

APRIL LARGE GROUP | 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 NlrV

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: Build the Story (K–1st grade), Picture Plates (2nd–3rd grade)

Application Activity: Buckets of Questions (K–1st grade), Jesus Went Away and Came Back (2nd–3rd grade)

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Motions (K–1st grade), Torn Paper Cross (2nd–3rd grade)

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

Devotionals for Kids

Parent Cue App



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 NlrV








5 min

Large Group Opener

5 min

Opener

What You Need

 Host	1
 kid volunteers for each round you do (ask for new volunteers at the start of each round)	8
 Timer (or smartphone or watch or countdown)	1
 Easter baskets	2
 Floor Tape	1
 40-60 Easter eggs (20-30 per tub) (adjust if you are using smaller or larger containers)	1
 bags of fake Easter grass (10 per tub) (adjust if you are using smaller or larger containers)	1

What You Do:

- Download the slides or optional videos and have them ready to use. If you do not have screen capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Download music and/or sound effects on an authorized basis from a resource such as Apple Music®, Amazon Music®, and/or a sound effect library and have it ready to play. Or, if you choose to stream music, refer to the terms and conditions of your streaming service. Note that you will likely need a commercial license in order to stream music publicly. Also confirm that your church has appropriate licensing to perform music and sound effects in your kids' environments, such as a blanket PERFORMmusic™ license from CCS. *Note: Legally, a song and/or sound effect belongs to the songwriter/composer who created it and the publisher who markets it. Performance rights organizations (PROs) license public performances (live or recorded) of their members' music. PROs in the U.S. are ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC. It is up to you to make sure your church has permission to perform or play a recording of a song and/or sound effect.*
- *Optional:* Download a countdown video from a royalty-free site. Load it into your presentation software and have it ready to play during the Opener. You could also keep time on a smartphone or watch. *Note: Some presentation software, such as ProPresenter, includes a built-in countdown clock that can be overlaid on a still image.*
- Create a starting line with floor tape at one end of the room.
- Place the two empty Easter baskets on the floor tape at the start line.
- Fill the two tubs with the Easter eggs and fake grass, and put each tub at the opposite end of the room directly across from the starting line.

AUDIO: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

SLIDE: Theme

Optional Video: Theme Loop

(Host enters with energy and excitement.)

Optional Video: Countdown

Optional Video: Theme Intro

Optional Video: Theme Loop

(Things to have ready: Floor tape set on one end of the room as a starting line. Tubs on the other end of the room filled with Easter eggs and fake grass. Empty Easter baskets on the start line. Timer—or smartphone or watch or countdown. Game slide. Bottom Line slide.)

OPENER

HOST: "Hi, friends! Welcome to [Name of Environment]! I'm so glad you're here today. Give me a big wave if you're excited to be here! This month, we're celebrating Jesus and the joy that never, ever ends. Can you say, 'joy'?"

KIDS: "Joy!"

HOST: "And today, we get to celebrate Easter! Who loves Easter? Easter is when Jesus gave His life to rescue us, but then He came back to life. And now we can be God's friend forever! Jesus is alive! Jesus is our friend forever! That's so awesome, and the biggest reason to have joy! Yay!"

"Before we celebrate all of that, we're going to play a super-fun Easter game. Wow, look at these huge Easter baskets!"

(Gesture to the tubs.)

"I bet there are tons of Easter eggs hiding in there! And you know what, it's time to play one big Easter egg game! Today, we're playing a game called 'Egg Rush!'"

SLIDE: Egg Rush! Title

"Inside these big tubs are LOTS of hidden Easter eggs. They're sneaky eggs, and they're hiding way down deep in the grass. I think I even saw one trying to peek out at me!"

"Here's how the game works: we're going to have two teams of four, and both teams are going to line up at the start line. When it's your turn, you'll run all the way down to your team's tub, dig through the Easter grass, find ONE egg, and bring it back to your team's basket. Then tag the next person on your team, and they'll take their turn. We'll play for one minute, and when the time is up, we'll count the eggs to see which team found the most."

"Let's go ahead and pick our teams! These friends will be our runners. If you'd like to volunteer, raise your hand!"

(Choose eight kids from the ones who have their hands raised, split them into two teams of four, and line them up at the start line.)

