

Daily Assembly Scripts

Day 1: Opening Assembly

Welcome (2 minutes)

Props: A suitcase loaded with a few clothes but mostly snacks—big bags of chips, granola bars, etc. It can be a normal suitcase, a little wacky, beat up, or it can have lots of travel stickers on it.

Person 1: Welcome to *Emerald Crossing*, everyone! Are you ready to take an Irish adventure through Psalm 23? We're going to learn about King David, who was a shepherd when he was young, and we'll hear how the Lord can be our Good Shepherd. To Person 2, as he is entering. Oh, top o' the morning (evening) to ya! Are you ready for our tour around Ireland?

Person 2: Enter rolling or carrying a suitcase, looking a little frazzled. Whew! I guess I'm ready. They lost my luggage at the airport, but it's been found.

Person 1: That's good. It would be hard to go on a trip without any luggage.

Person 2: Open the suitcase so the kids can see what's inside. Tell me about it! I can't make it a week here in Ireland without some good eats!

Person 1: I think we're gonna enjoy lots of good eats in Ireland, but it looks like you've at least got snacks covered! I'm so glad your lost bag was found.

Person 2: Me too!

Person 1: You know, it's not just luggage that can be lost. People can be lost too. Either of you can share a quick story of a time you were lost. Today, we're talking about a different way we can be lost—being spiritually lost, which means living apart from God. There's a way to be found by God, our Good Shepherd, and I can't wait for you to hear more about it. But for now, let's get started by singing our theme song.

Song (3 minutes)

Theme Song: "Emerald Crossing"

Song (3 minutes)

The Lord is My Shepherd

Mission Moment (5 minutes)

Note: You may want to do the Creature Feature in the opening and the Mission Moment in the closing.

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

This week, we are learning all about how the Lord is our shepherd, but we aren't the only ones who need to know this. There are boys and girls around the world who need to know about God too. This week, we're going to meet some of them. Sadly, many of them don't have enough food, so we're partnering with Children's Hunger Fund to help provide meals for children who don't have enough to eat.

You can not only help provide them with meals but also help them learn about Jesus!

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Hani slide

Are you ready to meet the first child? Pause for participation. Great! Today, we're going to meet a little girl named Hani, who lives in Ethiopia.

SHOW: Video 1—Hani

Country: Ethiopia

Problem: Extreme Hunger

Hani's mother wanted nothing more than to care for her children, but without any education or skills, it was very difficult for her to find work so she could buy food. The local church not only provided her family with food but also taught them how to grow vegetables and raise chickens and goats. This meant that she would always have fresh food for her children.

Sadly, many other children around the world are in need, just like Hani. But there's good news! You can help! Do you want to learn how? Pause for participation. This week at VBS, we will be collecting coins to provide meals just like the ones that Hani received from the local church. You will get one of these Coin Paks that you can use to collect your coins. Show Coin Pak. Take this home today and tell your family and friends about Hani. Ask them to help you collect coins for meals. Just 25 cents can provide a nutritious meal for a hungry child.

With the coins you collect, nutritious food can be packed into a Children's Hunger Fund Food Pak. These Food Paks can feed a family for several days. And because these Food Paks are delivered to families by local pastors and church volunteers, it provides local churches the opportunity to grow relationships with these families and share with them about Jesus Christ.

Bring back the coins you've collected each day this week so we can count how many meals you can provide. You can help deliver hope to suffering families around the world.

Announcements (time varies) Show Background

Announce any info pertinent to your situation. Today, you need to explain how the contests work so the kids can participate. Check with your director for details.

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing → Transitions

Day 1: Closing Assembly

Song (3 minutes)

Provider Song

Song (3 minutes)

Trust IN God

Creature Feature: Mia the Connemara Sheep (5 minutes)

Use the **PRESENTATION SLIDES** or show the **CREATURE FEATURE VIDEO**. The live version can be shortened more as needed each day.

SHOW: 01 Creature Feature title slide

This week, we're going to take a look at a few of the animals found in Ireland. Here are a couple of clues to guess the first one.

- It's a really *ewe-nique* animal.
- In fact, it's *wooly* fabulous.
- It can have a special relation-*sheep* with a shepherd.
- Did you guess it? Okay, no more *bleating* around the bush.

SHOW: 02 Connemara sheep

Today, we're talking about sheep. You may not think about sheep very much, but God designed these amazing creatures to glorify their creator!

Finding sheep in Ireland is pretty easy because there are over three and a half million of them! Some sheep, like the Connemara sheep, have a thick coat of wool that keeps them warm, even on the windy hills of Ireland. And wool is the main reason people raise these sheep.

SHOW: 03 Sheep shearing

Sheep are usually sheared about once a year for their wool. Shearing is like giving the sheep a big ol' haircut.

Do you know what wool is used for? Tell the person you're sitting next to something you think might be made of wool. *Do so.*

SHOW: 04 Wool items

Wool can be used to make blankets, hats, and lots of clothing items. But the Connemara sheep has more brittle wool, better suited to making carpets or rugs.

SHOW: 05 Sheep eating

Sheep spend a lot of time eating—sometimes up to 12 hours a day! Tell your neighbor one of your favorite foods. *Do so.* Sheep eat mostly grass. There's a problem, though. Have you ever tried to chew on grass?

Chew on a piece of grass. It's very tough and hard to digest. So how can sheep eat it and survive? They have to chew it twice! When a sheep takes a bite of grass, it chews it up, swallows it, and sends it down to its four-chambered stomach.

