

Today's Suggested Schedule—April 12th, 2026

Bible Story: On the Road to Emmaus • *Luke 24:13-35*

Bottom Line: You can have joy because there's a bigger story.

Conversation Starter: How does knowing that Jesus is alive bring you joy?

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

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZj> for a visual on some of the activities.

ORDER OF SERVICE

OPENING SMALL GROUP (20 minutes)

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction

Early Arriver /

Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP (30-35 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

- Introduce Monthly Theme Poster
- Review Monthly Memory Verse Poster
- Review Weekly Bottom Line Poster
- Teaching (Video)
- Review Weekly Bottom Line Poster

SMALL GROUP (25-30 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Reinforcement Activity

Prayer Journal

TAKE HOME

Devotional Page

Social

Providing Time for Fun Interaction

15 minutes

Opening Activity

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- Prepared “Road to Emmaus Puzzle” Activity Page puzzle pieces in a resealable bag

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high five, fist bump, or wave.
- As kids arrive, give them one puzzle piece each.
- Ask them to look at their piece and try to guess what the whole picture is.
- Say, “Can you tell what the picture is just by looking at your one piece?”
- After everyone has arrived and guessed, instruct the kids to put all their puzzle pieces together to reveal the full picture.

What You Say:

“Great job, everyone! It was pretty hard to guess the picture from just one little piece, right? It looked like a blob or a random line. But when we put it all together, we saw the big picture. Life can be like that. Sometimes we can only see one sad or confusing piece, and we forget there’s a bigger story God is telling. Let’s dive into today’s Bible Story about two friends who needed help seeing the big picture.”

[Lead your group to the Large Group area.]

LARGE GROUP

What You Need: TV, Pre-Loaded Video Content

What You Do:

1. Introduce/Remind kids about the
 - a. Monthly Theme
 - b. Monthly Memory Verse
 - c. Today's Bottom Line
2. Play Worship Songs
3. Allow kids to grab a snack
4. Play Teaching Video
5. Review Today's Bottom Line

Lead your group to the Small Group activity.

Groups

Creating a Safe Place to Connect

25 minutes

Groups 1/5

1. Take a Snapshot

Live for God | Application Activity

Made to Play

Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Invite the group to stand in a circle.
- Explain that one person is going to do a very small, subtle motion (like winking their eye, wiggling their finger, tapping their toe, or twitching their nose).
- Instruct the rest of the group to watch closely to “see” what the person is doing.
- Ask for volunteers and choose one kid from those with their hands raised. Instruct the volunteer to begin their motion.
- When someone thinks they spot what it is, direct them to shout, “I SEE! I SEE!” and identify the motion.
- If they’re right, they get to be the next person to do a motion.
- If the group can’t guess after a minute, the person reveals their motion, and you say, “We needed help to see!”
- Play several rounds. Ask for new volunteers at the start of each round.

What You Say:

“Great job! You all had to look really closely to see what was happening, right? In our Bible Story today, the two friends walked with Jesus for miles but didn’t recognize Him. They needed help to see the truth. As people, we usually focus on our little piece of the story, like that test that didn’t go so well, or the mean thing your friend just said, or how you have to start at a new school where you don’t know anyone. We all face difficult or confusing things like that every single day. But God has given us a huge gift: we get to know the bigger story that we’re living in.

“And the bigger story is this: God loves us so much that, from the very beginning, He had a plan to rescue us from the terrible curse of sin so we could be close to Him. All of history points to the time that God sent Jesus to rescue us. Sometimes we get so focused on our problems or sadness that we miss what God is doing. And that’s when we need to remember to step back and look for the bigger story. God is ALWAYS working, even when we can’t see it at first, and that’s why **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there’s a bigger story!**”

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- *Remind kids to select a motion that all kids in the group are able to do.*

Groups 2/5

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Imagine

What You Need:

- Bible
- Blindfold
- Prepared tape maze on the floor

What You Do:

- Ask for volunteers and choose two from the kids who have their hands raised.
- Choose one volunteer to be the “traveler” and blindfold them.
- Choose the other volunteer to be the “guide.”
- The guide must use only their voice to direct the traveler through the maze from start to finish. (e.g., “Take two steps forward.” “Stop.” “Turn left.” “Turn right.”)
- The rest of the group must stay silent.
- Continue with more rounds if time allows. Ask for two new volunteers at the start of each round.

