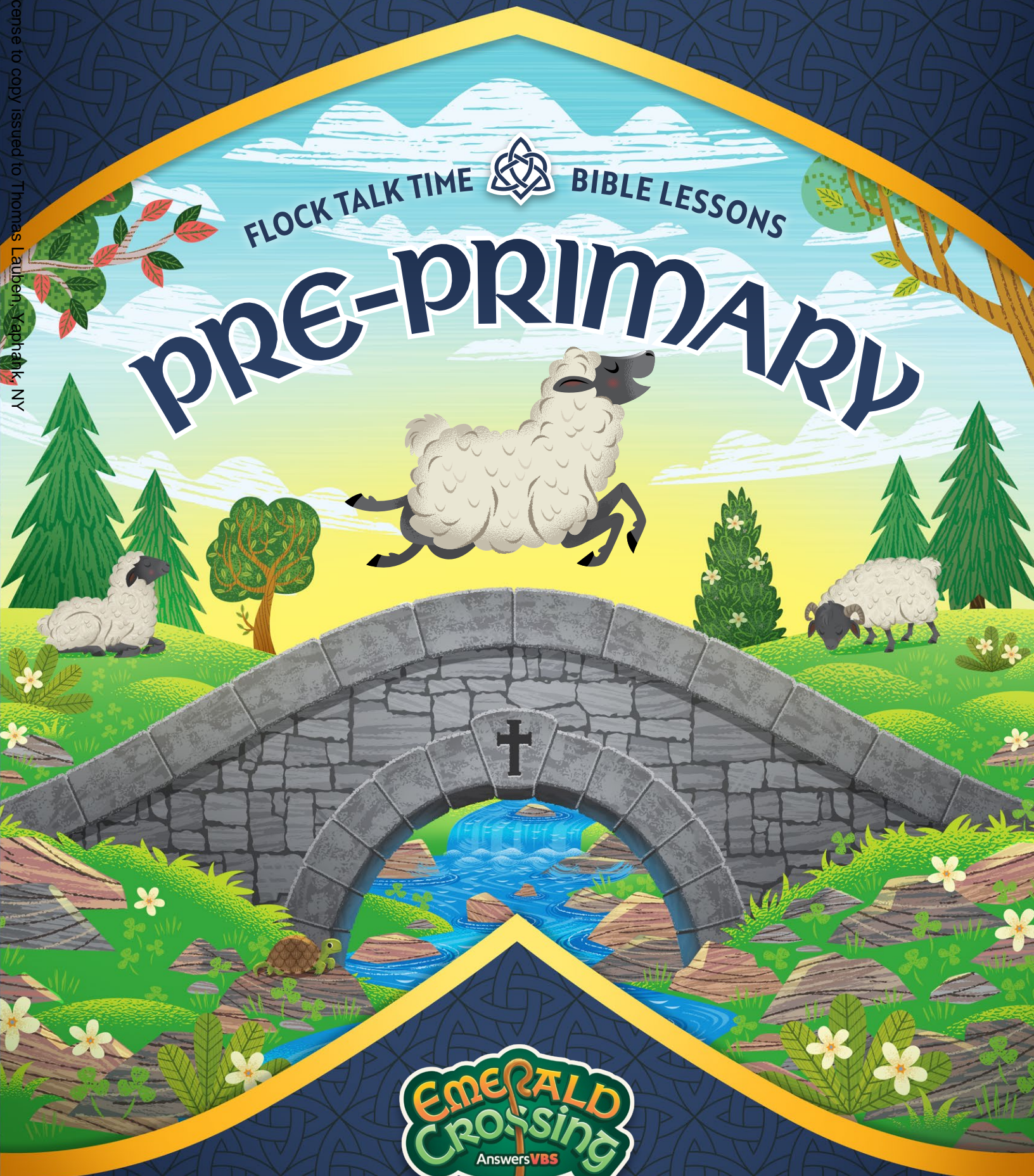


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FLOCK TALK TIME  BIBLE LESSONS

# pre-PRIMARY



**EMERALD**  
**Crossing**  
Answers **VBS**



Visit the Teaching folder at:

**[AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources](https://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources)**

- Animal Pal Coloring Pages
- Memory Verse Coloring Pages
- Presentation Images
- Puppet Scripts (Primary, Pre-Primary, Toddler)
- Teaching Patterns (all age groups)
- Classroom Decorations



# Course Overview

## Theme Verse: Psalm 23:1

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	
<b>Titles</b>	Lost to Found	Wrong Path to Right Path	Fearful to Peaceful	Grumbling to Grateful	Shaky to Sure	
<b>Locations</b>	Sheep Farm in Donegal	Green Pastures in County Galway	Black Valley in County Kerry	Enemy Territory in Dublin	Higher Lands in County Antrim	
<b>Bible Passages</b>	Psalm 23:1 1 Samuel 17:34–37	Psalm 23:2–3 Samuel 17	Psalm 23:4 1 Samuel 19–23	Psalm 23:5 2 Samuel 9:3-7 1 Samuel 16:1–13	Psalm 23:6 1 Chronicles 22	
<b>Lesson Focus</b>	Like David, I can be a child of God and have the Lord as <i>my</i> shepherd.	Like David, I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.	Like David, I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I'm feeling anxious or afraid.	Like David, I can have an attitude of gratitude in every situation.	Like David, I can be on the lookout for God's goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.	
<b>Apologetics Content</b>	Is the Lord a distant God? Did he create the universe and then just sit back and watch?	Is the Bible a trustworthy guide to lead me through life?	Why do we even have hard times?	Are good things because of "good luck" or a good God?	What should rainbows remind us of?	
<b>Memory Verses</b>	Psalm 23:1	Psalm 23:2	Psalm 23:4	Psalm 23:5	Psalm 23:6	
<b>Names of God</b>	Shepherd	Leader	Comforter	Provider	Promise Keeper	
<b>Animal Pals</b>	Mia the Connemara Sheep	Guide the Border Collie	Shadow the Raven	Pesky the Woolly Aphid	Shirley the Highland Cow	
<b>Exploration Stations</b>	<b>Discovery Center</b>	Sheep Memory Game	Can "Ewe" Guess the Smell?	Ewe-nique Eyesight	Shaving Cream Shearing	Feely Meely
	<b>Wet Sensory Table</b>	Sheep Washing	Still Water	Take Away the Shadows	Filled to Overflowing	Rainbows
	<b>Dry Sensory Table</b>	Lost Sheep	Play Paths	Highs and Lows	Bugs, Bugs, Bugs	Higher Lands
	<b>Dramatic Play</b>	Fitzpatrick's Farm	Fitzpatrick's Farm	Fitzpatrick's Farm	Fitzpatrick's Farm	Fitzpatrick's Farm
	<b>Coloring Corner</b>	Psalm 23:1	Psalm 23:2	Psalm 23:4	Psalm 23:5	Psalm 23:6
<b>Celtic Corner Science</b>	Sticky Sheep	Growing Green Pastures	Shadows and Light	Oil and Water Mix-Up	Making Rainbows	
<b>Celtic Corner Crafts</b>	Baa-loved Sheep Keepsake Ornament—Shepherd's Staff	S.O.A.P. Bible Puffball Zipper Pull	"Don't Worry, Just Pray" Magnet Night-Light in the Darkness	Thankube You Prepare a Table Place Mat	Psalm 23 Sensory Book Rainbow Promise Crown	
<b>Green Meadow Games</b>	Sheep, Sheep, Shepherd Lost Sheep Hunt	Border Collie Tag David and Goliath	Shepherd's Staff Tag Irish Folk Dances	Shoo Fly! King David, May I?	Earthquake! Mad Cow	
<b>Still Water Snacks</b>	Cross Trail Mix Sweet Sheep	Scene 23:2 Border Collie Paw Print	Stuffed Staff Bird's Nest	Piled-High Popcorn Full Float	Cow Patties Spud Circles	
<b>Cool Contests</b>	Guess the Rainbow Skittles	Group Spirit Day	Dress-Up Day	Bible Challenge	Mission Money Mania	