"Woohoo, we have our teams! And everyone else, you get to be our cheering squad!"

"Okay, cheering squad, are YOU ready?"

(Pause while kids cheer.)

"Team One and Team Two, are YOU ready?"

(Pause while kids cheer.)

"On your mark ... get set ... GO!"

Optional Video: 2-Minute Countdown

(Start timer—or smartphone or watch or countdown. One kid from each team is to run to the tub, search the tub for an egg, grab ONE egg, run back to the start line, return the egg to the team's Easter basket, and tag the next kid on their team.)

(Encourage each team as they race and involve the audience. Make sure the runners from each team are only bringing back ONE Easter egg at a time.)

"Look at those fast feet! Wow, they found a shiny egg! Let's hear some joyful cheers from the audience!"

(When two-minute timer is up ...)

11 min

Worship Option 1 | Amazing Music

3 min

Alive | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

3 min

Living Hope | Worship Song

"And FREEZE! Time is up! Wow! You guys were FAST! Okay, everyone, help me count Team One's eggs!

(Count eggs together with kids and announce the final number.)

"Okay, now let's count Team Two's eggs.

(Count eggs together with kids and announce the final number.)

"Our winner today is ... [Name of Team]!

(Repeat the game for as many rounds as time allows. Ask for new volunteers at the start of each round.)

"Everyone did such a great job, and you were all so joyful during our game! But do you know what gives us the MOST joy? Jesus! Jesus is alive—at He can be our friend forever—and that means we can have joy every day.

"Let's check out our Bottom Line for today!

SLIDE: Bottom Line

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

"Can you say that with me?"

KIDS AND HOST: [Bottom Line] "You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"

HOST: "Great job, everyone! Happy Easter! Jesus loves you so much!"

Note: We've suggested worship songs below from Amazing Music and Orange Kids Music. We've created these worship resources to be developmentally appropriate for elementary and preteen kids by incorporating simple, direct language, fun dance movements, and upbeat, current arrangements.

We've chosen specific songs that amplify our teaching content for this month. We recommend that you use these songs as scripted below, or combined with other popular worship songs that your kids know and love. Orange Kids Music can be purchased at store.thinkorange.com. Amazing Music is available on APlay with Amazing+, or as an Add-On.

(Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.)

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hi, friends! Are you ready to worship Jesus today? I love it! Worship is when we sing to God and show Him how much we love Him. And today is extra-special because Jesus is alive, and that means we can have joy every single day!

"Let's start by singing a song called 'Alive.' This song reminds us that Jesus is alive, and that gives us hope and joy. Everyone, stand up nice and tall. Wiggle your fingers ... wiggle your toes ... and let's get ready to dance!

SONG: "Alive" Dance Motion, Lyric or Instrumental Lyric Videos are available with Amazing Music on APlay

"Wow! You all sang that like you meant it! Now, let's sing another song that helps us remember something so important that Jesus gives us—freedom! When we follow Him, we don't have to worry or try to be the best. Jesus already loves us completely! Let's sing this one loud!

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

Memory Verse**What You Need**

No supplies needed

33 min

Bible Story (Live)

3 min

INTRODUCTION

"Great job, friends! You were singing so loud! Now we're going to sing 'Living Hope.' Jesus is our hope. He gives us joy because He beat death and came back to life. You can close your eyes, lift your hands, or sing as loud as you want—this is your time to worship.

SONG: "Living Hope" Dance Motion, Lyric or Instrumental Lyric Videos are available with Amazing Music on APlay

"You all did such an amazing job singing those songs! I love seeing your smiles and hearing your voices."

"This month, we're celebrating the joy we have because Jesus is alive. Our Memory Verse helps us remember that joy comes from knowing Jesus. I'll say our Memory Verse first, then we'll say it together. It's Philippians 4:4!

SLIDE: Memory Verse

WORSHIP LEADER: "Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! —Philippians 4:4 (NirV)."

"Now, let's say it together, nice and loud!"

WORSHIP LEADER: "Always be joyful."

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: "Always be joyful."

WORSHIP LEADER: "Because you belong to the Lord."

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: "Because you belong to the Lord."

WORSHIP LEADER: "I will say it again."

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: "I will say it again."

WORSHIP LEADER: "Be joyful!"

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: "Be joyful!"

WORSHIP LEADER: "Philippians 4:4!"

