

April 2nd-3rd | W1

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 2026, Week 1

Bible Story: Easter (Crucified and Risen) • *John 18–20:23*

Bottom Line: You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!* • Philippians 4:4 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

Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

Opener

Worship

Bible Story (sections from God's Big Story are listed as optional)

Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Bible Story Review: Picture Plates

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Motions

Discussion Questions

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss



Bible Story

Easter (Crucified and Risen) • *John 18–20:23*

Conversation Starter

How do you celebrate Easter?

Bottom Line

You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

Monthly Memory Verse

Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! • Philippians 4:4 NIV

5 min

Social

5 min

Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

No supplies needed



EveryChild Tips

Provide visual pictures to cue kids of an item for those who may struggle to think on the spot.

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
- Explain that you are going to play "Twenty Questions" with an Easter theme.
- Think of an Easter-related item (e.g., Jesus, cross, Peeps®, Easter egg, crown of thorns, sunrise, stone, chocolate bunny, jellybeans).
- Share that the kids can ask up to 20 yes or no questions to guess what you're thinking of.
- If they don't guess what you're thinking of in 20 questions, tell them the answer, think of a different item, and start another round.
- Let a kid who guesses correctly take a turn being the "thinker."

What You Say:

"You guys are great detectives! You asked good questions to figure out the answer. In our true story from the Bible today, Jesus' friends had a lot of questions too. They were confused and sad. But then they discovered the answer that changed everything. Let's go dive into the story."



5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

23 – Picture Plates | Made to Create

What You Need

-  Paper plates 1
-  Coloring supplies Several

What You Do:

- Review the Bible Story (John 18–20:23) with the kids. Be sure to cover these main points:
 - Jesus was arrested, put on trial, and sentenced to die on a cross.
 - Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb. A big stone was rolled in front of Jesus' tomb to seal it.
 - Jesus' friend Mary went to the tomb early Sunday morning. When she got there, the stone was rolled away, and the tomb was empty.
 - Jesus is alive! He appeared to Mary outside of the tomb, and she was so happy! She ran to tell Jesus' friends that He is alive!
- Give each kid a paper plate and place coloring supplies nearby.
- Ask kids to hold the plate upside down on top of their head with one hand.
- Tell them that they are going to use their other hand to draw the Easter story on the plate—while it's still on their head!
- Give the following prompts and allow kids time to draw each picture:
 1. Say: "Draw a cross."
 2. Say: "Draw a tomb with a stone."
 3. Say: "Draw a happy face because Jesus is alive!"
- Let them take the plates down and look at their drawings.
- Allow kids to talk about the Bible Story and add other details from the story to their drawing.

What You Say:

"Those drawings are so unique! Even though the pictures turned out silly when you drew them without looking, they still remind us of the most important story ever: the true story of Easter!

"God sent Jesus to rescue us. Our sin pulled us away from God and kept us from being close to Him. But God wants us to be His close, close friends! So Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins to make a way for us to be close with God. But Jesus didn't stay dead. On the third day, He came back to life! Jesus is alive! That's the best news ever! Jesus made a way for us to be friends with God forever. That gives us so much joy!

[Bottom Line] You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"



5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Memory Verse Motions | Made to Move

What You Need

 Bibles marked at Philippians 4:4	0
 "Verse Motions" Activity Page	1

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible marked at Philippians 4:4.
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse if needed:
- Repeat the verse together several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Using the "Verse Motions" Activity Page, teach the verse and motions one line at a time.
- "Always be joyful" (*Jump up and down and stretch arms up high*)
- "because you belong to the Lord." (*Point up to heaven*)
- "I will say it again." (*Cup hands around mouth like shouting*)
- "Be joyful!" (*Jump up and down again with arms stretched up high*)
- "Philippians 4:4" (*Hold hands open like a book*)
- Practice the full verse with motions together several times.

What You Say:

"You've got it! This verse tells us to be joyful. Why? Because we belong to the Lord! God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus made a way for us to be God's friends forever. If you want to be God's friend forever, you can make that decision today! Jesus died for our sins, and there is nothing you've done that can separate you from God's love. That's a reason to celebrate—today and every day! **[Bottom Line] You can have joy because Jesus is alive.**"

What You Do:

Ask these questions:

- Why do you think Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested even though the soldiers fell down when He said, "I am he"? (John 18:6 NIV)
- What moment in today's Bible story amazes you the most?
- What does the resurrection prove about who Jesus really is?
- Peter messed up, but Jesus still forgave him and used him. What does that tell you about how Jesus sees YOU when you mess up?
- How does knowing Jesus is alive change the way you face: Fear? Confusing moments? Mess-ups?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

What You Need



1

What You Do:

- Tell the kids that today's prayer is a celebration prayer.
- Explain that you will say a sentence, and then they will shout, "Jesus is alive!"
- Say, "God loves us so much!" (*Kids: "Jesus is alive!"*)
- Say, "Jesus gave His life so we can be God's friends!" (*Kids: "Jesus is alive!"*)
- Say, "We can be friends with God forever!" (*Kids: "Jesus is alive!"*)
- Say, "We can have joy!" (*Kids: "Jesus is alive!"*)
- Close with prayer.

What You Say:

"God, we are so happy today! Thank You for giving us the best gift ever—Jesus. Thank You that Jesus is alive and that we can be friends with You forever. Help us to share this joy with everyone we meet. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Supplies

23 – Picture Plates | Made to Create

- | | Quantity |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1. Paper plates | 1 |
| 2. Coloring supplies | Several |

Memory Verse Motions | Made to Move

- | | Quantity |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Bibles marked at Philippians 4:4 | 0 |
| 2. "Verse Motions" Activity Page | 1 |

Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

- | | Quantity |
|----|----------|
| 1. | 1 |