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### Pre-Primary Teacher Guide

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# Handy Helps

## Top o' the Morning to Ya!

It's early morning on the Emerald Isle. Gaze ahead as the sun rises on the cool, green pastures dotted with grazing sheep. Listen to the waves crash at the staggering Cliffs of Moher as their towering crags ascend majestically from the sea. Catch the earthy scent of sheep and cattle, fertile meadows, and dense forests. Step into a local restaurant and taste the rich flavors of a land known for its butter and potatoes. Run your hand over the soft wool of a pastured lamb or the rough, stony exterior of an age-old castle. Tune in as lively folk music entertains and delights all who listen.

From the lush meadows of its countryside to the cobblestone streets of its cities, there is something to delight the senses everywhere we turn in Ireland. So journey with us to *Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure Through Psalm 23*. Every stop along our path will teach us about the Good Shepherd and how he cares for his sheep. Like David discovered throughout his life, first as a shepherd and later as a king, we'll discover important truths such as:

- I can be a child of God and have the Lord as my shepherd.
- I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.
- I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I'm feeling anxious or afraid.
- I can have an attitude of gratitude in every situation.
- I need to be on the lookout for God's goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.

Beauty and adventure await us each day at Emerald Crossing, where lads and lasses will gather at the **Emerald Isle Assembly**. This high-energy beginning includes wacky intros, lively songs, a Mission Moment, and prayer.

Then they're off to rotate through five fun sites:

**Flock Talk Time**, where Bible lessons are taught in creative, hands-on ways.

**Celtic Corner Science and Crafts**, where kids will create their own crafts and explore God's world through science activities.

**Still Water Snacks**, where kids enjoy scrumptious Irish fare.

**Green Meadow Games**, the rambunctious rec time where kids join in some lively competition.

**Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory**

**Verses**, where kids sing songs, learn their memory verses, or go in-depth with the Mission Moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund.

Finally, everyone heads back to the **Emerald Isle Assembly** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama. Lads and lasses will be introduced to an Irish sheep farmer named Grandpa Fitz, who runs Stillwater Farm. Through some challenges, some fun, and a few big surprises, Grandpa Fitz shows how the Lord has been his comforter and guide his whole life.

So pull on your work boots, grab your walking staff, and get ready for a grand ol' time at *Emerald Crossing!*

### Our Goal

We are so thankful for how God has chosen to use the Answers VBS programs over the past years! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place? And why are we still at it by God's grace?

Our primary goal has always been to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal. They're not only awesome—we love 'em!—but they're also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be softhearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they're children, so it's apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator, and Jesus said to let them come to him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, we combine a biblically rich VBS with off-the-charts, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, we don't want to sacrifice rich teaching. But it's also crucial that the most exciting book in the world not come across as boring or irrelevant. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun.

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it. May God richly bless your VBS. We're praying for you!

# Your Role

Your role as the teacher is outlined in the following pages and includes planning and preparing the daily lessons, enthusiastically engaging in teaching the lessons, and praying over all aspects of your job.

Read this guide carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

So get ready! Get set! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives.

## Frequently Asked Questions

The content of *Emerald Crossing* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).

## Terms to Know

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here is a list of some of the most common terms you should know.

**Lads and Lasses:** Terms used when referring to children during VBS week.

**Travel Groups:** Groups of children (individual classes) named after animals that live in Ireland, such as Hedgehogs, Red Deer, Sheepdogs, and Irish Hares.

**Group Guides:** Group leaders who lead the travel groups from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required for this position.

