

Preteen | 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

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

What You Need

-  Offering container 0
-  EveryChild Supplies: Small pictures of Easter items Several



EveryChild Tips

Provide visual pictures to cue kids of an item for those who may struggle to think on the spot.

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Explain that you are going to play "Twenty Questions" with an Easter theme.
- Think of an Easter-related item (e.g., Jesus, cross, Peeps®, Easter egg, crown of thorns, sunrise, stone, chocolate bunny, jellybeans).
- Share that the kids can ask up to 20 yes or no questions to guess what you're thinking of.
- If they don't guess what you're thinking of in 20 questions, tell them the answer, think of a different item, and start another round.
- Let a kid who guesses correctly take a turn being the "thinker."

What You Say:

"You guys are great detectives! You asked good questions to figure out the answer. In our true story from the Bible today, Jesus' friends had a lot of questions too. They were confused and sad. But then they discovered the answer that changed everything. Let's go dive into the story."








5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

What You Need

 Prepared "Chalk Cross" Activity Page cutouts	0
 Black construction paper	1
 Painter's tape	Several
 Chalk pastels	1
 Heart cutout or sticker	1
 Hand wipes	1
 EveryChild Supplies: Gloves	1



EveryChild Tips

- Provide gloves for kids with sensory sensitivities.

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of black construction paper and a cutout from the "Chalk Cross" Activity Page.
- Help them use a small piece of painter's tape to stick the cross to the center of the black construction paper.
- Instruct them to use the chalk pastels to color heavily around the edges of the cross, drawing outward from the cross onto the black paper. Encourage them to use bright colors!
- Encourage them to smudge the chalk outward with their fingers to create a glowing effect.
- Once they're done coloring, carefully peel off the cross cutout. This will reveal a stark black cross surrounded by a burst of color.
- Give each kid a heart cutout or sticker to place in the center of the black cross.
- Give each kid a hand wipe.

What You Say:

"This beautiful art reminds us of today's true story from the Bible: the story of Easter and what Jesus did for every one of us. When Jesus died on the cross, it was a dark, sad moment. Jesus' friends didn't know it, but Jesus was paying for sins and making a way for us to be God's friends. And then Jesus didn't stay dead—He rose again on the third day! Jesus is alive, and that means that anyone who believes in Him can have a friendship with God that lasts forever!

"The heart reminds us that He did all of this because He loves us. At any moment, Jesus could have called down powerful angels to save Him from the agony of the cross. He could have walked away. But He didn't. Jesus chose to endure the pain so He could rescue us. Now, even in our darkest times, we have the light and joy of Jesus. **[Bottom Line] You can have joy because Jesus is alive.**"






5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Explore

What You Need

 Dissolving paper	1
 Washable markers	1
 Clear, plastic bowl	1
 Water	1
 Plastic tablecloth or tarp	1

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of dissolving paper and a washable marker.
- Instruct them to write a word or draw a picture that represents a sin that separates us from God. (Sin is anytime we choose to go our own way instead of God's.) (e.g., "Lying," "Selfishness," "Envy.")
- Direct them to fold the paper.
- Explain that Jesus' death on the cross paid the price for all of these things.
- One by one, encourage the kids to drop their paper into the water in the bowl. (*Stir gently with your finger if needed.*)
- Watch as the paper dissolves.

What You Say:

"Look at that. Your papers don't look like paper anymore and what you wrote went away. That's what Jesus did for us on the cross. That's what Jesus did for us on the cross. He took all our sin—all our bad choices, all of the times we chose to go our way instead of God's way—and He washed them away. He broke the curse of sin so we could be close to God again. Because He's alive, we're forgiven and free! That's the biggest reason for joy. **[Bottom Line] You can have joy because Jesus is alive.**"

[Make It Personal] (Share an age-appropriate way you trust Jesus with your sins.) You can say something like: "I know I make bad choices. But I don't have to carry that weight around anymore because I know Jesus has already paid for my sins. And that gives me so much peace and joy."




5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move

What You Need

 Bibles	1
 Laundry basket	1
 Prepared beanbags	Several

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.
- Create a line with floor tape on one side of your activity area.
- Place the prepared beanbags in a pile on the tape line.
- Place the laundry basket about five feet from the tape line.
- Instruct the kids to line up behind the tape line and take turns trying to toss one beanbag at a time into the laundry basket.
- Once all the beanbags are in the basket, dump them out.
- Challenge the group to race to put the beanbags in the correct order to form the verse.
- Read the verse together out loud. If needed, help the kids put the beanbags in the correct order.

