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 NIrV

Supplies NOT Included in the Activity Bags

Bible Story Review: Build the Story

Application Activity: Buckets of Questions

- ☐ Buckets with the numbers 1–5 on them (use tape and permanent marker)
- ☐ beanbags
- ☐ Floor tape

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Motions

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

<u>Bible Story Summary</u>

Easter (Crucified and Risen)
In Week 1, we explore the events leading up to Easter Sunday. A story that began with betrayal, arrest, and the desertion of Jesus' closest friends set the stage for Jesus to lay aside every right and give up His life for all of us. But even though the sun went dark and all hope seemed lost, God was still at work. And when Mary Magdalene came to the tomb at dawn on the third day, she found it empty! **[BOTTOM LINE] You can have joy because Jesus is alive.**

1. Bible Story Review- Build the Story

What You Need:

- Wiki Stix® or pipe cleaners

What You Do:

- Give each kid four Wiki Stix® or pipe cleaners.
- Tell the kids you're going to review the Easter story, and they get to build parts of it with the Wiki Sticks or pipe cleaners!
- Say, "God loves us so much, He sent us Jesus to rescue us. Can you make a heart?" *(Let them build.)*
- Say, "Jesus died on a cross to pay for our sins to make a way for us to be His friends forever. Can you make a cross?" *(Let them build.)*
- Say, "Then Jesus was buried in a tomb with a big stone in front. Can you make a round stone?" *(Let them build.)*
- Say, "On the third day, Mary went to the tomb, but the stone was rolled away! The tomb was empty! Jesus is alive! Can you make a happy face because Jesus is alive?" *(Let them build.)*
- Talk about how each shape reminds us of part of the true story of Easter.

What You Say:
"You built the whole Easter story! God loves us so much, He sent Jesus to rescue us. Jesus died on a cross to pay for our sins to make a way for us to be God's friends forever! And then He rose again on the third day! Jesus is alive today! That's why we celebrate Easter. That's why we have joy. ***[Bottom Line]*** **You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"**

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- Create the images in advance with the Wiki Stix and encourage the kids to point to the image as you read each statement.

2. Application Activity- Buckets of Questions

What You Need:

- Prepared buckets or plastic bins with the numbers 1–5 on them
- beanbags
- Floor tape

What You Do:

- Set up a line with floor tape on one side of the room.
- Place the prepared buckets in a line on the other side of the room, across from the tape line.
- Invite the kids to line up single file behind the tape line.
- Instruct the first kid to toss the ball or beanbag into a bucket.
- If they make it into bucket #1, ask question #1. If #2, ask question #2, etc.
- Questions:
    1. Who did God send to rescue us? *(Jesus)*
    2. Why were the disciples sad at first? *(because Jesus died)*
    3. What did Mary find at the tomb? *(It was empty./Angels!/Jesus!)*
    4. Why do we have joy today? *(Because Jesus is alive!)*
    5. Who can be friends with God forever? *(Everyone who believes in what Jesus did!)*
- Let the kids answer, then retrieve the ball or beanbag and give it to the next person.
- Make sure all five questions have been discussed before ending the game.

What You Say:
"Great job answering those questions! You know the true story of Easter so well. God had a plan all along to rescue us because He loves us so much. Jesus followed that plan perfectly. Jesus came to Earth, lived a perfect life, died on a cross for our sins, was buried in a tomb, and on the third day, Jesus rose again. Jesus is alive! Because Jesus paid for our sins, we can be friends with God! And since Jesus is alive forever, we will be His friends forever! ***[Bottom Line]*** **You can have joy because Jesus is alive."**

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- Allow kids to point to a bucket instead of tossing the ball or beanbag into it.

3. Memory Verse Motions

What You Need:

- Bibles marked at Philippians 4:4
- “Verse Motions” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible marked at Philippians 4:4.
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with kindergartners: *Guide children to open their Bibles to the marked page. Point to the book name at the top of the page as you say it aloud. Then, guide children to find the big number on the page—this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big number for the little number; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read it aloud. Then, lead everyone to say the verse together.*

Finding verses with 1st 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. You can help by pointing out the first few letters of the book’s name. When the kids 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 right chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.*

- 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.”**

Always be joyful

because you belong to the Lord.

I will say it again.

Be joyful!

Philippians 4:4 NIrV

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

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."