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: "Philippians 4:4!"

WORSHIP LEADER: "You all did such an amazing job learning the verse. When you go to school, when you're playing at home, and when you're with your friends, Jesus is alive, He is with you, and His joy goes with you. Let this verse be a reminder all week long: you can always choose joy because Jesus is alive, and He loves you so much."

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have screen capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.

What You Need

👤	Storyteller	1
👤	Host	1
👤	Table	1
👤	cardboard boxes labeled "Friday," "Saturday," and "Sunday" (See "What You Do" on how to prepare them.)	3
👤	big marker	1
👤	sheets of dark-colored tissue paper (enough to fill the "Friday" box)	Several
👤	Sad face visual and question mark visual that are provided ("Sad Face" printable and "Question Mark" printable)	1
👤	balloons (however many fit in the "Sunday" box)	3
👤	Ribbon (enough to tie some to each balloon)	1
👤	Balloon weights (enough for each balloon)	1
👤	Bible	1

5 min

SETTING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

- Confirm that your church has appropriate licensing to perform or play music and sound effects in your kids' environments (see above under Opener).
- Print the "Sad Face" printable and the "Question Mark" printable that are provided.
- Using the marker, write "Friday" on one box, "Saturday" on one box, and "Sunday" on one box in big, bold letters.
- Blow up the balloons with helium, tie some ribbon to each one, and tie the balloons to the balloon weights.
- Put the dark tissue paper in the "Friday" box.
- Put the "Sad Face" printable and the "Question Mark" printable in the "Saturday" box.
- Put the balloons and balloon weights in the "Sunday" box.
- Line up all the boxes on the table in the order of the teaching (the order is "Friday," "Saturday," and "Sunday.")

(Things to have ready: Table on the stage so the Storyteller can place their Bible on it and read from it. Have all the Easter egg props lined up on the table in the order of the teaching.)

STORYTELLER: "Hi, friends! Today is a very special day. Does anybody like to smile? Let me see a big smile! Does anybody like to have parties? Who likes having fun? Well, you're in the right place because today, we're celebrating Easter! It's the best party ever!

"Easter is when we celebrate that Jesus is alive! Jesus loves us so much that He gave His life to rescue us! And then, He rose back to life! Jesus beat death! And Jesus did all of that so we could be His friends forever! Hooray! That's what we're going to talk about today!

STORYTELLER: "Today, we're continuing our journey through the Bible. And we're at one of the most important events in the whole entire Bible—Easter!

"But before we get started talking about Easter, let me ask you something. Have you ever had a day that started out really happy ... and then something happened that made you feel sad?

"Maybe your favorite toy broke ... or a friend couldn't come over ... or something didn't go the way you hoped. Well, something big happened to Jesus' friends. They loved Jesus so much. They followed Him, they listened to Him, and they saw Him do amazing things. But then ... something happened that they didn't expect.

"These eggs (*gesture to the eggs on the table*) are going to help us understand what happened. Each one shows us a little piece of the story. You see, even though Jesus did everything right, some leaders didn't like the things He said. They didn't understand that Jesus was God's Son. And one night, soldiers came and took Jesus away.

"This part of the story can feel sad. It felt sad for Jesus' followers too. But remember, God is good, and He was writing a good story. God was working out His plan through everything that happened.

"Let's open the first egg to see what happened next.

5 min

JESUS IS ARRESTED AND DIES ON THE CROSS

What You Need

No supplies needed

(Pick up the first egg, open it, and hold up the cross.)

STORYTELLER: "Inside this egg is a cross. The cross reminds us of something very real and very important. After soldiers arrested Jesus, they took Him to a place called Golgotha. There, they nailed Him to a cross. Jesus never did anything wrong, not even once. But Jesus **CHOSE** to go to the cross because He loves us.

"Let's read what the Bible says happened:

(Open the Bible and read John 19:17-18a NIV.)

He had to carry his own cross. He went out to a place called the Skull ... There they nailed Jesus to the cross.

"Even though Jesus was the Son of God, He let Himself be arrested. He let Himself be taken away. He let Himself be nailed to the cross. Why? Because Jesus came to rescue us. Let's open the next egg.

(Pick up the second egg, open it, and hold up the heart.)

