

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**That's What Fronds Are For**  
Palm Sunday  
John 12:9-16

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**Whatever happens, remember  
God is still working.**

### HOST SUPPLIES

- Two Small Group Leaders
- Two blindfolds
- Jigsaw puzzle completed except for two "missing pieces"
- Tray and table or easel to display the puzzle
- Two photos of your puzzle—both unfinished, with the two pieces missing, and finished
- Table for the game
- Two large buckets
- Plastic Easter eggs (enough to fill both buckets)
- Host's phone

### STORY SUPPLIES

- Table
- Yellow Easter basket with a plush donkey inside
- Blue Easter basket with a scroll (rolled-up and tied piece of paper) inside
- Pink Easter basket with a small coat or robe and artificial palm leaf inside
- Easter grass

### 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**  
MIN

**SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction**  
Early Arriver  
Opening Activity

### LARGE GROUP

**35**  
MIN

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **HAPPY APRIL**

- **HOPE**

- **All month long, we will be focusing on the message of HOPE**
- **HOPE: Believing that something good can come out of something bad**
- **For HOSTS and COMMUNICATORS, please be ready to share your own stories of HOPE while**

- **EASTER INVITE CHALLENGE - VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENT**

#### MONTHLY WORSHIP LINEUP:

Week 1 - This Is Living & Graves Into Gardens

**Week 2 - Never Gonna Stop Singing & Way Maker**

EASTER - WHAT I SEE & GRAVES INTO GARDENS

Week 4 - Never Let Me Go (new) & The Blessing

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN

# PUZZLED

Believe there's  
a bigger picture

WEEK  
**TWO**  
APRIL 2022

LARGE GROUP  
**K-3**

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

## TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**That's What Fronds Are For**  
Palm Sunday  
John 12:9-16

## TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Whatever happens, remember  
God is still working.

## MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

In this world you will have  
trouble. But be encouraged!  
I have won the battle over  
the world.  
John 16:33b, NIV

## MONTHLY LIFE APP

Hope—Believing that  
something good can come  
out of something bad

## BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

## LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

**AUDIO:** PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.  
**SLIDE:** THEME  
**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** THEME LOOP

## WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter

**WORSHIP LEADER:**

**AUDIO:** *Never Gonna Stop Singing*

**AUDIO:** *Way Maker*

Host enters.

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** THEME

## OPENER

**HOST:** "Hi, friends! My name is [your name], and I'm so glad we're all here together! This month, we're talking about something amazing . . . something truly life-changing . . . something called HOPE!"

**SLIDE:** LIFE APP

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** THEME TRANSITION TO LIFE APP

"Hope is believing that something good can come out of something bad."

**SLIDE:** THEME

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE):** LIFE APP TRANSITION TO THEME

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"I don't know about you, but sometimes when life just isn't going my way, I feel a little puzzled—a little confused. I keep looking at whatever's wrong and wishing it could be different. But if you choose to have hope, that means you believe there's a bigger picture. It means that you trust that God is in control and can bring good things even out of tough situations.

"We'll talk more about that in a few minutes. But first, check out this puzzle that I've been working on.

**SLIDE: PHOTO OF YOUR UNFINISHED PUZZLE (OPTIONAL)**

*Hold up or point to the puzzle that's complete except for two missing pieces.*

*Note: You may want to take a photo of your puzzle in advance (with the two pieces missing) and show it on screen so everyone can easily see.*

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

"But guess what! I got to the end and realized I was missing not just one but TWO puzzle pieces! Has that ever happened to you? It's very frustrating, isn't it? So here's my plan. Can I have a couple of Small Group Leaders come up here and help me find the missing pieces?

*Bring two Small Group Leaders up on stage. Have them stand behind the table with two large buckets of plastic Easter eggs. Give each leader a blindfold. (They don't need to put the blindfolds on yet.)*

*(to the two leaders)* "[Leaders' names], your buckets are full of Easter eggs. Easter is next Sunday, you know—but Easter is SUCH a big deal that we've started the celebration early! So you have all those fun Easter eggs, but there's only ONE egg in each of your buckets that has a missing puzzle piece inside.

"When I say 'Go,' you'll open eggs to try to find the missing puzzle piece. When you find it, you can take your blindfold off and put the missing piece over here in the puzzle. But you must find the piece then successfully get it in the puzzle in 60 seconds or less!

*(to audience)* "What do you think, everyone? Do you think they can do it? Let's cheer for our leaders.

*(to the two leaders)* "You can now put on your blindfolds. *(to audience)* Let's count it down: five, four, three, two, one, GO!

**AUDIO: FUN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (60-SECOND VERSION)**



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*If you're not using a screen countdown, set a timer on your phone for 60 seconds.*

*Provide funny commentary as leaders look for the missing puzzle pieces. When they find both pieces and successfully add them to the puzzle, celebrate and show the finished puzzle to the audience.*

**SLIDE: PHOTO OF YOUR FINISHED PUZZLE (OPTIONAL)**

"We did it! Way to go! Let's give our leaders a huge round of applause!"

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

*Dismiss the two leaders to their seats.*

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## BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Storyteller enters*

### SETTING UP THE STORY

**STORYTELLER:** "Hi, everyone! Last week, we talked about an amazing miracle Jesus performed when He raised His friend Lazarus from the dead. As you can imagine, everyone talked about what Jesus had done. And the news spread quickly. Many people believed and put their faith in Jesus.

"But the religious leaders DIDN'T believe that Jesus was the Son of God. These leaders were angry that so many people were following Jesus. So even though Jesus hadn't done anything wrong, they wanted to find a way to arrest Him.

"As I tell you what happened next, I'd love if you can help by finding some Easter baskets in the room. After all, we're starting our Easter celebration early, right? All of the events of this story led up to what we're celebrating next week on Easter Sunday.

