

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

Find Jesus

In the Rocks

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

He Is Not Here!

Easter Bingo!

1, 2, 3 Hopscotch

Jesus Is Alive!

Journal and Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home

Memory Verse Card

Parent Cue Card (print or email)

Parent Cue App

*Allergy Alert



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

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.

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."

5 min

Jesus Is Alive! | Made to Create

*Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need

	"Jesus is Alive" Activity Page	1
	Cardstock	1
	clear plastic cups per child	2
	Crayons	Several
	Scissors	1
	Glue sticks	Several
	Permanent marker	1

Before the Activity: Copy "Jesus is Alive" on copy paper and cut, one set per child. Write each child's name on the bottom of their set of cups.

During the Activity: Give each child a set of cups. Ask children to color both of their pictures. Encourage each child to rub glue on the back of their picture of Jesus next to the tomb and stick it to one side of their cup. Place that cup inside their second cup. Ask children to rub glue on the back of the picture of the stone and glue it on the cup covering the tomb on the inside cup. Demonstrate how to twist the cups to roll the stone away.

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

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Come make a special Easter craft with me that shows the super happy surprise of our Easter story!"

During the Activity: "Look at these pictures, they're pictures of the stone and the tomb. Color your pictures then we'll add them to your cups. *(Pause.)* Rub some glue on the back of the picture of Jesus next to the tomb. Now stick it to the side of your cup like this. *(Demonstrate.)* Super! Now put that cup inside your other cup. *(Demonstrate.)* Rub some glue on the back of that great big stone. *(Pause.)* Stick that on your cup to cover the tomb like this. *(Demonstrate.)* Great job! But we aren't finished yet. In our Bible Story today, we heard that Jesus died on a cross and His friends put His body in a tomb. *(Twist the cups so only the tomb shows.)* Then the big stone was rolled in front to cover the tomb. *(Twist the cups so the stone covers the tomb and Jesus.)* But on the third day, the stone was rolled away *(Twist the cup again to show the empty tomb and Jesus next to it)* and the tomb was ... EMPTY! Jesus was gone! Jesus is alive! Jesus came back just like He said he would! Hip, hip, hooray! Jesus is alive! Let's do it again. The tomb was closed with a big stone ... but then it was rolled away! Jesus is alive!"

After the Activity: "You can take this home to tell everyone the good news! 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

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."