

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

8 min

Wonder Bible Story (Video)



What You Need

No supplies needed

8 min

Bible Story

What You Need

 Bible Optional: Cardstock

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What You Do:

- Download the Large Group Visuals to display on a device or screen or copy on cardstock.

LEADER: "Hello, friends! My name is [your name]."

"Tell me: do you ever pretend to rescue something? Maybe you are pretending to be a firefighter, and you (*pretend to turn a steering wheel*) drive your fire truck to save people from a fire. Then you celebrate and say: (*pat legs*) 'Hip, hip, (*throw arms in the air*) hooray!' Can you say that with me?"

CHILDREN and LEADER: (*Pat legs.*) "Hip, hip, (*throw arms in the air*) hooray!"

LEADER: "Well, sometimes we do wrong things, and that keeps us from being close friends with God. So, God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue US! Everybody, say: (*pat legs*) 'Hip, hip, (*throw arms in the air*) hooray!'"

CHILDREN and LEADER: (*Pat legs.*) "Hip, hip, (*throw arms in the air*) hooray!"

LEADER: "Jesus loves us SO much that He came to rescue us. That's what Easter is all about. Are you ready for the true story of Easter? (*Listen.*) It's a true story from the Bible!"

Open the Bible for children to see, then set it down.

SLIDE: Story Image W1 01 (Jesus and disciples at Last Supper)

"One day, Jesus ate a special meal with His friends, the disciples. Jesus told His friends that soon He would have to die. It was terrible news! Jesus said that after He died, He would come back to life! But the disciples did not understand what that meant.

SLIDE: Story Image W1 02 (Jesus is arrested)

"After they ate, Jesus and the disciples went to a garden to pray. But one of Jesus' friends, named Judas, went and found the people who did not like Jesus, and he brought them to the garden! Soldiers took Jesus away, even though He never did anything wrong!

SLIDE: Story Image W1 03 (Mary at the cross)

(Simple and somber.) "They put Jesus on a cross, which hurt Him and He died. *(Growing awe and excitement.)* But ... Jesus is so powerful that when He died, the earth shook! It was an earthquake. Can you shake your body and say: *(Shake your arms and legs.)* "Rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: *(Shake your arms and legs.)* "Rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble!"

LEADER: "Great job! You can stop shaking now."

"All of Jesus' friends were so sad because Jesus died, but they didn't remember that Jesus said He would come back."

"They put Jesus' body in a tomb, which is like a cave. A huge stone was rolled in front of the tomb, and soldiers stood nearby so no one could get in."

"Three days went by. Can you count to three with me?"

CHILDREN and LEADER: *(Hold up your fingers as you count.)* "One ... two ... three."

LEADER: "Then, on the third day, early in the morning, two women who were friends with Jesus went to the tomb. Before they got there, the earth shook again. It was another earthquake. Shake like an earthquake again!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: *(Shake your arms and legs.)* "Rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble!"

LEADER: "Great job! I need you to stop shaking because the next part of the story is SO amazing."

SLIDE: Story Image W1 04 (Angel rolls the stone away)

(Lean in and speak a little quieter, with awe and growing excitement.)
"The earth shook because an ANGEL came to the tomb, and the angel rolled the huge stone away. The soldiers were so scared of the angel that they fell down!"

Hold one arm up in front of you, flexed at the elbow. Place the elbow in the palm of the opposite hand, and then let your flexed arm fall on top of the opposite arm.

"Boom! And then, the angel SPOKE to the women."

The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus ... He is not here! He has risen, just as he said he would!" (Matthew 28:5-7 NIV).

"The angel said that Jesus is alive! *(Pat legs.)* Hip, hip, *(throw arms in the air)* hooray! Jesus is alive! Say that with me."

3 min

Prayer

What You Need

No supplies needed

CHILDREN and LEADER: *(Pat legs.)* "Hip, hip, *(throw arms in the air)* hooray! Jesus is alive!"

SLIDE: Story Image W1 05 (Excited women running)

LEADER: "The women were so excited! They RAN to tell all of Jesus' other friends the good news.

"Let's run together and pretend to tell everyone the good news that Jesus is alive. Ready? Come with me!"

Run with the children to the other side of the room.

"Okay, let's say: *(pat legs)* 'Hip, hip, *(throw arms in the air)* hooray! Jesus is alive! Ready?"

CHILDREN and LEADER: *(Pat legs.)* "Hip, hip, *(throw arms in the air)* hooray! Jesus is alive!"

Repeat a few times in different parts of the room as long as time and interest allow.

LEADER: "Friends, Jesus is alive! He loves all of us so much that He died and came back to life so we can be friends with *(point up)* God. Jesus rescued us ... all because Jesus wants to be our friend forever. Jesus wants to be your friend forever, and **[Bottom Line] Jesus wants to be my friend forever.**

"Tell me: Who wants to be your friend forever?"

CHILDREN and LEADER: **[Bottom Line]** "Jesus wants to be my friend forever."

LEADER: "Yes, **[Bottom Line]** Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Pick up and close Bible.

[Transition] "Our story time is over, but we're not through. Let's talk to God because God loves you!"

LEADER: "Dear God, thank You so much for sending Jesus to rescue us so we can be friends with You. You are the best, God. Help us follow Jesus always. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen."