Now get ready, because this next part may seem a little gross. After a while, the sheep coughs the chewed-up grass, called the "cud," back up into its mouth to chew

it all over again. What do you think about that? It may seem yucky, but it's really an amazing design from God that allows sheep to break down the tough grass more to get the most nutrients from it.

SHOW: 06 Sheep eye

Of course, grazing sheep have to stay alert for enemies (predators) that might be lurking nearby, so God designed their eyes in a special way to help with that.

Take a look at your neighbor's eyes—at the pupils. They're the round black part in the center. *Do so.*

Did you know sheep have rectangular pupils instead of round ones like ours? That might seem strange, but God is an incredible designer. When a sheep wants to graze, it bends its head down. When its head moves, its pupils also move to stay level with the ground so they can still look around and keep an eye out for danger.

But that's not the only amazing thing sheep can do with their eyes. I want you to try something. Look straight forward and hold your head completely still. Now, without moving your head at all, try to look at the person on either side of you. *Demonstrate and let kids try.*

Were you able to see them? You probably had to move your eyes to do so. But if you were a sheep, you wouldn't have to move your eyes at all! That's because those rectangular pupils allow sheep to see in almost every direction at once. God gave them the ability to see things in front of them, next to them, and behind them at the same time. Now that's super cool!

SHOW: 07 Sheep headbutting

Another design that keeps sheep safe is that they live together in groups called "herds" or "flocks," often led and protected by a male sheep called a "ram."

Guess why they're called rams. *Pause as they guess.* Right! Rams use their heads to ram into each other! Rams butt heads to find out which one is in charge—and they can headbutt really hard! In fact, some wild sheep can ram with a force of around 800 pounds!

SHOW: 08 Monster truck tire

If a person could headbutt that hard, he could knock over a monster truck tire or a piano with just his head! Don't try it, though, because you would injure your brain. God gave sheep thick skulls with shock-absorbing spaces in them that protect their brains from the force of their ramming. Sheep will also headbutt to protect themselves from predators. However, the safest place for sheep to be is close to their shepherd.

SHOW: 09 Sheep with shepherd

People have been keeping sheep since the beginning. Throughout the Bible, we read that godly people like Abel, Rachel, and Moses were all shepherds! A shepherd's job is to lead the sheep to find food, water, and shelter and to rescue them from danger.

SHOW: 10 David fighting the bear

Today, we learned (will learn) about David. Before he fought Goliath, David was a shepherd, and he risked his life to save his sheep from being carried away and devoured by lions and bears. David recognized that the Lord does the same things for us, and he wrote Psalm 23 to reflect that. God guides, protects, and saves his people. During his earthly ministry, Jesus explained his purpose when he said he is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. And when people asked Jesus why he spent time with those who did bad things, Jesus compared himself to a shepherd who would leave behind 99 sheep that were safe to go after one lost sheep to save it. And he does that for us!

SHOW: 11 Cross/Empty tomb

Even though we run away from God by being selfish and unkind, and we deserve death as a punishment for our sin, Jesus came to this earth to save us. He lived a perfect life as fully God and fully man so he could take our penalty of death upon himself. He gave up his own life on the cross in our place as the perfect sacrifice. But the best news is that Jesus didn't stay dead; he rose again! God promises that whoever turns from their sin and trusts Jesus with their life will be saved.

SHOW: 12 Mia the Connemara sheep

Today's animal pal, Mia (My-a) the Connemara sheep, is here to remind us how we can cross from being lost to being found. So the question you need to ask yourself is this: Is the Lord my shepherd? If he isn't your shepherd,

then I encourage you to repent of (turn from) your sin and trust him today!

Drama (12 minutes)

See the Drama Production section starting on page 27 for details.

Announcements (time varies)

Cool Contests (3 minutes)

Announce winners of today's contests. Remind the kids to do their Go and Dos on the Student Guides, learn their memory verses, and make up a sign or team cheer for tomorrow.

Prayer

Takeaway Time (2–3 minutes)

Each day, everyone will say Psalm 23 together with the hand motions—today, just say verse one and then add verses daily. You can say it with them or give prompts along the way to keep them together but let them do it themselves. Don't use the hand motions video. It's a good challenge to see if they can do it without the video by the end of each day.

As we wrap up today, let's say today's verse with our hand motions. Recite Psalm 23:1 with hand motions.

Remember—that's the most important question you can ever ask yourself: Is the Lord *my* shepherd? If you don't know the answer to that, please come talk to me or ____.

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Theme Song

Day 2: Opening Assembly

Welcome (2 minutes)

Props: Slide of Giant's Causeway

Person 1: Come in and begin to enthusiastically welcome everyone.

Person 2: Come in from the back, super excited.

Person 1: You're coming in the wrong way!

Person 2: I got on the wrong path, and guess where I ended up!

Person 1: Where?

Person 2: At a place in Northern Ireland called Giant's Causeway!

Person 1: Wow, why's it called that?

Person 2: Show slide of Giant's Causeway. Well, it's this really cool place that has lots of legends about it. One is about a giant named Finn MacCool who used the causeway (which is kind of like a land bridge) so he could travel across the sea without getting his feet wet to fight a challenger in Scotland. There are similar columns rising from the sea in the Scottish Isles too.

Person 1: Now that you mention it, I've heard of this place. It's got 40,000 or so strange interlocking columns

that form a sort of road out of stepping stones that go from the land down into the sea.

Person 2: Right! Right!

Person 1: Was it made by a giant?

Person 2: No. In reality, it was formed by volcanic eruptions—most likely as a result of the global flood of Noah's time. But it's fun to think of giants. Ireland has lots of legends about them.