**Flock Talk Time:** Bible and apologetics lesson time.

**Shepherds:** Teachers of the Flock Talk Time.

**Celtic Corner Science and Crafts:** Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

**Still Water Snacks:** Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

**Green Meadow Games:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

**Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory**

**Verses:** Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

**Good as Gold Memory Verse:** Daily Bible verse to learn.

**Animal Pals:** Our friendly animal mascots that remind us of the main theme of each day.

**Toddlers:** 2–4-year-olds.

**Pre-Primaries:** 4–6-year-olds or children ages 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

**Primaries:** 6–9-year-olds or children who have completed grades 1–3.

**Juniors:** 9–12-year-olds or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multiage K–6 travel groups, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

# Top 20 Pre-Primary Teaching Tips

1. Pray and study God's Word. That is your most important preparation. God has entrusted you with the awesome privilege of opening his Word and sharing it daily with the children, so be well prepared. "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).
2. Read through all your lesson plans well in advance and become familiar with the resources downloaded from [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources](https://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources). Begin to pray and plan now, then continue to pray during and after VBS.
3. In this guide:
  - » Teaching tips are marked with a ✦.
  - » Materials are listed next to each activity.
  - » The "teacher says" portion is bold.
4. You may want to assign the task of gathering supplies for all the teachers to one person or have the teachers divide up the supply list, with each being responsible for multiples of certain items. It's also helpful to get all the supplies ready in containers ahead of time rather than gathering them day-by-day the week of VBS.
5. See Decorating Decisions for a picture and description of the teaching set. Also, when setting up the room, you may want to clear away tables and chairs depending on room size and number of children expected.
6. Modify the Exploration Stations as your situation warrants. Use as suggested or incorporate one or more ideas into the lesson time to do with the whole group together.
7. Ask group guides to help man the Exploration Stations each day. Post the directions and teaching tie-ins at each station every day as easy references for your helpers.
8. A puppet is used daily at some point during the lesson. It may also be used to welcome the children, sing a song, or review a memory verse. The puppet can come up from a puppet area if there are two of you to do the puppet skit. If working alone, the puppet can come up from behind a suitcase with the lid flipped up.
9. Attend the Teacher Workshop and the Gospel Workshop. Be prepared to share the good news of salvation!
10. Dress as if you are a modern-day farmer/shepherd in rural Ireland. This can include a T-shirt and hat (see Resource Catalog), a vest or sturdy shirt over the T-shirt, jeans, and a staff. You may even want to include a rain jacket and rain boots or hiking boots as it rains a lot in Ireland. Take on a persona to bring lessons to life. Some teachers enjoy making up a fun name, adopting an Irish accent, or adding something new to their "costume" each day, such as adding a small animal pal stuffie to various pockets in a vest. Teach in a way that makes you feel comfortable.
11. Think safety. Read the [Child Safety Precautions](#) file for more information.
12. Use your Bible throughout the lessons at the appropriate times. Bookmark the passages for quick access. Show the importance of the Scriptures through your facial expressions and your actions.
13. Children will be at various levels of spiritual comprehension. Pray for the Lord to take the message and do with it as he wills in the heart of each child.
14. Call the children by name as you interact with them. Name tags help with this.
15. Show love. All children, regardless of age or appearance, need to be loved. Greet them warmly each day and always be ready with smiles, encouraging words, and appropriate hugs. Be aware of your church's appropriate touching policies.
16. Be all there. Try to leave behind whatever is currently going on in your life and focus your attention on the children under your care.
17. Notice the good. Children want attention and will sometimes resort to acting up in an effort to receive attention, even if it is negative attention. Be proactive by noticing and praising the things they do right. Be an encourager.
18. Children generally rise to the level expected of them, so challenge them to work on memory verses and complete their take-home Student Guides.
19. Use brown lunch bags labeled with the child's name to send everything home each day.
20. Have fun! Teaching should be a joy for you. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

# Tips for Managing a Group of Kids

Kids are fun, and kids have energy! Prepare to confidently lead them using the following strategies.

## Attention-Getters

**Call and Response**—The teacher will teach the kids that when she says something, they should reply with something else. Practice the following ideas so they know your expectations for responding to them.

- **Teacher:** Where are my sheep?  
**Kids:** Everybody sleep! (they sit still and close eyes)
- **Teacher:** Potato, pot-ah-to!  
**Kids:** Tomato, tom-ah-to!
- **Teacher:** Shamrock!  
**Kids:** Sham-roll!
- **Teacher:** Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo . . .  
**Kids:** Violet!
- **Teacher:** Emerald!  
**Kids:** Isle!  
**Teacher:** Emerald!  
**Kids:** Isle!  
**Teacher:** Shh!

