think *Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need

	"Easter Bingo" Activity Page	1
	"Bingo Calling Cards" Activity Page	1
	Cardstock	1
	Pom-poms, foam shapes, or other small markers	Several
	Scissors	1

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Easter Bingo" on cardstock and cut one out per child. Copy "Bingo Calling Cards" on cardstock and cut one set per Small Group. Give each child a bingo card and a small handful of markers (pom-poms or foam shapes).

During the Activity: Hold up one Bingo calling card at a time. Name the picture and have the children look for the matching picture on their card. If they have it, they can cover it with a marker. Continue until a child gets a line covered and shouts "Bingo!" or "Jesus is alive!"

After the Activity: Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Let's play a game of Easter Bingo to help us remember our happy story about Jesus! Everyone gets a special card. When you see a picture on your card that matches the one I hold up, you can cover it with a pom-pom!"

During the Activity: "Okay, let's start! The first picture is ... the cross. (Hold up card.) Does anyone have the cross? If you do, cover it up! (Pause.) Next up is... the empty tomb! (Hold up card.) Look for the empty tomb! (Continue until someone gets a bingo.) Yay, you got it! Hip, hip, hooray! Jesus is alive!"

After the Activity: "Playing bingo was so fun! All of those pictures help us remember the amazing true story of Easter. The best part of the story is that Jesus is alive, and **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Who wants to be your friend forever? **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!**"

5 min

1, 2, 3 Hopscotch | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need

 "1,2,3 Hopscotch" Activity Page	2
 Cardstock	1
 Painter's tape	1



EveryChild Tips

- For a version with less movement, set this activity up on a table. Use a toy to move from number to number and shout, "Jesus is alive!"

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "1,2,3 Hopscotch" on cardstock, two sets per Small Group. Arrange and tape the pages to the floor in a simple hopscotch pattern (1, 2, 3, Jesus).

During the Activity: Encourage children to take turns hopping on the numbers, counting as they go. When they land on the picture of Jesus, everyone shouts, "Jesus is alive!"

After the Activity: Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Let's play a hopping game! Come stand by me."

During the Activity: "We're going to play hopscotch! I want you to hop on each number and say it out loud. Ready? One ... two... three! And when you get to the last picture, it's Jesus! When you land on Jesus, we are all going to shout, 'Jesus is alive!' [Child's name], you go first! (Guide the child through the course.) One, two, three ... (Child lands on Jesus.) Everyone, shout! 'Jesus is alive!' Hip, hip, hooray!" (Continue until all children have had a turn.)

After the Activity: "All that hopping was fun! What do we shout when we see Jesus? (Pause for response.) That's right! Jesus is alive! And because He is, **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Who wants to be your friend forever?**[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever!**"

5 min

Journal and Prayer | Made to Reflect

What You Need

 "Memory Verse Card" from the Home folder	1
 Cardstock	1
 Bible	1
 Journal	1
 Fun-shaped pen	1
 Scissors	1

Note: You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut one per Small Group. Place one card in your Bible at John 15:15. *Note: Keep this card in your Bible all month long.*

Encourage the children to do a happy dance to celebrate that Jesus is alive as you lead them to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you.

During the Activity: Review the Bible Story and the Memory Verse Hand Motions, then ask the children to help you make a list of things that make the children want to shout "Hooray!"

After the Activity: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "It's Small Group time! Today, we are going to do a happy dance to celebrate that Jesus is alive! Let's dance all the way to our Small Group spot. (*Dance with children to your Small Group spot.*) Whew! We made it! Now we can sit down and talk about today's Bible Story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

During the Activity: (*Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.*) "In our Bible Story today, Jesus died on the cross and was put in a tomb with a big stone rolled in front. On the third day, can you count to three with me? 1, 2, 3. His friends went to the tomb, but Jesus was not inside the tomb. Jesus came back alive, just like He said He would. Jesus is alive and wants to be our friend forever! Easter is when we celebrate that Jesus died and came back to life so He could be our friend forever and ever! **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Who wants to be your friend forever?**[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.**

"The Bible verse we are learning talks about how Jesus wants to be our friend. It says, 'I (*point up*) have called you(*point to others*) friends.'*(hook index fingers twice)* John 15:15.*(Open hands like a book.)* Did you hear that? Jesus called us friend! Jesus called me friend and Jesus called you, and you, and you friend! Jesus wants to be your friend forever and **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever** too! Let's stand up and say that Bible verse together! Just say what I say and do what I do! 'I (*point up*) have called you(*point to others*) friends.'*(hook index fingers twice)* John 15:15.*(Open hands like a book.)*

"Yay!*(Clap.)* I'm so happy that Jesus came back just like He said He would. Let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God.*(Open journal.)* In our Bible Story, Jesus came back alive. That makes me want to say, Hip Hip Hooray! When I say your name, tell me something that makes you want to say 'Hooray' and I will write it in our

journal." (Remember to print, as you write in the journal, so the children can recognize their names and the letters.)

After the Activity: "Let's pray. Dear God, thank You for all the things that make us say Hooray, like (*read the list*). But thank You most of all for the happiest and best news ever—that Jesus is ALIVE! Jesus is alive and we know Jesus wants to be our friend forever, and that makes us shout, 'Hip, hip, hooray!' We love You, God. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Supplies

Roll Away the Stone Relay | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies

- | | Quantity |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Large playground ball or hula hoop | 1 |
| 2. Painter's tape | 1 |

Memory Verse with Motions | Made to Move

- | | Quantity |
|--|----------|
| 1. Optional EveryChild Supplies:-
"Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF | Several |
| 2. Optional EveryChild Supplies:-
Cardstock | Several |
| 3. Optional EveryChild Supplies:
VELCRO® dots | Several |
| 4. Optional EveryChild Supplies:
Scissors | 1 |

Easter Bingo! | Made to Think *Uses Minimal Supplies

- | | Quantity |
|---|----------|
| 1. "Easter Bingo" Activity Page | 1 |
| 2. "Bingo Calling Cards" Activity Page | 1 |
| 3. Cardstock | 1 |
| 4. Pom-poms, foam shapes, or other
small markers | Several |
| 5. Scissors | 1 |

1, 2, 3 Hopscotch | Made to Move *Uses Minimal Supplies

- | | Quantity |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. "1,2,3 Hopscotch" Activity Page | 2 |
| 2. Cardstock | 1 |
| 3. Painter's tape | 1 |

Journal and Prayer | Made to Reflect

- | | Quantity |
|--|----------|
| 1. "Memory Verse Card" from the Home
folder | 1 |
| 2. Cardstock | 1 |
| 3. Bible | 1 |
| 4. Journal | 1 |
| 5. Fun-shaped pen | 1 |
| 6. Scissors | 1 |