Person 1: Well, that reminds me of what we're talking about today—a real giant. The Bible tells us some giants really did exist! Not make-believe ones like Finn MacCool but real ones like Goliath. Goliath was living on the wrong path, apart from God. He fought David, the writer of Psalm 23. David was living on the right path, following God. We'll be talking about crossing from the wrong path to the right path today.

Person 2: I can't wait to hear more about it, but for now, let's sing ____.

Song (3 minutes)

Provider Song

Song (3 minutes)

Goodness + Mercy

Mission Moment (5 minutes)

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

Do you remember the person we met yesterday who was training her dog? Right! Her name was Quinn, wasn't it? Does anyone remember the name of her dog? Pause for participation. That's right! Penny! In addition to showing us how she's training Penny to be a sheepdog, Quinn is introducing us to children around the world. Each one of these children live in poverty and need to hear how much God loves them. Thankfully, you get to help!

Remember, just one quarter can provide a meal to a hungry child.

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Ivanna slide

Today, Quinn is going to introduce us to a little girl named Ivanna, who lives in Romania. Let's hear her story.

SHOW: Video 2—Ivanna

Country: Romania

Problem: Displaced people

Raise your hand if you've ever been on a long car ride. Pause for participation. Ivanna and her family basically went on a long road trip, but instead of going someplace fun like a vacation, she was leaving her home because

it was no longer safe. She also didn't know where she was going to end up. Thankfully, the church was there to help her family find a place to stay and to give them food to eat.

You can help children like Ivanna by collecting coins. Who did you tell about our goal to collect coins? Pause for participation. Remember, every 25 cents you collect this week means one meal for a child like Ivanna.

Does anyone have a guess at how many meals we can provide so far? Pause for participation. Well, we've counted the coins you brought in, and we can provide ____ meals! One dollar can provide four meals. To calculate your VBS meal progress, multiply the dollars raised by four.

SHOW: Daily Count Day 2 slide with current meal count filled in

That's a great start to our week, but we've still got a few more days to go. So keep bringing in your coins all week long! If you haven't already shared with your families what we're collecting coins for, be sure to do that today! Ask your parents if you can earn money for your Coin Pak by doing some special chores around the house. Get creative!

Announcements (time varies)

Show Background

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing → transitions

Day 2: Closing Assembly

Song (3 minutes)

Goodness and Mercy

Song (2 minutes)

TRUST IN GOD

Creature Feature: Guide the Border Collie (5 minutes)

Use the PRESENTATION SLIDES or show the CREATURE FEATURE VIDEO. Shorten this script as needed.

SHOW: 13 Creature Feature title slide

Welcome back, everyone! I'm thinking about pets for a minute here. Stand up if you have a . . . lizard or snake . . . fish . . . rabbit . . . hamster . . . guinea pig or gerbil . . . cat . . . dog.

Today, we're going to talk about dogs—a particular breed of dog, in fact. Yesterday, we learned a lot about sheep and how shepherds take care of them. But I've noticed that shepherds aren't the only ones working with the sheep.

SHOW: 14 Border collie

Sheepdogs do too! For almost as long as people have been keeping sheep, dogs have been helping to herd

them. We even read in the book of Job, one of the oldest books in the Bible, that Job had dogs tending his flock.

SHOW: 15 Sheepdog breeds

Many different dog breeds work with sheep, including the German shepherd, the Old English sheepdog, the Pembroke Welsh corgi, and the Australian shepherd. But one of the most famous sheepdogs is the border collie.

Tell your neighbor why you think it's called a "border" collie. Do so.

SHOW: 16 Border collie map

This breed isn't originally from Ireland, but they come from another area with a lot of sheep: the border between England and Scotland, located one island over from Ireland. So that's why they're called "border" collies.

Now let me ask you a question. Have you ever started acting up in a store or a restaurant and your mom gave you "the eye"? You know what I'm talking about? Share a quick story of a time this happened to you.

SHOW: 17 Sheepdog staring at sheep

Well, border collies are exceptional herding dogs and are known for using "the eye," which means they can

direct the sheep to move or to stop moving just by staring at them! That's a pretty impressive ability.

(If you need to shorten the script, skip to #26—Border collie staring slide.)

How did they learn to do that, and why do the sheep obey them with just one look? To answer that, we need to understand some history of border collies.

SHOW: 18 Dog kind

In Genesis 1, God tells us he made animals according to their kinds. Domestic dogs, like border collies, belong to the canine, or dog, kind. This kind also includes wild canines, like wolves, jackals, coyotes, and foxes. All the animals in this kind are related because they all descended from the original dogs created during creation week. You can think of a created kind like a family. Have you noticed that you don't look or act exactly like your brothers or sisters or cousins even though you're in the same family? In the same way, God put a lot of different traits in the original dog kind. Today, we have dog breeds with different shapes, sizes, colors, hair types, and behaviors. Even though they may look and act differently, they're all still dogs.

SHOW: 19 Coywolf

Even when they're crossbred to form hybrids like wolf-dogs or coywolves, they'll always be dogs. They won't ever turn into something else.

SHOW: 20 Wolves

Wolves were likely the great-great-great-great-great . . . you get the picture . . . grandparents of all domestic dog breeds, including the border collie. Wolves use many different impressive abilities to hunt their prey.

SHOW: 21 Wolf nose

They have a sense of smell estimated to be 100 times more powerful than ours.