"Inside this egg is a heart. This heart reminds us that everything Jesus did—every step, every word, even, as we'll see, dying on the cross—was done because of love. Jesus loves you! Sadly, we all have this awful thing in our lives called sin. Sin is when we choose our way instead of God's way, and it pulls us away from God. But Jesus wants us to be His close, close friends! But something had to be done about this awful sin. So Jesus gave His perfect life and paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done or ever will do. He paid for sin! And now, when we accept what Jesus did for us, we can be close to God again! Jesus loves us so, so much that He gave His life for us!

"Jesus' friends didn't know it, but that's what Jesus was doing on Easter. Let's continue on with the sad part of our story. This is what the Bible says happened next:

(Open the Bible and read John 19:30 NIV.)

After Jesus drank he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and died.

"Let's see what's inside the next egg.

(Pick up the third egg, open it, and hold up the tissues.)

"This egg has tissues in it. Jesus' friends were sad, sad, sad, so they cried and cried when He died. They had followed Jesus everywhere. They had seen Him help people. They had heard Him teach about God's love. And now ... Jesus was gone.

"Jesus' friends didn't understand what was happening. It felt like the saddest day in the whole world. But the story isn't over. God was still working."

STORYTELLER: "Let's open the next egg and see what it helps us remember.

(Pick up the fourth egg, open it, and hold up the stone.)

5 min

JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

JESUS IS ALIVE**What You Need**

No supplies needed

"Inside this egg is a stone. After Jesus died, two men who loved Him—Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus—took Jesus' body and placed it in a tomb. A tomb is like a cave dug in a rock. Then they rolled a big, heavy stone in front of the opening. The stone was so big that no one could move it by themselves.

(Open the Bible and read John 19:41 NIV.)

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden. A new tomb was there. No one had ever been put in it before ... So they placed Jesus there.

"Jesus' friends didn't know what would happen next. They were sad. They were confused. And it seemed like everything was dark and quiet.

"But even on that quiet day, God was still at work. Something amazing was getting ready to happen—something that would change everything.

"Are you ready to see what comes next? This is the best part of the story.

STORYTELLER: "This is our last egg. And this one is the biggest surprise of all.

(Pick up the fifth egg, open it, and show the audience that it's empty.)
"It's ... empty.

"This egg is empty because the tomb was empty. Jesus wasn't there. Jesus is alive!

(Open the Bible and read John 20:1 NIV.)

Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. It was still dark. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the entrance.

"Mary Magdalene was one of Jesus' friends. She went to the tomb very early in the morning. When she got there, the big stone was moved. The tomb was open! Mary didn't know what had happened. She thought someone had taken Jesus' body.

"But Jesus hadn't been taken. Jesus had come back to life! After Mary told a couple of disciples what she had discovered, she came back to the tomb again. There were two angels sitting inside of it! Then, this happened:

(Open the Bible and read John 20:14-16 NIV.)

Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't realize that it was Jesus.

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. So she said, "Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary."

5 min

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

GOD'S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

What You Need

No supplies needed

She turned toward him. Then she cried out in the Aramaic language, "Rabboni!" Rabboni means Teacher.

"When Jesus said her name, Mary knew it was Him. She knew Jesus was alive. She was so happy, so full of joy, that she ran to tell the others.

"Jesus gave His life to pay for our sins, so we could be His friends forever! Jesus loves us so much! Then, Jesus came back to life. Jesus is alive forever and ever and ever. Hooray!

STORYTELLER: "Wow, friends ... what an amazing story. Let's remember what happened.

"We opened the first egg and found a cross. The cross is the awful place Jesus chose to go to give His life. But why did Jesus choose to die? The next egg tells us! It had a heart inside. Jesus chose to give His life because He loves us! Jesus chose to die to pay for our sins so we could be close to Him again. Then we opened another egg and found the tissue—because Jesus' friends didn't know what was happening, and were so sad when He died. And we opened another egg and found a stone, just like the big stone that closed the tomb.

"And finally, we opened the last egg ... and it was empty, just like the tomb was empty because Jesus wasn't there. Jesus is alive!

"This is the best news in the whole world. Jesus gave His life to pay for our sins so we could be close to God! Then Jesus came back to life! Jesus beat death! He is alive, and He will be alive forever. And now we can be God's friend forever! Hooray!

