

WEEK
FOUR
MARCH 2024

SMALL GROUP
2-3

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Palm Sunday

Take You at Your Word
Matthew 21:1-11

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus came to be our Savior.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God so loved the world that
he gave his one and only Son.
Anyone who believes in him will
not die but will have eternal life."
John 3:16, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Easter—Celebrating that
Jesus is alive

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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.

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

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Welcome/Opener
Worship
Bible Story
Bottom Line
Prayer
Closer

SMALL GROUP

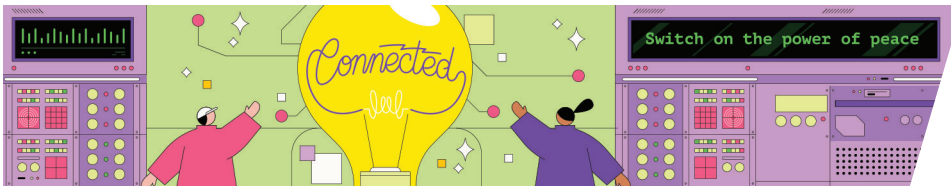
25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Bible Story Review: Wave Parade!
Application Activity: Promise Keepers
Memory Verse Activity: Roll Doubles
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotionals for Kids
Parent Cue App



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning
through following guidelines and
working as a group



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. As you prepare for the week leading up to Easter, reflect on the example Jesus set to love and serve others. Thank God for fulfilling the promise to send a Savior. Pray for the kids in your group—that they would be open to discovering that Jesus came to be our Savior.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Palm Sunday

Take You at Your Word
Matthew 21:1-11

1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, "Palm Leaf" Activity Page, scissors, green paper, and pencils; *Optional:* glue, craft sticks

WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive. Introduce yourself to any guests who may be visiting for the first time!
- Invite kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Set out the leaf templates from the "Palm Leaf" Activity Page.
- Set out the scissors, pencils, and green paper.
- Invite kids to trace the template on green paper.
- Instruct the kids to cut out the oval leaf shape, fold it in half, and cut the edges like palm fronds.
- Invite the kids to use their pencils to roll and shape the edges of the palm leaves so they curl.
- *Optional:* Set out the glue and craft sticks so kids can glue a craft stick to the end of the leaf to create a handle.
- Make sure kids write their names on the back of their palm leaves.
- Collect each kid's leaf and set them aside for the Wave Parade! activity after Large Group.
- NOTE: Kids can make more than one leaf to prepare for any latecomers who will need one during the Wave Parade! activity after Large Group.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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he gave his one and only Son.
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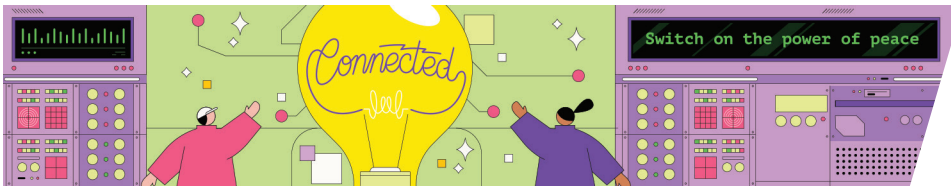
John 3:16, NIRV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Easter—Celebrating that
Jesus is alive**

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.



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PRELUDE

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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: Plastic Easter eggs, plastic spoons, and floor tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Use the floor tape to create four different paths across the floor. For example:
 - straight line
 - zig-zag
 - curvy line
 - loop-de-loop
- Divide the kids into four groups.
- Instruct each group to line up behind one of the paths of floor tape.
- Give the first kid in each group a plastic Easter egg and a spoon.
- At your signal, invite the kids to use only their spoons to move their plastic Easter eggs along the pathway.
- Once the kid reaches the end of the path, instruct them to turn around, pick up their Easter egg, run it back to their team, and place the egg and the spoon on the floor in front of the next kid in the group.
- Direct the next kid in the group to move the egg down the path with the spoon in the same way.
- Encourage the kids to cheer for their teammates and celebrate their return from the path.
- See which team can get all their teammates through their path the fastest!
- Continue playing by giving different teams opportunities to try out different paths.

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Matthew 21:1-11

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John 3:16, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Easter—Celebrating that Jesus is alive

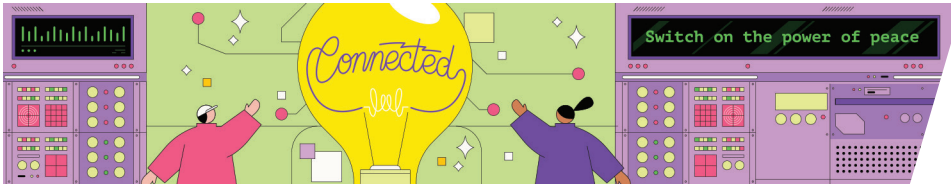
BASIC TRUTH

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"Wow, that was so much fun! Which path was the easiest path to follow? *(Pause for responses.)* And which paths were the hardest to follow? *(Pause for responses.)* I loved hearing you cheer for your teammates and celebrate throughout the game. **[Transition] Today we're going to hear about Someone who crowds of people cheered for as He arrived. Let's go hear about it!"**

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



1. WAVE PARADE!

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Wave Parade!" Activity Page, palm leaves from Early Arriver activity or green crepe paper streamers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their paper palm leaf from the Early Arriver Activity or a strip of green crepe paper.
- One at a time, read a statement from the "Wave Parade!" Activity Page.
- If the fact is true, instruct the kids to wave their palm leaves (or green streamers) in the air.
- If the fact is false, direct the kids to keep their palm leaves (or streamers) at their sides.
- If the fact is false, ask a kid to share the correct fact.
 - If the kid comes up with the correct fact, invite everyone to celebrate with their palm leaves or streamers again!