SHOW: 22 Wolf running

Once they have caught the scent of their prey, they can run after it at up to 38 miles per hour

SHOW: 23 Wolf staring

If they're hunting a herd of animals, wolves may stand close by and stare at the herd to judge distances and look for the best target. Through a process called domestication, humans purposefully bred the friendliest and most helpful animals together over and over and were able to redirect and separate traits they liked best for human use. Today, nearly 400 dog breeds exist that were all bred for special purposes.

SHOW: 24 Bloodhound nose

For example, bloodhounds use their powerful sense of smell to find people who are lost.

SHOW: 25 Greyhound running

Greyhounds were bred to be racing dogs, sprinting at speeds even faster than wolves.

SHOW: 26 Border collie staring

God gave the border collie lots of features that make them awesome for herding sheep, like good peripheral vision, alert ears, and strong and nimble bodies that can run and move easily. Border collies don't use their eyes to hunt sheep, but instead, have learned to use their stares to herd and guide the sheep toward their shepherds! Isn't that amazing?

SHOW: 27 Border collie herding sheep

Do you feel pressure if your mom gives you "the eye?" Well, sheep feel pressure too. Just like sheepdogs have instincts to herd other animals, sheep have instincts to flock away from animals that put pressure on them. For the sheep, having a dog stare at them can be intense pressure that makes them want to move away.

SHOW: 28 Border collie staring

Border collies can use the pressure of their stare to move sheep where they need to go, whether it's away from danger, into shelter to protect them from harsh weather, or to a new pasture.

SHOW: 29 Shepherd with border collie

Now why do you think shepherds who love their sheep would use sheepdogs to herd them? Because sheepdogs can move sheep faster and farther than humans can. They don't replace the shepherds, since they don't make decisions about the sheep on their own. The shepherds instruct the sheepdogs on what to do, and then the sheepdogs do it. Although speedy sheepdogs guiding sheep to different places can startle the sheep, shepherds know that a little bit of discomfort is best for their sheep.

SHOW: 30 Sheep in danger

We can be like sheep in our relationship with the Lord. Sheep wander from shepherds and may be unaware of approaching danger. We can also wander away from a close relationship with God when we disobey him and try to do things our way. This puts us in danger of hurting others and hurting ourselves, which makes the Lord sad. Just like the border collie drives the sheep back toward the shepherd, the Lord allows the consequences of sin to motivate us to return to him. In Psalm 23, David wrote about how God kept him from being tempted to sin. He said that the Lord led him in paths of righteousness. Righteousness means doing what is right in God's eyes. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can turn from the wrong path of sin and follow the Lord on the right path of obedience.

SHOW: 31 Sheep with shepherd

We also enjoy the refreshment of God's presence, just like sheep following their shepherd get to enjoy pastures of green grass and fresh water.

SHOW: 32 Guide the border collie

Today's animal pal, Guide the border collie, reminds us that the Lord guides us toward the right path for our

lives through his Word. So what do you need to do today to follow the Lord? How can you plan to get to know God more?

Drama (12 minutes)

Announcements (time varies)

Cool Contests (3 minutes)

Announce the winners of today's contests. Remind them to learn tomorrow's verses, complete Go and Do activities, and dress up tomorrow for Dress-Up Day. Any shepherd/farmer, Irish animals, Viking, or King David attire works.

Prayer

Takeaway Time (2–3 minutes)

Okay, before we leave, let's try our first three verses with hand motions. Do so, having everyone recite Psalm 23:1–3 together with hand motions.

Remember to live on God's good path, which we learn about from the Bible. How do we get on the right path? By becoming part of God's family (his flock). Then we learn the Bible, love the Bible, and obey the Bible.

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald crossing

Day 3: Opening Assembly

Welcome (2 minutes)

No props needed.

Person 1 and Person 2 come in together. Person 2 pretends to badly stub his toe and starts hopping around dramatically, moaning and groaning.

Person 1: Welcome back to *Emerald Crossing*! Notice Person 2. What happened, ____?

Person 2: Continue hopping around. I stubbed my toe! Ohhh! Owwww!

Person 1: I'm sorry! That sounds really painful.

Person 2: It is! I didn't see that ____ (whatever is on your set—or something imaginary) and bam! There went my toe.

Person 1: Is it your big toe?

Person 2: Y-e-e-s-s! I'm afraid I may have broken it. Say the following with big emotion, as if it's just occurring to you. And . . . then I'll have to go to the hospital . . . and maybe they'll have to give me medicine. Or a shot. Or worse yet, maybe they'll have to cut my toe off! Oh no! I may not be able to walk right ever again!

Person 1: Hold it, hold it. Aren't you getting a bit carried away with your fears?

Person 2: Huh?

Person 1: You know, most of the stuff people worry about never even happens—like having to get your big toe cut off. But even if it did, God is with you and will comfort you. Psalm 23 tells us that!

Person 2: You mean you don't think I'll get my big toe cut off after all?

Person 1: No, I don't. But instead of worrying about the outcome, why don't you try praying?

Person 2: Don't worry . . . just pray. I like that.

Person 1: Yeah, we're going to talk more about going from fearful to peaceful today, and prayer is a part of that. First, though, let's get on our feet and sing.

Song (3 minutes)

The Lord is My Shepherd

Song (3 minutes)

The Lord Himself will lead Me

Mission Moment (5 minutes)

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

Who remembers what we are collecting coins for this week? Pause for participation. And how much does it cost to provide one meal? Pause for participation. That's right! It only costs 25 cents to send a meal to a child in need. And that food that your coins provide is nutritious food that can be made into healthy meals for the whole family.