"This is why we celebrate Easter. This is why we have joy that never ends. Jesus is alive! Let's say our Bottom Line together.

SLIDE: Bottom Line

"You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"

HOST: "Let's take a look at the progress we made in God's Big Story this week!

SLIDE: God's Big Story

"This week, we covered two whole pictures in this map of God's Big Story! We talked about the picture that says, 'The Cross' and the picture that says, 'The Resurrection!' (*Gesture to timeline.*)

"Friends, this week, we talked about the central point of God's great rescue plan! Since the fall in the garden, (*gesture to the picture, if you have it*) God had promised that He was going to restore the closeness that was broken by sin. He was going to make a way for people to be His close friends forever. Years ago, God had said, 'I am going to rescue you.' 'I want you close.' 'This distance will not do.' And throughout His Big Story (*wide gesture to the other images in God's Big Story, if you*

have them), He faithfully, faithfully, faithfully was working to keep that promise to break that curse of sin that kept people from being close to Him. So Jesus, God's very own Son, came. He lived a perfect life, and then gave that perfect life to pay the price for sin. Because He never did anything wrong, Jesus was able to take on our sin. With His own life, He paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done or ever will do. He broke the curse of sin we were under. He set us free. With the curse broken, with sin paid for, we could be close to God again! What God had been working on in His Big Story was finally coming true! And then Jesus did something else amazing! He rose back to life! Jesus beat death! Our Rescuer who loves us is alive and with us forever and ever!
 SLIDE: Week 1 Timeline Image

(If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's Timeline Image on the clothesline.)

"This week, we learned the incredible news: Jesus died and rose again. Jesus loves us so much that He gave His life to rescue us, and then He rose back to life again! And because Jesus is alive, we can have life and joy! WOOHOO!"

8 min

Closing

5 min

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

What You Need

No supplies needed

Storyteller: "Now that we've heard this amazing Easter story, let's talk about what it means for us today.

"What Jesus' friends didn't know those few days, but that we know now, is that when Jesus gave His life, He paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done or ever will do. With sin paid for, we could be close to God! That's what He wants more than anything—to be your close, close friend!

"You can be friends with the God of the universe because of what Jesus did on Easter!

"And that friendship is better than any friendship. Jesus is alive, even today, and as your forever friend, He goes with you through every single thing you face. When you wake up in the morning, Jesus, your forever friend, is with you. When you go to school, Jesus, your forever friend, is with you. When you play with your friends, Jesus, your forever friend, is with you. When you go to bed at night, Jesus, your forever friend, is still with you.

"You are loved, so loved, by the God of the universe! He gave His life to make a way so you could be close to Him, and then He rose again! That's the most exciting news ever!

"Happy Easter, everybody! Jesus loves you!

"Let's pray and thank Jesus for what He's done."

Pray

3 min

PRAYER

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "You can close your eyes and get still as we talk to Jesus.

"Jesus, thank You for loving us so much. Thank You for dying on the cross for us to rescue us. And thank You for rising again on Easter morning. Help us make our whole lives about growing our forever friendship with You that You bought for us on Easter. We love You so much, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."
(Dismiss kids to their small groups.)

AUDIO: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

SLIDE: Theme

Optional Video (Media Package): Theme Loop

Supplies

Opener	Quantity
1. Host	1
2. kid volunteers for each round you do (ask for new volunteers at the start of each round)	8
3. Timer (or smartphone or watch or countdown)	1
4. Easter baskets	2
5. Floor Tape	1
6. 40-60 Easter eggs (20-30 per tub) (adjust if you are using smaller or larger containers)	1
7. bags of fake Easter grass (10 per tub) (adjust if you are using smaller or larger containers)	1

INTRODUCTION	Quantity
1. Storyteller	1
2. Host	1
3. Table	1
4. cardboard boxes labeled "Friday," "Saturday," and "Sunday" (See "What You Do" on how to prepare them.)	3
5. big marker	1
6. sheets of dark-colored tissue paper (enough to fill the "Friday" box)	Several
7. Sad face visual and question mark visual that are provided ("Sad Face" printable and "Question Mark" printable)	1
8. balloons (however many fit in the "Sunday" box)	3
9. Ribbon (enough to tie some to each balloon)	1
10. Balloon weights (enough for each balloon)	1
11. Bible	1