

2-3 | 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

Social

5 min

23 Social Activity | Made to Explore

What You Need

-  Offering container 1
-  Prepared plastic tray with party items on it 1
-  Small towel or cloth 1

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name with a high five or a fist bump.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Show the tray to the kids.
- Encourage the kids to name each item as you point to it.
- Cover the tray with the towel.
- Ask the kids to close their eyes.
- Remove one item from the tray and hide it behind your back.
- Tell the kids to open their eyes and uncover the tray.
- Ask, "What's missing?"
- Let the kids guess which item is gone.
- Play again, this time letting a kid be the one to remove an item and hide it from sight.
- Continue until every kid has had a turn.

What You Say:

"You are all great at remembering what was on the tray! It was fun to see what was missing and then find it again. In our true story from the Bible today, Jesus' friends were very sad because they thought Jesus was gone forever. But then, they found out something amazing! Let's go hear what happened."

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

Application Activity

5 min

23 – Jesus Went Away and Came Back | Made to Explore

What You Need

-  Prepared "Jesus Went Away and Came Back" Activity Page in the plastic sheet protector or jumbo resealable bag 1
-  Plastic bin (clear is helpful, but it doesn't have to be), 12 inches deep or larger 1
-  Plastic tablecloth or tarp 1
-  Water 1

What You Do:

- Ask kids to watch closely as you slowly lower the picture of Jesus from the "Jesus Went Away and Came Back" Activity Page into the water.
- Say: "God sent us His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins, but He didn't stay dead."
- Say: "On the third day, Jesus came back to life!"
- Invite the kids to count to three with you and slowly lift the picture of Jesus out of the water.

What You Say:

"Today's true story from the Bible took us through the very worst day and into the very best day in history! Jesus died on a cross, but on the third day, He came back to life! Jesus' friends, the disciples, were sad when Jesus died and went away, but their sadness turned to joy when Jesus came back to life! Jesus wasn't gone forever. Jesus was alive, and Jesus is alive today!

"Jesus' friends didn't know it, but God was doing something amazing in the sad time of the cross. God was making a way for us to be His close friends forever! When things are hard or sad for us, we can remember that Jesus is alive and He is with us. That gives us joy that never ends.

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

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

23 – Memory Verse Motions | Made to Move

What You Need

-  Bibles 1
-  Construction paper in a variety of colors Several
-  EveryChild Supplies: Dot markers Several
-  EveryChild Supplies: Coloring materials Several



EveryChild Tips

Prepare crosses in advance and encourage kids to decorate them with dot markers or other coloring supplies.

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible and direct them to look up Philippians 4:4.
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses for 2nd-3rd graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list. When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

- Repeat the verse aloud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to put their Bibles aside.
- Give each kid a piece of construction paper.
- Show them how to tear the paper into a cross shape. See our Pinterest Board.
- As kids work, practice saying the verse together.
- Once they're finished tearing the paper, invite them to stand up and hold their crosses while saying the verse one more time.

What You Say:

"Great work! You made something really special by tearing a plain piece of paper and creating a cross. Your cross may not look perfect. But that's the point! We aren't perfect, and we all make bad choices sometimes, choosing our way instead of God's. But the cross is the good news! The cross reminds us how much Jesus loves us. Jesus died on the cross for our sins so we could be friends with God forever! And then Jesus rose from the dead! Jesus is alive today! And because Jesus is alive, we can always be joyful. **[Bottom Line] You can have joy because Jesus is alive.**"

5 min

Prayer

5 min

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect

What You Need

-  Prepared cups/bowls of jellybeans 1
-  EveryChild Supplies: Colored beads 1
-  EveryChild Supplies: Stickers 1



EveryChild Tips

- In place of candy, use colored beads or stickers.