What You Say:

“Wow, great job, you guys! Navigating that maze without seeing was tough, right? The traveler had to trust the guide who could see the whole path—the bigger picture. In our Bible Story today, Cleopas and his friend were the travelers, and they were lost in their sadness. They thought the story was over. But Jesus came alongside them as a guide. He walked with them and showed them the bigger story, which was that He, the Messiah, HAD to suffer on the cross and rise again. It was all part of God’s rescue plan. When Jesus gave up His life and then rose again on the third day, He defeated the power of sin and death. Now when we believe in Jesus and accept what He’s done for us, we can be forgiven and walk in close relationship with God forever. When the two friends saw the big picture, their sadness turned to joy! And just like them, **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there’s a bigger story.**”

Groups 3/5

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask these questions:
 - If you were walking with Jesus, what questions would you ask Him?
 - Why do you think Jesus chose to show up right in the middle of the two friends' sadness instead of waiting until they felt better?
 - How do you think Cleopas and his friend were different after their walk with Jesus compared to before it?
 - How does knowing that Jesus is alive help you have joy—even in confusing or painful times?
 - What is one way you can look for God's bigger story this week?

Groups 4/5

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Play

What You Need:

- Bibles
- Sandal or shoe
- Music player
- Fun, upbeat music

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up Philippians 4:4 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

- Read the Memory Verse together out loud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Invite the kids to set their Bibles aside.
- Instruct the group to sit in a circle.
- Pass the sandal or shoe around the circle while the music plays.
- When the music stops, instruct the kid holding the sandal to stand up and say the Memory Verse: *"Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! Philippians 4:4."*
- If they need help, the group can say the Memory Verse with them.
- Start the music again and continue playing.

What You Say:

"You guys are pros at this verse! The first part says: *'Always be joyful.'* That sounds impossible, right? How can we be joyful when bad things happen? The key is the next part: *'because you belong to the Lord.'* Because we belong to God, we are part of His story.

"We're living in God's big story right now! This doesn't mean that you won't face hard times or that you can't ever be sad or angry. But it does mean that you go through it all with God. That gives us a deep joy that doesn't go away, even on bad days. That's why **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because there's a bigger story!**"

EveryChild Pro-Tips:

- Use a stop sign or other visual cue to signal when it is time to stop.

Groups 5/5

5. Make It Personal with Prayer Pray to God | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

Uses Minimal Supplies

What You Need:

- Prepared posterboard cross
- Tape
- Sticky notes
- Writing supplies

What You Do:

- Give each kid a sticky note and something to write with.
- Ask kids to think of something in their life that they need Jesus' help with.
- Instruct them to write it on the sticky note (or draw a symbol for it if they're more comfortable with that).
- Explain that we're going to give these things to God, trusting that He is writing a bigger story.
- Invite them to stick their notes onto the cross on the wall.
- Gather around the cross.

What You Say:

"God sees every one of these sticky notes. He knows it's hard. But just like He turned the sadness of the cross into the joy of the resurrection, He is working toward that good story you are living in. Let's pray together and trust Him with our stories.

"God, thank You that You see the whole picture. Thank You that You're writing a good story. We give You these hard things today. Help us to trust You. Fill us with Your joy, and remind us that You are with us, You will help us, and You are always working for good. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- For the sticky note prayer, if a child is uncomfortable sharing a hardship, allow them to write a prayer for someone else or simply write: "God knows."*

Give each child a copy of the Week 2 Devotional Page to take home