

Block Party: Celebrating Jesus and Joy That Never Ends April Wk. 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 NIV*

1. Countdown

2. Announcements

3. CG:Transition Slide then Host Opener (5 minutes)

- Host
- 8 kid volunteers for each round you do (ask for new volunteers at the start of each round)
- Floor tape
- 8 large, plastic Easter eggs
- 2 pool noodles
- Set up a starting line and a finish line with floor tape.
- Line up eight Easter eggs (four for each team) on the starting line.
- Put two pool noodles (one for each team) on the floor next to the Easter eggs.

Media

- Upbeat music to play as kids enter the room
- Upbeat music to play during the game
- Theme Slide
- “Roll with It Title” Slide
- Bottom Line Slide

4. Praise and Worship (10 Minutes) – End with CG:Transition Slide

5. CG: Word Video and CG:Transition Slide

6. Bible Story (15 Minutes)

- Storyteller
- Host
- Bible
- Table
- 3 cardboard boxes labeled “Friday,” “Saturday,” and “Sunday” (See “What You Do” on how to prepare them.)
- 1 big marker
- Several sheets of dark-colored tissue paper (enough to fill the “Friday” box)
- Sad face visual and question mark visual that are provided (“Sad Face” printable and “Question Mark” printable)
- 2 or 3 balloons (however many fit in the “Sunday” box)
- Ribbon (enough to tie some to each balloon)
- Balloon weights (enough for each balloon)
- Print the “Sad Face” printable and the “Question Mark” printable that are provided.
- Using the marker, write “Friday” on one box, “Saturday” on one box, and “Sunday” on one box in big, bold letters.
- Blow up the balloons with helium, tie some ribbon to each one, and tie the balloons to the balloon weights.
- Put the dark tissue paper in the “Friday” box.
- Put the “Sad Face” printable and the “Question Mark” printable in the “Saturday” box.
- Put the balloons and balloon weights in the “Sunday” box.
- Line up all the boxes on the table in the order of the teaching (the order is “Friday,” “Saturday,” and “Sunday.”)

Media

- Upbeat music to play as kids exit the room
- Theme Background Slide
- Theme Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- “Sad Face” Printable
- “Question Mark” Printable

At the end the Storyteller should pray for the group and dismiss kids to Small Group

7. Small Group (20-30 Minutes)

Bible Story Outline

Easter (Crucified and Risen) • John 18-20:23

SETTING UP THE STORY

- Today's story is about Easter, one of the most important events in the Bible.
- Jesus' friends had a happy time turn sad. They loved Jesus, but then something unexpected happened.
- We'll use three boxes labeled "Friday," "Saturday," and "Sunday" to understand what happened.

FRIDAY

- Jesus was in Jerusalem celebrating Passover. He knew the time was coming for Him to rescue us.
- Early in the morning, soldiers came to arrest Jesus. Let's open our Friday box. (Open box, hold up dark tissue paper). Friday was a dark day.
- Read: John 18:4-5a (NIRV).
- Jesus allowed the soldiers to arrest Him.
- Read: John 18:19-21 (NIRV).
- Jesus was taken to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor.
- Read: John 19:4 (NIRV).
- But the crowd shouted for Jesus to be put to death.
- Read: John 19:14-16 (NIRV).
- The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. Even while hurting, He cared for others.
- Read: John 19:26-27 (NIRV).
- At last, Jesus knew He had finished everything He came to do.
- Read: John 19:30 (NIRV).

FRIDAY LEADS INTO SATURDAY

- After Jesus died, His friends were heartbroken. They placed His body in a tomb and a large stone was rolled in front of the entrance.
- Friday was a sad, dark day. They didn't know the story wasn't over.
- Read: Luke 23:55-56 (NIRV).
- Then came Saturday. Let's open the Saturday box. (Open box, hold up sad face and question mark).
- Saturday felt exactly like this. Jesus' friends were sad and confused. They didn't know what God was doing.
- It was the Sabbath, so they had to rest. All they could do was wait. But even though they couldn't see it, God was still working.