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Luciana slide

Today, we are going to meet a little girl named Luciana, who lives in the Philippines.

SHOW: Video 3—Luciana

Country: The Philippines

Problem: Disaster

Can you imagine living in a house that was sitting on an angle like Luciana's? Pause for participation. Do you think she felt safe and secure in her home? Pause for participation. Probably not. And with so many mouths to feed, it would take her parents a very long time to save enough money to fix their house on their own. Thankfully, there are pastors like the ones who visited Luciana's family who are willing to help them provide for their basic needs so they can focus on fixing their home.

There are pastors around the world ready to help other kids in need like Luciana. Have you been sharing what you have learned this week with others? Have you asked if your parents will help you provide meals for kids like the ones you've met so far?

~~Do you want to hear how many meals we can provide so far? Pause for participation. Well, we've counted your~~

Let's do our best to help meals so that children in need can eat + also hear the good news of Jesus!

coins, and we've already raised enough to provide _____ meals! To calculate your VBS meal progress, multiply the dollars raised by four.

SHOW: Daily Count Day 3 slide with current meal count filled in

I'm pretty excited about what you've collected so far, and we still have two more days! And that many meals means more opportunities for local pastors to share the love of Jesus Christ with children in need. I think more children around the world need to hear this good news,

don't you? I can't wait to see how many more meals we can provide tomorrow.

Announcements (time varies) *Show Background*

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing → transitions

Day 3: Closing Assembly

Song (2 minutes)

Goodness and Mercy

Song (3 minutes)

TRUST IN GOD

Creature Feature: Shadow the Raven (5 minutes)

Use the PRESENTATION SLIDES or show the CREATURE FEATURE VIDEO. Shorten this script as needed.

SHOW: 33 Creature Feature title slide

Well, hello again everyone! You're here at a great time! I've been busy with my binoculars looking for today's animal. Look through binoculars. And I just found it! But I want you to see if you can identify it. Here it is!

SHOW: 34 Raven through binocular lens

It's a black bird with a curved beak and a peculiar "croak" sound to its call.

Do you think you can identify this bird? Pause. If you guessed a raven, then you're correct! You may have thought it was a crow, and that's understandable, because crows and ravens look similar. In fact, crows and ravens are from the same created kind, called the corvid kind! The corvid kind also includes blue jays and magpies. Even though crows and ravens look a lot alike, they're different types of birds. So how can you tell the difference between a raven and a crow? Here are a couple clues.

SHOW: 35 Raven and crow comparison

Ravens are bigger than crows, and ravens tend to soar, while crows do a lot of flapping.

SHOW: 36 Raven and crow tails

Ravens have a wedge-shaped tail, but crows have a fan-shaped tail.

Ravens tend to fly alone or in small groups called "unkindnesses." Crows like to fly in larger groups called "murders."

Finally, ravens and crows have different calls. Make what you think a raven call would sound like. Do so. A crow call sounds like a "caw," and a raven call sounds like a "croak."

Play RAVEN SFX.

Speaking of calls, did you know the common raven is the largest songbird in Ireland? Ravens can even learn to mimic, or copy, noises! They've learned to imitate the calls of animals, the sounds of objects, and even human speech!

SHOW: 37 Dolphin, great apes, parrots

In fact, some people consider ravens to be better mimics than parrots! However, their talents don't stop at mimicry. Ravens are really smart, possibly rivaling the intelligence of dolphins, great apes, and parrots! They can remember faces and have been known to hold grudges against people who haven't treated them well. So make sure you're not unkind to an unkindness (of ravens)!

SHOW: 38 Noah with raven

These God-given talents make the raven one of God's fascinating creatures! And, indeed, people have been fascinated by ravens throughout history. Did you know the raven is one of the first animals mentioned by name in the Bible? Can anyone remember when a raven was mentioned in Genesis? Take responses. We read that Noah released a raven from the ark to check if the floodwaters had gone down.

Many cultures, including the ancient Irish people, thought ravens had something to do with dead or dying things. Do you know why? Tell your neighbor your thought. Do so.

This may seem a little creepy, but ravens are associated with dead things because they eat dead animals.

SHOW: 39 Raven eating

But that's not the only thing they eat. Insects, worms, berries, grain, small animals, and even human trash can be on their menu. Eating dead animals may seem gross, but it's actually amazing how God has provided for his creation by designing scavengers, such as ravens, to clean up the mess of our sin-cursed world. These animals are kind of like the vacuum cleaners or garbage trucks of our world. If it weren't for ravens and other scavenger animals, we'd be living in a very gross and messy place.

SHOW: 40 Raven with Elijah

We can be grateful for the role ravens play in God's creation, but did you know that God also uses these birds to

teach us some very important truths about himself? In 1 Kings 17, the prophet Elijah had to hide from an evil king who wanted to kill him. It was a frightening time for Elijah, and he could easily have been afraid of how he would survive. But God comforted Elijah by sending him food every day—and guess what delivered Elijah's food? God told ravens to bring it to him! And Jesus comforted his followers when he told them to look at the ravens to see how God provided for them. He reminded them that they were much more valuable than the birds, so they shouldn't worry. Jesus wants us to remember that he will comfort and provide for us even more than he does for the wild ravens.

SHOW: 41 David fleeing from Saul

These truths were something that David had to learn through some very hard times. He had to face many enemies and flee for his life when King Saul wanted to kill him. David understood that God was with him even through the hard times. This brought him great comfort, which we read about in Psalm 23.