**Rainstorm**—Use your fingers, hands, legs, and feet to simulate rain that goes from very light to heavy and back to very light. Start with silence then rub hands together for the wind. Snap fingers for light rain then pat your legs for a heavier rain. Clap hands and add stomping feet for heaviest rain. Do in reverse to wind back down to no rain.

**Rhythm Claps**—The teacher claps a little rhythm and the kids clap the exact rhythm back. Vary the clapping patterns.

**Countdown**—Hold up five fingers and start to count down from five to one. By the count of one, they need to be completely quiet.

**Soft Talk**—Start talking about something important very softly or in a whisper. They will often get quiet to hear what you are saying. Or say, “If you can hear me, clap once.” Continue softly with other commands.

**Flash the Lights**—This is a good signal to listen up.

## Lining Up to Walk Through the Building

**If You**—Say different categories for lining up in fun ways, such as the following:

- “If you’re wearing green today, line up. Now, if you’re wearing \_\_\_, line up.”
- “If your birthday is during the summer, line up. Now, if your birthday is during the school year, line up.”
- “If you have a dog, line up. Now, if you have a cat, line up. Now, if you have no pets, line up.”
- “If your first name starts with A–L, line up. Now, if your first name starts with M–Z, line up.”

## Proactive Tips

**Be Prepared**—One of the best ways to ward off discipline problems is to be prepared. Think through and organize your schedule, leaving no downtime. Keep things moving! This takes more effort on your part, but it’s worth it.

**Active Participation**—Keeping kids actively engaged in the lesson is perhaps the best thing you can do to keep the class from getting rowdy. The lessons are written to be creative, fun, and full of active participation. Play the games, act out the Bible accounts, and do the other ideas listed. Occupy kids’ minds and attention with good stuff!

**Helpers**—Involve the kids. Let them be helpers. Some kids just want to feel needed, so giving them a responsibility is a way to show you trust them. Try putting them in charge of a simple task, like helping others learn memory verses, passing out papers, or holding a poster for the teacher. Sometimes a simple task can keep them busy and make them feel important!

**Use Humor**—Kids of all ages love to laugh! Have fun together. If you see a situation is getting tense or a child is getting upset for some reason, try thinking of a way to lighten the mood with humor.

## Calming Rowdiness

**Don’t Yell**—Kids may respond at first if someone yells, but they eventually dismiss it. Try some of these other ideas instead.

**Separate Kids**—Separate kids who misbehave around each other but encourage problem-solving when possible. “What are some things we could do to help you and \_\_\_ get along?”

**Give Choices**—Avoid power struggles by giving choices. If a child is resistant to doing something you’ve asked, try your command another way. “You can either sit with the rest of the group and listen or sit with \_\_\_ (leader’s name) at the back of the room.”

**Praise in Public, Correct in Private**—If someone does need correction, be careful not to embarrass him in front of his peers. If you need to talk to a child about a misbehavior, pull him aside while everyone else is busy. Kids will be less defensive if they don’t feel they have to “save face” in front of their peers and if they feel you really care and aren’t just coming down on them.

**Know Church Policies**—Know your church’s policy for severe behavior issues. Do you take the child to your VBS director? Do you alert the child’s parents? Do you involve other staff members? Be prepared.

# Age-Level Characteristics

Kids are awesome! Each one is unique and is a special creation from the hand of our amazing Creator. With all their uniqueness, however, they also share some common characteristics. That doesn't mean every child always exhibits the following characteristics at the suggested age, but these guidelines can be a benchmark to use when looking at characteristics of children as a whole. Understanding how God has wired different age groups can help us be more effective in teaching and interacting with them.

First, you'll see general characteristics of children and then specific characteristics of Pre-Primaries (ages 4–6).

## Characteristics of Children

Children have some common characteristics.