SUNDAY

- Very early on Sunday morning, something amazing was about to happen. Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw the stone was rolled away. Jesus' body was gone.
- She ran to tell Peter and John. They ran to the tomb and saw it was empty.
- Mary stayed near the tomb, crying. But Sunday was a joyful day!
- Let's open our Sunday box. (Open box, balloons float up). Sunday is the day Jesus came back to life!
- Two angels appeared to Mary at the tomb.
- Read: John 20:13-16 (NIRV).
- When Jesus said her name, Mary knew it was Him. Jesus was alive!
- Read: John 20:17 (NIRV).
- Mary ran to tell the disciples the happiest news in the world.
- Read: John 20:18 (NIRV).
- God had done the impossible. Sunday was a day of joy.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

- Friday was hard, Saturday was quiet, but Sunday changed everything. Jesus came back to life! He defeated sin and death!
- When Jesus died, He paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done. He paid for sin so we could be close to God.
- When you decide to follow Jesus, you can be close with God again. Because Jesus defeated death, that friendship will last forever.
- This is why we celebrate Easter.
- **BL:** You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

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Bottom Line: You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

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1. Countdown

2. Announcements

3. CG: Transition Slide then Host Opener (5 minutes)

SLIDE: Theme

(Host enters with energy and excitement.)

(Things to have ready: Floor tape placed as starting line. Eight large, plastic Easter eggs lined up at the starting line in two groups of four. Two pool noodles on the floor next to the Easter eggs. Game slide. Bottom Line slide.)

HOST: “Happy Easter, everyone! I’m so glad you’re here today because this is one of the biggest celebration days ever. Today is all about joy, hope, and the best news in the whole world! Jesus is alive! We’re starting a brand-new series called ‘Block Party: Celebrating Jesus and Joy That Never Ends.’ And honestly, what better way to start off our month talking about joy than Easter?”

“Since today is all about celebrating, we’re kicking things off with a super-fun game.

SLIDE: Roll with It Title

“And trust me ... you’ll understand the name in about 10 seconds.

(Gesture to the Easter eggs.)

“These will be your official racing eggs. And nope, you’re not allowed to pick them up with your hands. You’re going to guide them using ... drumroll please ...

“Pool noodles!

(Hold up a pool noodle.)

“Today, we’re doing an Easter egg relay like you’ve never seen before.

“Each team will line up behind these four giant Easter eggs at the starting line. When I say ‘Go,’ the first person on each team will use **ONLY** the pool noodle to roll one egg from the starting line to the finish line. Once you cross the finish line, run back to the start line—you can leave your egg at the finish line—hand the pool noodle to the next teammate, and then it’s their turn to roll an egg. Keep going until all your team’s eggs make it across the finish line. The first team to get all their eggs across the finish line wins!

“Before we start, we have a couple of very important rules. First, no kicking the eggs. Your feet are not egg launchers. Second, no using your hands—even if your egg decides to run away. If it rolls the wrong way, which it probably will, just go chase it. And finally, no whacking each other with the pool noodles. Today is Easter, not Pool Noodle Battle Day.

“All right, I’m going to need some volunteers. Who would like to play? If you’d like to play, raise your hand!

(Select eight volunteers from the kids who have their hands raised and divide them into two teams of four. Line up each team in a single file line at the start line.)

“Alright teams, go ahead and grab your pool noodles and stand behind your Easter eggs! Perfect! These eggs look ... extremely unpredictable. Even better.

“When I say ‘Go,’ start rolling the Easter eggs! One ... two ... three ... GO!

AUDIO: Upbeat music

(Play the game. Make sure the kids are using only the pool noodles to roll the Easter eggs and not their hands or feet. Cheer for the teams and involve the audience.)

“Oh no, that egg is rolling like it’s late for school! Someone catch that runaway egg! You’ve got this! Let’s go, teams!

(Play the game until one of the teams rolls all their Easter eggs across the finish line.)

“And stop! We have the winning team! Great job, everyone!

(Repeat the game for as many rounds as time allows. Ask for new volunteers at the start of each round.)

“What a party! I love that we all get to be together on Easter! Easter is the day we celebrate the best news ever: Jesus is alive. And because Jesus is alive, we can have joy that never ends.

“Let’s check out our Bottom Line for today!

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] “You can have joy because Jesus is alive!

“Can you say that with me?”

KIDS AND HOST: [Bottom Line] “You can have joy because Jesus is alive!”

HOST: “Great job, everyone! WOOHOO! Jesus is alive!”

(Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.)

4. Praise and Worship (10 Minutes) – End with CG:Transition Slide

5. CG: Word Video and CG:Transition Slide

6. Bible Story (15 Minutes)

SLIDE: Theme Background

(Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.)

INTRODUCTION

(Things to have ready: Table on the stage so the Storyteller can place their Bible on it and read from it. All three boxes filled, ready, and on the table.)