SHOW: 42 Shadow the raven

Today, as we talk more about this world we live in and some of the things that make us anxious, we'll be reminded that even if we're walking through a shadowy valley, meaning hard times, God is always with us. Shadow the raven, who lives in the Black Valley of Ireland, reminds us of that. God can give you comfort

and strength to go from fear to peace. How can you rely on God and seek his comfort? I hope you'll think about that today.

Drama (12 minutes)

Announcements (time varies)

Cool Contests (3 minutes)

Announce the winners of today's contests. Remind everyone to learn tomorrow's verses and complete their Go and Do activities. Pass out the Bible Challenge and have them bring it back completed tomorrow.

Prayer

Takeaway Time (2–3 minutes)

Before we go, let's say Psalm 23:1–4 together. Recite Psalm 23:1–4 with hand motions.

God wants us to talk to him when we feel scared or anxious. Let him know how you're feeling and why. Ask for his help. Think about how good he is. Think about the blessings he has given you. Study the Bible to find out more about who he is. Be thankful. God wants to help you have peace rather than fear.

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing

Day 4: Opening Assembly

Welcome (2 minutes)

Props: Large, empty to-go cup from a coffee shop; optional: shirt with a tea stain for Person 2

Person 1: Welcome back to *Emerald Crossing*! Turn to Person 2. You got your "cuppa," I see.

Person 2: Yeah, I went to the coffee shop, and it was . . . something.

Person 1: Why? What happened?

Person 2: Well, the barista started pouring my cup of tea, but then she got distracted talking to another customer. Before I knew it, the cup was overflowing and running all over the floor!

Person 1: Oh my! So it was an *overflowing* cup of tea?

Person 2: It sure was. I was so annoyed. The cup was so full it didn't just go on the floor—it spilled on me too. I've been grumbling about it ever since.

Person 1: Well, you know, instead of grumbling, God wants us to be grateful (thankful) for all the blessings he gives us and for who he is to us.

Person 2: I guess you're right. I did get my tea, after all.

Person 1: You know, that makes me think about the verse in Psalm 23 that talks about how God fills our cup to overflowing with good things.

Person 2: Like coffee or tea?

Person 1: Like anything good. Every good thing we experience is from God—hugs, laughter, food, and God himself, who is good. We'll hear lots more about going from grumbling to grateful today as we think on the goodness of God. But let's sing right now!

Song (3 minutes)

Provider Song

Song (3 minutes)

The Lord Himself will Lead Me

Mission Moment (5 minutes)

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

Well, we've been collecting coins for four days now. Can anyone tell me what we're collecting coins for? Pause for participation. Right! We're raising money to provide meals for hungry kids! It just takes 25 cents to provide a meal! And when a family receives a meal, they also hear the good news that Jesus loves them!

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Hugo slide

Hugo is a boy from El Salvador, a country in Latin America, just southeast of Mexico.

SHOW: Video 4—Hugo

Country: El Salvador

Problem: Generational Poverty

Have you ever learned something so incredible that you just couldn't keep it to yourself? You had to tell everyone you knew about it? *Pause for participation.* That's exactly how Hugo's family felt when they learned about Jesus' love for them! And thanks to the Food Paks provided by the nearby local church, Hugo knows he will have food to eat. He has the hope that one day, he may be able to break the cycle of poverty.

So it's been a few days since you started raising money to provide meals for kids like Hugo. Are you excited to hear how many meals we can provide so far? *Pause for participation.* I don't think you sound very excited. Are you excited to hear how many meals we can provide so far? *Pause for participation.* The good news is you have raised enough to provide ____ meals! To calculate your VBS

meal progress, multiply the dollars raised by four. You guys are doing amazing! **Keep it up!**

SHOW: Daily Count Day 4 slide with current meal count filled in.

And remember, these coins are doing more than providing meals! The pastors and church volunteers delivering these meals will also share the hope of the gospel with children and families in need.

Tomorrow is the last day to turn in your coins. So see if there is anyone else you can ask to help donate coins or if there are any chores you can do to earn extra money.

Announcements (time varies) **Show Background**

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing → Transitions

Day 4: Closing Assembly

Song (3 minutes)

Emerald Crossing

Song (3 minutes)

Trust In God

Creature Feature: Pesky the Woolly Aphid (5 minutes)

Use the **PRESENTATION SLIDES** or show the **CREATURE FEATURE VIDEO**. Shorten this script as needed.

SHOW: 43 Creature Feature title slide

I've got a tricky question for you. What likes to eat plants and is covered in white fluff? On the count of three, shout out your answer! One, two, three! *Pause.* Did you say sheep? That's . . . not it!

No, today's animal is smaller than a sheep. Much smaller. Here it is! *Hold up a stick.* No, it isn't a stick. Hmm, we might need this to see it. *Hold up a magnifying glass and look through it at the stick.*

SHOW: 44 Woolly aphid

This is the woolly aphid! A teeny-tiny species of plant-eating insect that can be found in several places around the world, including Ireland.

These guys have six legs, a pair of antennae (*put your fingers up to your head like antennae*), which help them to feel and smell, and three major body segments: the head, thorax, and abdomen. Hey! Let's sing about that.

Have everyone stand up and sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes," substituting head, thorax, abdomen. Sing at a normal speed, then do it a couple more times, faster and faster.

Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen
Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen
Pair of antennae and six legs
Head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen

Now, hopefully, you can see where they get the name woolly aphid. Their "wool" is not the same as sheep's wool, however. It serves a different purpose.

Look at your neighbor's hair. What color is it? *Pause.* Well, a sheep's wool is its hair!