"Each Easter basket in the room has an object inside that will help us tell the story. I'll tell you which color basket I need. If you see it, yell, 'I found it,' and point to it. Okay? To start off, does anyone see a yellow Easter basket?"

*Wait for the kids to point to the basket. Then choose a kid to bring it to you on the stage. Reach into the basket and pull out the plush donkey then set the basket on the table.*

### FINDING THE DONKEY

*Hold up the plush donkey.*

**STORYTELLER:** "Awww, look. What a cute donkey! You see, Jesus and the disciples were traveling into the city of Jerusalem. Jesus sent two of His friends ahead . . . to find a donkey.

*Set the donkey on the table.*

"Jesus said to the two disciples . . .

*Open the Bible to Matthew 21:2-3 (NIV) and read.*

*"Go to the village ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a donkey tied up. Her colt will be with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them. The owner will send them right away.*

"The disciples agreed. They went ahead to find the donkey and colt."

### ZECHARIAH'S WORDS

*Hold up the donkey.*

**STORYTELLER:** "Jesus' friends brought the donkey and colt to Him. They placed their coats over the donkey and colt so Jesus could sit down and ride.

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*Set the donkey on the table.*

"Okay, now I'm looking for a blue Easter basket. Does anyone see it? If you see a blue Easter basket, yell, 'I found it' and point to it.

*Wait for the kids to point to the basket. Then choose a kid to bring it to you on the stage. Reach into the basket and pull out the scroll then set the basket on the table. Hold up the scroll.*

"What do we have here? A scroll! What do you think that's about?"

*Set the scroll on the table.*

"Well, it turns out Jesus was carrying out the plan God had set in motion long before. A long time before Jesus was ever born, a prophet named Zechariah wrote down a promise that was about to come true. Listen carefully to Zechariah's words and see if you can hear it.

*Open the Bible to Zechariah 9:9 (NirV).*

*"City of Zion, be full of joy! People of Jerusalem, shout! See, your king comes to you. He always does what is right. He has won the victory. He is humble and riding on a donkey. He is sitting on a donkey's colt.*

*Hold up the donkey.*

"See? There it is! It was part of God's plan for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. Jesus was showing everyone that He was the Savior God had promised.

"All right, friends, you've been so helpful. Can you help me find a pink Easter basket? Does anyone see it? If you see a pink Easter basket, yell, 'I found it' and point to it."

*Wait for the kids to point to the basket. Then choose a kid to bring it to you on the stage. Reach into the basket and pull out the coat and palm leaf then set the basket on the table.*

## COATS AND PALM BRANCHES

*Hold up the coat and palm leaf.*

**STORYTELLER:** "It's a coat and a leaf from a palm tree! As Jesus rode toward Jerusalem, people honored Him by throwing their coats on the ground to make a path for Him.

*Lay the coat on the table and keep holding up the palm leaf.*

"Others broke branches off palm trees and laid them across the road or waved them. Again, they were doing this to honor Jesus and welcome Him to the city as their king.

*Hold up the Bible with your other hand, and read John 12:13 (NirV).*

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"The people shouted to celebrate Jesus, shouting things like . . .

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the king of Israel!"

*Set the palm leaf on the table.*

## WRAPPING UP THE STORY

**STORYTELLER:** "It was a huge celebration to honor Jesus! Of course, Jesus knew that there were difficult things ahead that He would face in Jerusalem. He knew that the religious leaders were out to get Him and that they wanted to arrest Him. To these leaders, it seemed like the whole WORLD was following Jesus—and they wanted to put a stop to it.

"But even though Jesus would eventually be arrested, and even though He would die on the cross, Jesus knew that it was all part of God's good plan. It was the reason Jesus had come: to give His life as our Savior. Through it all, God was still at work. And nothing that anyone could do would stop God's plan to save the world.

"It's important for us to remember that God is ALWAYS working in our lives—in the good times and the tough times. We know that God is always with us. And we can have hope, because we know that God sees the bigger picture.

**SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE**

**"Whatever happens, remember God is still working.**

"Let's pray and ask God to help us remember that."

**SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND**

## PRAY

**STORYTELLER:** "Dear God, thank You for reminding us today that whatever happens, You are still working. Today, we want to celebrate Jesus the way people did as He entered Jerusalem. It gives us hope to know that You loved us enough to send Jesus to be our Savior. When we face tough times, help us remember that You always have a good plan and that You're always there to help us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

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## CLOSER

*Host enters as Storyteller exits.*

**HOST:** "It must have been so amazing to be part of the crowd in Jerusalem that day as they cheered to welcome Jesus into their city!

"At the time, many people believed that Jesus was the Savior who had come to rescue them. They thought Jesus would take over right then and there and become their king. *(Pause.)* But that wasn't exactly what happened. You see, God was working on a much bigger plan, not just to rescue those people, but to rescue all people for all time.

"That became clear to everyone in the days that followed as Jesus went on to die on the cross then come back to life. That's what we'll talk about next week as we celebrate Easter together! But for now, here's what we need to remember.

**SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE**

**"Whatever happens, remember God is still working.**

"Sometimes, we get disappointed when things don't go the way we want or the way we expect them to. We get frustrated when we don't get our way, like if we're not invited to a party we want to go to or a family member loses their job or if someone we love is sick.

"It can be tough to live with hope when bad things are happening. But in those times, we can stop and remember that God sees the whole picture. God is working out a GOOD plan for our future. And God is always working in our lives, even when we can't see it. Don't forget, **[Basic Truth] we can trust God no matter what!**

"You can jump on your feet now and head to Small Group. Talk with your friends about some ways God is working in your life right now!"

*Dismiss kids to their small groups.*

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**