STORYTELLER: “Hey everyone, I’m so super-glad you’re here today! We’re going to talk about one of the most important things to ever happen in the whole wide world today!

“It’s Easter! Happy Easter! Easter is such an important day! When we talk about Easter, we’re not just talking about a holiday or a celebration. We’re remembering that something awesome started because of what Jesus did on the cross, and ... spoiler alert ... because He died and rose back to life, for you and me! Jesus loves us so much that He gave His life to rescue us! And then, He rose back to life! Hooray!

SLIDE: God’s Big Story

“Let me tell you a bit about our journey in God’s Big Story! God made everything, including us, to be close friends with Him. But when humans sinned, God had a plan to save them through a family. He picked Abraham and promised that his family would bless the whole world. Through Abraham’s family, including Joseph and Moses, God saved His people and brought them to the Promised Land. Even though God tried to guide them, His people kept disobeying, which led to their nation being divided and them being separated. God kept promising a Rescuer through prophets.”

“And then it did! God sent Jesus, the Rescuer we needed, just like He promised! While Jesus was on Earth, He showed us who God is because He is God! Jesus lived a perfect life, and we will see today the most amazing thing He did with that perfect life! God has loved us for a long, long time

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Today, we’re continuing our journey through the Bible. And we’re at one of the most important events in the whole entire Bible—Easter!

“I want to show you something special I brought to help us with our Easter story today! I brought three boxes with me. We’re not going to open them yet, but each one has a word on it. This one says, ‘Friday’ ... this one says, ‘Saturday’ ... and this one says ‘Sunday.’ These three days are really important in our story.

“Now, I want you to stop for a moment and think about something: Have you ever had a day that felt a little sad or heavy? Maybe something didn’t go the way you hoped. How did your heart feel on that day?

“Have you ever had a day when you had to wait for something? Maybe you didn’t know what was going to happen, and you just had to hold on and wait. That can feel a little confusing, can’t it?

“In our story, Jesus’ followers felt all of those things. Sadness ... waiting ... a lot of wondering. But then ... something happened that filled their hearts with SO much joy. Each box will help us understand what those days were like. We’ll open them as we go along.

FRIDAY

STORYTELLER: “Jesus and his disciples gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, remembering God’s past acts of deliverance and looking forward to Jesus’ own mission to save us. Jesus knew what was coming and understood God’s plan for salvation through Him. Judas, one of Jesus’ disciples, went ahead and led soldiers to arrest Jesus early on Friday morning.

Before we go any further, let’s open our first box. This is the Friday box. Get ready to count with me. One ... two ... three ... open!

(Open the “Friday” box. Hold up the piece of darkly colored tissue paper.)

“Do you see what’s inside? It’s dark paper. Friday was a dark day. Jesus’ followers felt sad and scared. Let’s read what the Bible said happened:

(Open the Bible to John 18:4-5a NIV and read.)

Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him. So he went out and asked them, “Who do you want?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I am he,” Jesus said.

Jesus was telling them He was God. The crowd, wanting Him punished, sent Jesus to Pilate, the Roman leader. Even though Pilate couldn't find any reason to charge Him, he gave in to the crowd's request and handed Jesus over to be crucified. Jesus was crucified at a place known as 'the Skull'

They nailed His hands and feet to a wooden cross. Even while He was hurting, Jesus cared for the people He loved. Jesus saw his mother there. He also saw the disciple he loved standing nearby. Jesus said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son." He said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, the disciple took her into his home.

"At last, Jesus knew He had finished everything He came to do. After Jesus drank he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and died.

FRIDAY LEADS INTO SATURDAY

STORYTELLER: Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a tomb. Jesus's friends were heartbroken and didn't understand God's plan. God was still working even though everything seemed dark.

(Open the Bible to Luke 23:55-56 NIV and read. Note: This passage is a switch from John to Luke to show the events of Saturday.)

The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee ... saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was placed in it. Then they went home. There they prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath day in order to obey the Law.

"And then came the next day ... Saturday. Let's open our Saturday box together. Count with me. One ... two ... three ... open!

(Open the "Saturday" box. Hold up the sad face and question mark papers.)

"Look at this. It's a sad face and a question mark. Jesus' Friends were sad, confused, and full of questions about God's plan. Because it was the Sabbath, they were unable to visit the tomb or were forced to wait.

"Saturday was a day of waiting ... But Sunday was coming."