What You Say:

"Nice work, everyone! And great teamwork getting all the beanbags into the basket and then putting the verse together. Philippians 4:4 tells us to *'Always be joyful.'* That isn't always easy, especially when times are tough, or hard things happen in our lives. But when we remember that we *'belong to the Lord'*—and that Jesus is alive with us—it makes joy possible. No matter what happens, Jesus made a way for you to be friends with God forever, and that friendship can start right now. Life with God is far better than you can ever imagine, and **[Bottom Line] you can have joy because Jesus is alive!**"

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

Ask these questions:

- Why do you think Jesus allowed Himself to be arrested even though the soldiers fell down when He said, "I am he"? (John 18:6 NIRV)
- What moment in today's Bible story amazes you the most?
- What does the resurrection prove about who Jesus really is?
- Peter messed up, but Jesus still forgave him and used him. What does that tell you about how Jesus sees YOU when you mess up?
- How does knowing Jesus is alive change the way you face: Fear? Confusing moments? Mess-ups?




5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect

What You Need

-  Prepared posterboard cross that's taped to the wall at a kid's height 1
-  Sticky notes 1
-  Writing supplies 1



EveryChild Tips

- Create a "group" thank you note on a large piece of paper if individual writing is too daunting for the group.

What You Do:

- Point out the large cross taped to the wall.
- Give each kid a sticky note and ask them to write a short "Thank You" note to Jesus on it. They can thank Him for dying for them, for being alive, for being their friend, or for something specific He has done in their lives.
- Invite them to go to the wall and stick their note on the cross.
- Gather around the cross and pray.

What You Say:

"Jesus came to Earth, lived a perfect life, and then He gave that perfect life to pay the price for our sin. Because He never did anything wrong, Jesus was able to take on our sin. With His own life, He paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done or ever will do. He broke the curse of sin we were under. He set us free. Because the curse is broken and our sin is paid for, now we can be close to God forever! Jesus chose to endure the cross because God wants to be close to YOU. Seeing all these thank-you notes reminds us of how much we have to be grateful for. Let's pray together.

"Jesus, thank You. Thank You for the cross. Thank You for the empty tomb. Thank You that You're alive right now! We are so grateful that we can know You and be Your friends. Please fill us with Your joy this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Getting Ready | Preteen 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 Play

What You Need:

- Offering container

EveryChild Supplies:

- Small pictures of Easter items

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. Take a Snapshot

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Explore

What You Need:

- Dissolving paper, one piece for every kid
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- Washable markers, one for every kid
- Clear, plastic bowl; one for each Small Group
- Water, enough to fill the plastic bowl
- Plastic tablecloth or tarp, one for each Small Group
- *Before group time:*
- *Cut dissolving paper into small pieces, one for every kid. (See example of dissolving paper here: <https://bit.ly/4iNiocB>)*
- *Spread out a tablecloth or tarp.*
- *Fill the plastic bowl with water and place it in the center of the tablecloth/tarp.*

2. Bible Story Extension

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Explore

What You Need:

- Print "Chalk Cross" Activity Page on cardstock and cut, one for every kid
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- Black construction paper, one piece for every kid
- Painter's tape, one roll for each Small Group

- Chalk pastels, enough for each Small Group to share
- Heart cutout or sticker, one for every kid
- Hand wipes, enough for each Small Group to share

EveryChild Supplies:

- Gloves

3. Discussion Questions

Talk about God | Bible Story Review

Made to Connect

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity

Made to Move

What You Need:

- Bibles, one for every kid
- Laundry basket, one for each Small Group
- Beanbags, at least 9 for each Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Masking tape, one roll for each Small Group
- Marker, one for each Small Group
- *Before group time:*
- *Write parts of the Memory Verse on strips of masking tape and stick them to the beanbags. (e.g., "Always," "be joyful," "because," "you belong," "to the Lord." "I will," "say it again." "Be joyful!" "Philippians 4:4")*

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

Pray to God | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect

What You Need:

- Posterboard, one for each Small Group
- Marker, one for each Small Group
- Scissors, one pair for each Small Group
- Sticky notes, one for every kid
- Writing supplies, one for every kid
- Tape, one roll for each Small Group
- *Before group time:*
- *Draw a large cross on the posterboard and cut out, one for each Small Group.*
- *Tape the cross to the wall at the kids' height.*

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

Preteen Social Activity | Made to Play

	Quantity
1. Offering container	0
2. EveryChild Supplies: Small pictures of Easter items	Several

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

	Quantity
1. Prepared “Chalk Cross” Activity Page cutouts	0
2. Black construction paper	1
3. Painter’s tape	Several
4. Chalk pastels	1
5. Heart cutout or sticker	1
6. Hand wipes	1
7. EveryChild Supplies: Gloves	1

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Explore

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1. Dissolving paper	1
2. Washable markers	1
3. Clear, plastic bowl	1
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Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Move

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Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer | Made to Reflect

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1. Prepared posterboard cross that’s taped to the wall at a kid’s height	1
2. Sticky notes	1
3. Writing supplies	1