- They are born sinners (Romans 3:23).
- God has given each a conscience, and they generally want good to win over evil.
- God has shown himself to all children through his creation, making it obvious to all that there is a Creator.
- Children enjoy active learning—moving around, seeing things, touching things, smelling and hearing things, and being involved.
- Children need to be loved, encouraged, and praised.
- Children are rapidly growing and changing.
- Children trust the adults who are responsible for them.
- Children can get discouraged with criticism and failure.
- Children are eager to learn and are curious about the world and God.

## Characteristics of Pre-Primaries

### Physical Characteristics

Pre-Primaries are active and more confident in physical activities like jumping, hopping on one foot, and walking backward. They love to be moving. They're improving in hand-eye coordination. They're rapidly growing and may need rest after active play.

### Takeaways for Us

Pre-Primaries like to play hard so keep them moving with short, simple games and activities. They may need to sit and rest for a brief time afterward.

### Emotional/Social Characteristics

Pre-Primaries are less fearful than Toddlers but still often exhibit common fears, such as fear of dogs and the dark. They can have emotional extremes and are testing others to see who can be controlled. They want to please adults

and want praise. They will often mimic adults' behaviors. They like imaginative play. Pre-Primaries can handle small tasks and levels of responsibility.

### Takeaways for Us

- Let them be helpers. Give them simple jobs to do and have them help pick up things and straighten the room at the end of the lesson. Let them know they've done a good job.
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

### Spiritual/Mental Characteristics

Pre-Primaries talk a lot and ask a lot of questions, including questions about God. They understand that sin is disobeying God's commands. They need a lot of guidance in tasks but can also follow a simple series of directions. They have an attention span of approximately five minutes. They enjoy doing new things and hearing stories and songs. They're not always able to tell the difference between reality and fantasy. They're developing attitudes toward right and wrong and can do basic memory work.

### Takeaways for Us

- In downtime, give them time to ask questions. Be ready to patiently answer. But while you are teaching, be careful you don't get so wrapped up in letting them talk that the lesson doesn't happen!
- Vary activities often. The longer an activity goes, the wigglier the children become!
- When engaged in pretend activities, name them as such (e.g., "Let's pretend to be explorers!"). At the same time, point out often that God's Word is not pretend but true.
- Repetition of songs and stories works well, and Pre-Primaries enjoy it.
- Sing the memory verse songs with them. They will be able to learn at least parts of the verses by the end of the week.
- Use visuals.
- Teach them about sin and asking God for forgiveness.
- Show interest in each child, letting them know you care.
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully.
- Show care and respect for your Bible and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

# Flock Talk Time

As we open God's Word in our Flock Talk Time, we will mine the depths of Psalm 23.

The lesson time is written as a 35–40 minute period, divided into two segments: Exploration Stations (15–20 minutes) and Lesson Time (15–20 minutes). You can either keep your group together for the stations and lesson time or divide the group in two, with each half switching places after 15–20 minutes.

If Exploration Stations aren't possible, simply choose one or more of the station activities to incorporate into your lesson time as a group activity, rather than having a separate area for them.

## Exploration Station Time

There are five stations to choose from: Discovery Center, Wet Sensory Table, Dry Sensory Table, Dramatic Play, and Coloring Corner. These stations can be in the same room as the lesson time or in an adjoining room. If both the stations and the lesson time are in the same room, set them up in opposite ends of the room.

When the children enter the stations area, you may want to have them first sit while you briefly explain each station and teaching tie-in. Then the children may rotate in small groups through each station every few minutes, or they may independently move from one to another, which is what our test churches do. It's good to photocopy the directions and teaching tie-ins for each station and leave them at the appropriate stations for group guides to reinforce. The children don't need to do every station each day. Send the coloring page home daily, colored or uncolored.

See the Exploration Stations supply list on the back cover for a list of the supplies needed each day. Post the **signs** with each station's name.

For the sensory tables, use small wading pools or large, clear, under-the-bed storage containers. Place them on a

plastic tarp or tablecloth to catch spills. Partially fill one with water for the wet station. Partially fill the other with kinetic sand or play sand (not regular sand) as listed for the dry station.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for more specifics on setting up the Dramatic Play area to look like the inside of an old Irish farmhouse kitchen and the Coloring Corner to look like a sheep pen.