SUNDAY

STORYTELLER: "Early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, one of Jesus' friends, visited the tomb before sunrise. She intended to bring spices for Jesus' body but found the stone rolled away and the tomb open, with Jesus' body missing.

She ran to tell Peter and John, who rushed to the tomb. Inside, they saw the strips of cloth but not Jesus. Mary stayed near the tomb, crying, unsure of Jesus' whereabouts or who had taken His body.

"It's time to open our Sunday box. Are you ready? Count with me. One ... two ... three ... open!

(Open the "Sunday" box. Pause as balloons float up.)

"Look at these balloons! Sunday is the day Jesus came back to life. The sadness of Friday and the questions of Saturday were answered with the happiest news the world has ever heard. Two angels dressed in white appeared to Mary at Jesus' tomb. Let's see what they said to her.

(Open the Bible to John 20:13-16 NIV and read.)

They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said. "I don't know where they have put him." Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn't realize that it was Jesus.

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. So she said, "Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary."

"When Jesus said her name, Mary knew it was Him. She turned around and saw Jesus alive. Really alive. Jesus had beaten death. He had kept His promise. "Mary ran to tell the disciples the happiest news in the world. *Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news. She said, "I have seen the Lord!"*

"Imagine that moment. Mary ran as fast as she could to tell the disciples that Jesus was alive. Everything He had said was true. God had done the impossible. Sunday was a day of joy. Joy that filled the whole world. God loves you so much that Jesus gave His life to rescue you—then He rose from the dead! Because Jesus is alive, we can have joy no matter what we face. Not just today on Easter ... but every single day. God loves you every single day!"

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Friday was a hard day. Saturday was a quiet day. But Sunday ... Sunday changed everything. What Jesus' friends didn't realize quite yet was that something else amazing had happened. When Jesus died, He paid for all the wrong things anyone has ever done or ever will do. He paid for something called sin. Sin is when we choose our way instead of God's way, and it pulls us away from God. But Jesus wants us to be His close, close friends! So Jesus gave His perfect life and paid for sin! And now, when we accept what Jesus did for us, we can be close to God again! Jesus loves us so, so much that He gave His life for us!"

Here in the iZone we call this the ABC's of salvation. To be saved God wants us to A- admit that we do bad things, and these bad things keep us from God. Then there is the B. We need to believe that Jesus died for you and is God's son. Because Jesus came to earth and died on the cross, he takes on the punishment for all the bad things that we admit to doing. The final step is C, Confess. You pray to God and confess or tell God you are sorry for the sin or bad things in your life, ask Jesus to forgive you and then promise to do your best to make Jesus the most important thing in your life. If you have never done this before and you want to know more about asking Jesus in your life, please talk to one of your small group leaders.

"Jesus is alive! He defeated death! You will be God's friend forever! And there's nothing more joyful than that! This is why we celebrate Easter. This is why today is full of joy ... because Jesus is alive! Let's take a look at our Bottom Line for today.

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] "You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"

"Let's say that together, everyone!"

KIDS and STORYTELLER: [Bottom Line] "You can have joy because Jesus is alive!"

SLIDE: God's Big Story

"This week, we covered two whole pictures in this map of God's Big Story! We talked about the picture that says, 'The Cross' and the picture that says, 'The Resurrection!' (*Gesture to timeline.*)

SLIDE: Week 1 Timeline Image

"Friends, this week, we talked about the central point of God's great rescue plan! Since the fall in the garden, God promised to restore the closeness broken by sin. He made a way for people to be His close friends forever. Years ago, God said, "I'm going to rescue you. I want you close. This distance won't do."

Throughout His Big Story, He faithfully worked to break the curse of sin that kept people from being close to Him. Jesus, God's Son, came. He lived a perfect life and gave it to pay the price for sin. Since He was perfect, He took on our sin. With His life, He paid for all our wrongdoings. He broke the curse of sin and set us free. With the curse broken and sin paid for, we could be close to God again! God's Big Story was finally coming true! Then, Jesus rose from the dead! He defeated death! Our Rescuer, who loves us, is alive and with us forever!

"Now that is the amazing Easter story, you can be friends with the God of the universe because of what Jesus did on Easter! And that friendship is better than any friendship. Jesus is alive, even today, and as your forever friend, He goes with you through everything you face. Everything you face, you face with Him as His much-loved friend.

"You are loved, so loved, by God. Happy Easter, everybody! Jesus loves you!

At the end the Storyteller should pray for the group and dismiss kids to Small Group
7. Small Group (20-30 Minutes)

SLIDE: Theme