But woolly aphids' "wool" is actually a waxy substance. Instead of keeping them warm, the woolly aphid's wool helps hide the aphid.

SHOW: 45 Woolly aphid predators

You see, if you're that tiny, you could be lunch for a lot of different animals! But when an animal sees a pile of white fluff, it doesn't look good to eat, so it's tricked into staying away.

SHOW: 46 Katydid mandibles

As mentioned, woolly aphids like to eat plants. They can't chew them up, though, because they don't have mandibles, which are kind of like jaws on an insect. Do you see the mandibles on this katydid?

SHOW: 47 Woolly aphid mouth

Instead of mandibles, God created woolly aphids with a mouth that looks like a straw. Do you think it would be cool to have a mouth like a straw? *Pause.* We sometimes use straws to drink juice. The woolly aphid also uses its straw-like mouth to drink juice. Yum! Plant smoothie! Woolly aphids drink sap from the stems of plants.

SHOW: 48 Dead plant

Woolly aphids need to eat, but their eating habits can be very bad for the plants they're eating. These guys can even disfigure or kill a plant when they eat it. Now, you may be thinking, "How can such a small bug kill a whole plant?" Well, usually, these aphids don't eat alone. They swarm!

SHOW: 49 Woolly aphid swarm

There can be thousands of these bugs on one plant at a time. And since they drink the sap the plant needs to grow, the plant can get sick or die. Sometimes, these guys will destroy plants that are important to humans. Their feeding habits can also spread yucky diseases or fungi. While cute, these bugs can be pesky pests. You might say they're a plant's enemy.

SHOW: 50 David

Sometimes, we can feel like we're swarmed and overwhelmed by trouble and danger, like a plant swarmed by aphids. David certainly understood this feeling. He faced powerful enemies and dangers at every turn. It could have been easy for David to lose heart and grumble and complain about the circumstances he found himself in. But that's not what David did. Instead, David remembered God loved and cared for him and was with him even in difficult times. By trusting in God, David was able to experience gratitude in his life for all God had done for him, instead of grumbling and complaining. His cup was running over with God's goodness.

SHOW: 51 Pesky the woolly aphid

Today's animal pal, Pesky the woolly aphid, is here to remind us that when we're surrounded by tough times, God desires that we focus on his goodness rather than complaining about our circumstances. So take some

time today to think about how God has blessed you and what he has given you that you're thankful for!

Drama (12 minutes)

Announcements (time varies)

Cool Contests (3 minutes)

Announce the winners of today's contests. Remind them to learn tomorrow's verses, complete their Go and Do activities, and bring in their final mission money.

Prayer

Takeaway Time (2–3 minutes)

Before we go, let's try Psalm 23 together. We're almost to the end! Recite Psalm 23:1–5 together with hand motions.

Instead of being on the complain train, let's have an attitude of gratitude and focus on our overflowing cup of God's goodness.

Here's a special truth to remember through good times and hard times: God is good all the time, and all the time _____. Have them finish by saying, "God is good."

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing

Day 5: Opening Assembly

Welcome (2 minutes)

Props: Dish or pan with real or imaginary Jello Jigglers

Person 1 comes in at the normal pace. Person 2 walks out carefully, tentatively, slowly poking along behind Person 1.

Person 1: Say to the kids: Good day to ya, lads and lasses! Welcome back to *Emerald Crossing*! Look back and talk to Person 2. You coming? What's going on back there?

Person 2: I just made some Jello Jigglers and they're really shaky.

Person 1: Ahh, so you're trying to walk carefully so you don't mess them up.

Person 2: Yeah, I'm not sure if these are gonna survive. What do you think?

Person 1: Go over and peer down in the dish. If you have real ones, show them to the kids. Otherwise, just pretend. Wow, they really are shaky.

Person 2: I know. I'm not sure if I followed the instructions right. I was going to serve them at VBS today, but now I'm not sure.

Person 1: Hmm . . . you want to go from shaky to sure. That reminds me of something.

Person 2: Another jiggly food? Uh . . . cheesecake?

Person 1: Nope—what we're talking about today at VBS. Psalm 23:6 tells us we will surely dwell in the house of

the Lord forever. It's not a shaky promise from God—it's for sure for any who believe in Jesus.

Person 2: I love that God is a promise keeper. If he promises something, it will happen.

Person 1: You better believe it! Well, maybe you should put those in the fridge for now, and we'll go ahead and get started with our singing.

Do so, while Person 2 runs backstage and comes back out without the Jello Jigglers.

Song (3 minutes)

Provider Song

Song (3 minutes)

Goodness + Mercy

Mission Moment (5 minutes)

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

This week, Quinn has introduced us to children all over the world who are facing poverty and don't have enough money to meet their needs. But we've done more than learn about kids in need, right? Pause for participation. Did we learn how we can help them too? Pause for participation. That's right! We did!

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Sebastian slide

Today, we aren't going to learn about a child living on the other side of the world. This child lives in the United States.

SHOW: Video 5—Sebastian

Country: United States

Problem: Invisible Poor

Be sensitive to the population of children you are serving. Rephrase as necessary to be sure all children feel welcome and included. For someone like Sebastian, it can be difficult to tell if he is in need. He wears a uniform to school just like the rest of his classmates, so he doesn't look any different. But it also means that no one knows he needs help. This is why the local church is so important; they are working hard to learn about families like Sebastian's who need help.