WHAT YOU SAY:

"You did a GREAT job remembering today's Bible story! Jesus traveled toward Jerusalem on a donkey's colt, and the people were so excited that they waved their palm leaves in celebration. The crowds cheered as they celebrated Jesus as the Savior that God promised. Show me how you wave your palm leaves! (*Let kids wave and get excited!*) Even though the religious leaders wanted Him out, Jesus stayed focused on what He had come to do: **Jesus came to be our Savior.**"

[Make It Personal] (*Talk about the time in your life when you decided for yourself to accept Jesus as your Savior. What helped you make this decision? What safe people in your life did you talk to? Follow your church's guidelines if any kids express interest in trusting in Jesus as their Savior. Include parents/guardians in this conversation.*)

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25 MINUTES

MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



*2. PROMISE KEEPERS

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Promise Keepers" Activity Page, embroidery floss (or other yarn or string), colorful beads, letter beads, dry-erase board, dry-erase marker, and tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Remind the kids that God has given us many promises in the Bible.
- One at a time, read a verse listed on the "Promise Keepers" Activity Page.
- After you read each verse, invite the kids to share a promise the verse speaks about.
- Write down the promises on the dry-erase board. (Ideas are listed below each Scripture on the Promise Keepers" Activity Page.)
- Set out the embroidery floss and beads.
- Invite the kids to create a bracelet (or "promise keeper") to remind them of a promise God has made to them.
- Invite kids to use the letter beads to spell out one word that will remind them of one of God's promises.
- Kids can use the other, colorful beads to decorate their bracelet.
- Use the tape to tape down one end of the floss (or string) as the kids place the beads on the floss (or string).
- Once each kid is done, remove the tape and tie the bracelet around their wrists, leaving ample room to pull the bracelet on and off.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"The Bible is *filled* with promises that God has given us! What are some of the promises we heard today? (*Pause for responses.*) That's incredible!

"It's life-changing to know that there's a God who sees us, knows us, and loves us. Even when people turned away from God and the world was broken, God had a plan to restore us. God promised to send a Savior, and that promise came true when God sent us Jesus. Jesus didn't come to rescue the people from the Romans, like a lot of people thought. He came for an even bigger rescue. He came to rescue everyone from their sin and make a way for everyone to have a relationship with God that lasts forever!

"It's true, **Jesus came to be our Savior.** That's the best promise of all!"

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Take You at Your Word

Palm Sunday
Matthew 21:1-11

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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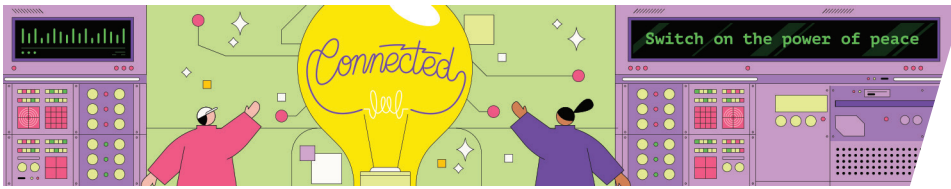
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MONTHLY VIRTUE

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25 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



3. ROLL DOUBLES

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, prepared gift box, small prizes, and dice

WHAT YOU DO:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
- Together, look up John 3:16, using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Take You at Your Word

Palm Sunday
Matthew 21:1-11

Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd 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 John in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find John, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find John. Help the kids find the page. When they find John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 16 in chapter 3.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Jesus came to be our Savior.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life."

John 3:16, NIV

- Say the verse out loud together several times.
- Direct the kids to set aside their open Bibles outside the circle for prayer time.
- Set out the pre-wrapped box (with index card and prizes inside) in the center of the circle.
- Give one kid two dice.
- Instruct the kid to roll the dice.
- If the kid rolls two different numbers, direct them to pass the dice to the kid on the right to roll next.
- Anytime a kid rolls doubles, instruct them to go into the middle of the circle to carefully unwrap one layer of tissue paper or wrapping paper, and then return to their spot. (Kids can continue rolling as they are unwrapping.)
- As soon as the next kid rolls doubles, instruct that kid to move to the middle to carefully unwrap one layer of tissue paper or wrapping paper (even if the previous kid has not finished yet).
- Instruct the kid who successfully unwraps the final layer to open the box, pull out the index card, and read the Memory Verse for the whole group.
- Ask the winner to hand out the prizes to the rest of the kids.