What You Do:

- Give each kid their cup with the jellybeans inside.
- Say: "We're going to use these jellybeans to help us remember the true story of Easter."
- Hold up one color at a time, and instruct the kids to hold up the same color as you and repeat after you.
- Hold up a black jellybean and say: "Black reminds us of our sins that kept us from being close to God." (*Let the kids repeat.*)
- Hold up a red jellybean and say: "Red reminds us of Jesus' blood on the cross. Jesus paid for our sins!" (*Let the kids repeat.*)
- Hold up a white jellybean and say: "White reminds us that Jesus cleanses us from sin." (*Let the kids repeat.*)
- Hold up a green jellybean and say: "Green reminds us we can grow our friendship with God every day." (*Let the kids repeat.*)
- Hold up a yellow jellybean and say: "Yellow reminds us of our friendship with God that will last forever." (*Let the kids repeat.*)
- Set the cups aside.

What You Say:

"All of these colors help us remember the amazing truth of Easter—Jesus died for our sins, He made a way for us to be friends with God forever! And then He rose again! That is the best news ever! "Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus. Thank You that He died for our sins so we can be Your friends, and thank You that He rose to life again. Help us grow closer to You every day. We are so excited to be friends with You forever! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | 23

Small Group

GETTING READY

Here's everything you need to know to get ready for this week.

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 Minutes)

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Opening Activity

Made to Explore

What You Need:

- Offering container
- Plastic tray or baking sheet, one for each Small Group
- Party items (e.g., balloon, party hat, wrapped candy, streamer, party blower), enough for each Small Group
- Small towel or cloth (that's big enough to cover the tray), one for each Small Group
- *Before group time:*
 - *Place all the party items on the tray/sheet.*

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible Story applies to real-life experiences through interactive activities and discussion questions. **(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)**

1. Picture Plates

[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Create

What You Need:

- Paper plates, one for every kid
- Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

2. Jesus Went Away and Came Back

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Explore

What You Need:

- Print "Jesus Went Away and Came Back" Activity Page on cardstock, one for each Small Group
- Plastic sheet protector or jumbo resealable bag, one for each Small Group
- Washable markers, enough for each Small Group to share
- Plastic bin (clear is helpful, but it doesn't have to be), 12 inches deep or larger; one for each Small Group
- Plastic tablecloth or tarp, one for each Small Group
- Water, enough to fill the plastic bin
- *Before group time:*
 - *Color the picture on the "Jesus Went Away and Came Back" Activity Page if using the black and white version.*
 - *Place the "Jesus Went Away and Came Back" Activity Page in a sheet protector or resealable bag.*
 - *Spread a plastic tablecloth or tarp on the floor or table.*
 - *Fill the bin with water and place it in the middle of the tablecloth.*

3. Torn Paper Cross

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one for every kid
- Construction paper in a variety of colors, one piece for every kid

EveryChild Supplies:

- Dot markers
- Coloring materials

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Bag of jellybeans, one for each Small Group
- Cups/bowls, one for every kid
- *Before group time:*
- *Place a handful of jellybeans in each cup/bowl.*
- *Include the following colors in each cup/bowl: black, red, white, green, and yellow.*

EveryChild Supplies:

- Colored beads
- Stickers

HOME: Prompting Action Beyond the Experience

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.

Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue App.**

Supplies

23 Social Activity | Made to Explore Quantity

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Offering container | 1 |
| 2. | Prepared plastic tray with party items on it | 1 |
| 3. | Small towel or cloth | 1 |

23 – Picture Plates | Made to Create Quantity

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

23 – Jesus Went Away and Came Back | Made to Explore Quantity

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Prepared “Jesus Went Away and Came Back” Activity Page in the plastic sheet protector or jumbo resealable bag | 1 |
| 2. | Plastic bin (clear is helpful, but it doesn’t have to be), 12 inches deep or larger | 1 |
| 3. | Plastic tablecloth or tarp | 1 |
| 4. | Water | 1 |

23 – Memory Verse Motions | Made to Move Quantity

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 1. | Bibles | 1 |
| 2. | Construction paper in a variety of colors | Several |
| 3. | EveryChild Supplies: Dot markers | Several |
| 4. | veryChild Supplies: Coloring materials | Several |

23 – Pray and Dismiss | Made to Reflect Quantity

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Prepared cups/bowls of jellybeans | 1 |
| 2. | EveryChild Supplies: Colored beads | 1 |
| 3. | EveryChild Supplies: Stickers | 1 |