You've also been working hard this week, collecting coins to provide meals for children like the ones you met. You met Hani in Ethiopia, Ivanna in Romania, Luciana in the Philippines, Hugo in El Salvador, and Sebastian in the United States. But the coins you collected this week aren't just going to help them.

The coins you are collecting will support Children's Hunger Fund, and they partner with churches in over 30 countries around the world! Those churches provide food to families in need and share the hope of Jesus. Every box of food means a chance to share the gospel.

Your quarters are making a huge difference! Isn't that amazing?

Are you ready to see how many meals we can provide this week? Pause for participation.

The grand total number of meals we can provide this week is ____ meals! To calculate your VBS meal progress, multiply the dollars raised by four.

SHOW: Daily Count Day 5 slide with current meal count filled in

You did such an amazing job collecting coins! This can feed so many children in need. But do you know what's even better? Because of you, more children and their families will learn about the love of Jesus.

But it doesn't have to end here! Did you know you can keep sending meals to children in need even after this week? You can keep making a difference for children worldwide with Children's Hunger Fund. Ask your parents how you can continue sharing meals and Christ's love with children in poverty.

Announcements (time varies)

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

Emerald Crossing → Transition?

Day 5: Closing Assembly

Song (3 minutes)

The Lord is my shepherd

Song (3 minutes)

TRUST IN GOD

Creature Feature: Shirley the Highland Cow (5 minutes)

Use the PRESENTATION SLIDES or show the CREATURE FEATURE VIDEO. Shorten this script as needed.

Props: Shaggy wig, a thick fleece jacket, raincoat

SHOW: 52 Creature Feature title slide

Come out wearing a shaggy wig. Run into something and say it's kind of hard to see where you are going. Take it off.

That shaggy hair reminds me of today's animal pal, the Highland cow.

SHOW: 53 Highland cow

The Highland cow is not originally from Ireland, although they're found there now. They originated in one of Ireland's neighboring countries: Scotland.

Highland cattle are a unique cattle breed known for their long horns and shaggy hair. Their hair is the longest of any domestic cattle breed in the world! Of course, it makes them look absolutely adorable, but it can also be used to make clothes.

What color do you think of when you think of a Highland cow? Pause.

SHOW: 54 Highland cow colors

Highland cattle have reddish hair, but they can also be black, white, yellow, dun (a dull grayish-brown), silver dun, or brindle (brownish with streaks of other color).

The most important function of this long hair is to keep the cattle toasty and dry, so God gave them two coats of hair. Put on the thick fleece jacket. The first is a shorter fluffy inner coat underneath that traps heat, kind of like this heavy fleece jacket. Put on the raincoat. The second is a long, oily outer coat that repels water like this raincoat. These layers keep the cows warm and waterproof! Staying warm is particularly important for these cattle because of where they live.

SHOW: 55 Highlands of Scotland

As their name suggests, they were bred to live in the highlands or mountainous areas of Scotland.

SHOW: 56 Highland cow in higher lands

The views in the higher lands of Ireland are beautiful, but it can be very windy, cold, and rainy. Thanks to their thick double coat, Highland cattle don't mind the harsh weather at all!

In the mountains, plants don't always grow as much as they do in lower grasslands, so these cows can't be picky

eaters. Not to worry, though, because God designed the Highland cattle to eat just about anything that grows up there. They're even able to eat poison ivy without any problems!

SHOW: 57 Highland cow comparison

Another thing that makes these Highland cattle suited for mountain living is their size. They aren't as big as many other cattle, so they aren't carrying as much weight climbing up and down the rocky hills. Although females can weigh up to 1,300 pounds, and males can weigh up to 2,000 pounds, these cattle have short, stocky legs that keep their weight close to the ground, making them very sure-footed!

SHOW: 58 Highland cow calf

Even a Highland calf can start roaming these hills within an hour of its birth. God designed Highland cattle so that no matter how rough the area is, they have what they need to help them thrive in their treacherous mountain homes.

SHOW: 59 David

When David thought of all God had done for him, he saw the same truth—that the Lord's presence provided everything he needed to make it through life. David looked back on how the Lord had saved him when he was lost, put him on the path of righteousness, calmed his fears, and filled his heart with gratitude. David's faith was sure because he knew he could trust God's goodness and mercy no matter what happened. God is always good and always full of mercy. David could trust God's promise that he would one day live forever in God's kingdom. God always keeps his promises.

When we praise and thank the Lord for what he has done for us, we grow in our faith in him. We move from

the shaky ground of our own thinking to the solid rock of trusting in the Lord's salvation and his Word.

SHOW: 60 Shirley the Highland cow

Today's animal pal, Shirley the Highland cow, who sometimes lives in the higher lands of Ireland, reminds us of that higher land all Christians can be sure of—heaven. We can trust the Lord to *surely* keep us all the way to his kingdom because God is a promise keeper.

Well, this week's Irish adventure sure has been fun! Remember to look at God's amazing creatures wherever you go and think about how they glorify him and remind us of his truth!

Drama (12 minutes)

Announcements (time varies)

Cool Contests (3 minutes)

Announce the winners of today's contests.

Prayer

Takeaway Time (2–3 minutes)

Before we go, let's try all of Psalm 23 together. Do you think you can do it? Here we go! Recite Psalm 23:1–6 together with hand motions.

I hope you keep saying Psalm 23 to yourself every day! Remember all the promises, hope, and help God gives us in this beautiful psalm! And remember that the most important question you can ask yourself is this: Is the Lord *my* shepherd?

Well, lads and lasses, it's been an amazing week together at *Emerald Crossing*! Thanks for joining us. See you next time!

Emerald Crossing