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Easter—Celebrating that Jesus is alive

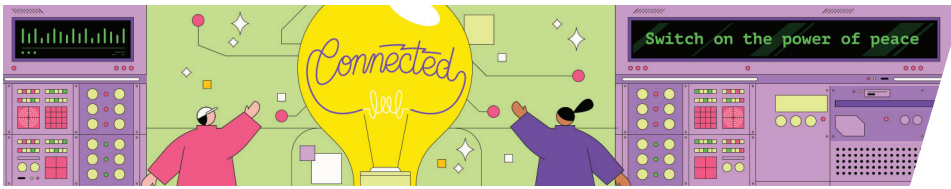
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WHAT YOU SAY:

"You all did a great job learning our new Memory Verse for Easter! As much as I enjoyed the gift we unwrapped together, God promised us a much better gift—a Savior! God kept that promise because **Jesus came to be our Savior.**

"Jesus is God's plan to rescue us. Jesus made a way for us to have a relationship with God. Jesus also showed us what it looks like to love people and serve others. **Jesus came to be our Savior.** That's the best gift of all!"



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HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space
for personal understanding
and application



4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

- Instruct the kids to refer to their open Bibles from the Roll Doubles activity.
- Read John 3:16 several times together.
- Use the discussion below to talk about the first half of the Memory Verse.
- Lead your group in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"This is a wonderful verse to remember as we get ready to celebrate Easter.

"God so loved the world: God loves the world so much and everyone in it. That includes everyone in the world—you, me, everyone in this room, and everyone in our families.

"that he gave his one and only Son. Jesus was given to us as a gift, as a way to make things right between us and God. When we follow Jesus, we can have peace and a relationship with God. That's right—**Jesus came to be our Savior.**

"Let's pray!

"God, thank You so much for loving us. Thank You for giving us Jesus, who came to be our Savior. Help us to understand how big that love is! Give us opportunities to show love and kindness to others as we remember how much You loved us first. Help us to remember the promises You've given us, and to trust that You always keep Your promises. Thank You for everything You've done for us. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show the adults their "promise keeper" bracelets. Invite kids to explain why they chose the word they chose.

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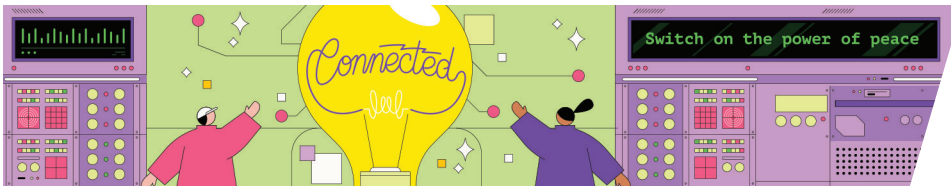
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HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

(Choose one or both of these activities.)

1. EARLY ARRIVER

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Print "Palm Leaf" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two to three copies for each Small Group
- Scissors, one pair for each kid
- Green paper, one for each kid
- Pencils, one for each kid
- *Optional: glue, enough for each Small Group to share*
- *Optional: craft sticks, one for each kid*

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Plastic Easter eggs, four for each Small Group
- Plastic spoons, four for each Small Group
- Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

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.)

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

1. WAVE PARADE!

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Wave Parade!" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- Palm leaves from Early Arriver activity or green crepe paper streamers, one for each kid

* 2. PROMISE KEEPERS

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

Made to Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Promise Keepers" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- Embroidery floss (or yarn/other string), enough for each kid to make a bracelet
- Colorful beads, enough for each kid to make a bracelet
- Letter beads, enough for each kid to spell a word on their bracelet
- Dry-erase board, one for each Small Group
- Dry-erase marker, one for each Small Group
- Tape, one roll for each Small Group

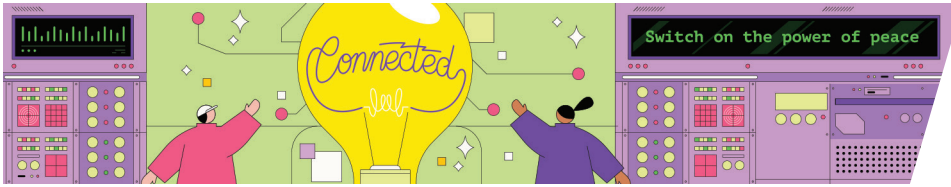
3. ROLL DOUBLES

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, one for each kid
- Box, one for each Small Group
- Wrapping paper and tissue paper, enough to wrap the box a few times for each Small Group
- Tape
- Index card, one for each Small Group
- Small prizes (Ex: plastic Easter eggs for each kid, Easter pencils or erasers; *Optional: individually-wrapped candy, etc.*), one prize for each kid
- Dice, two for each Small Group
- Before group time:
 - Write the Memory Verse out on an index card.
 - Put the prepared index card and the small prizes in the box.
 - Wrap the box with the wrapping paper and tissue paper in several different layers.



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PRELUDE

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HOME

GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

4. PRAY AND DISMISS [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles

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 resource:
Parent Cue app.