## Lesson Time

The lesson time is divided into three sections:

**Introduce It!** (5 minutes or less): This is a time to begin the lesson in an interesting way.

**Teach It!** (10–15 minutes): This deepens the lesson, with costumed teachers sharing the Bible account and apologetics information.

**Apply It!** (Remaining class time): This is the memory verse review and practical application time.

Ideas are given within the lessons to adapt the activities to your time period. There are many possibilities. Because of the content-rich lessons, a little extra time is great if you can swing it! But if not, there are lots of options, so you may want to shorten or skip some activities.

The lesson format is written for a two-person team. One person serves as Teacher One and the other as Teacher Two or the Teaching Assistant. The format also works if teaching alone. If team teaching, decide ahead of time who will teach what. If teaching alone, either find someone to help with the daily puppet script or work the puppet yourself, using a suitcase with the lid flipped up. Have the puppet appear from behind the lid. Shortened (20 minute), **one-person lessons** (without Exploration Stations or a puppet) are available to download.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for specifics on decorating the lesson room.

# Memory Verse Songs

Encourage your kids to learn their memory verses the easy way—by singing them! The contemporary memory verse songs are produced by Seeds Kids Worship (ESV) and the traditional memory verse songs are produced by Majesty Music (KJV). Both are available with the Music Leader Download, which comes with the purchase of a Super Starter Kit. They feature the full verses. (Pre-Primates and Toddlers are taught condensed versions of these

verses.) If you choose to use these songs, we suggest using them during the memory verse time in each lesson. The memory verse songs and the theme songs are together on one student CD. Student CDs in packs of 10 are available if you would like each student to have a copy of the songs (Contemporary—1230610; Traditional—1230620). Songs are also available to stream—see [AnswersVBS.com/streaming](http://AnswersVBS.com/streaming).

# Special Needs

The *Special Needs Teacher Supplement* (1230530) can help you accommodate and modify these lessons for those who need it, either in your regular classroom or in a self-contained classroom.

# Sample Schedule

Below is a sample schedule of a typical day at VBS. Check with your director for a copy of the schedule and room assignment for your VBS.

Time	Group One	Group Two	Group Three
9:00–9:15	Emerald Isle Assembly—Opening (Everyone together)		
9:20–10:00	Flock Talk Time	Celtic Corner Science and Crafts	Green Meadow Games and Still Water Snacks
10:05–10:45	Green Meadow Games and Still Water Snacks	Flock Talk Time	Celtic Corner Science and Crafts
10:50–11:30	Celtic Corner Science and Crafts	Green Meadow Games and Still Water Snacks	Flock Talk Time
11:35–Noon	Emerald Isle Assembly—Closing (Everyone together)		

## Student Extras

Check with your VBS director and choose one or more of these fun optional materials to give to your students so they can take home a review of the daily lesson content.

Also, decide with your director when it will work best to give out the various items: during lesson time, during snack time (a good time to review!), or at the end of the day (a good time to pass out bookmarks, Student Guides, and other items that need to make it home safely).

**Simple Songs:** The songs referenced throughout this guide that are for Pre-Primaries and Toddlers may be streamed on your personal device from AnswersVBS.com/streaming. They are also available on a separate Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410). You may want to purchase a CD for each child.

**Student Guides:** These daily, age-appropriate take-home papers feature a lesson review activity, the memory verse, and a suggested verse review game. The “Go and Do” section parallels the Apply It! part of the lesson. You can either go over these during class time or send them home with the students to be completed with a parent or caretaker. This is what our test churches do. If you send the guides home, motivate the kids to do them because they are full of good information. Give them to the group guides to pass out at the end of the day. Then have the guides check with the kids the following day to see how they did and make a big deal about their hard work. The Student Guides are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary ESV (1230730)
- Pre-Primary KJV (1231340)

**Emerald Isle Water Board Book:** These fun, interactive board books feature the daily memory verses and animal pals. Kids can use the included water pen to color the pages and reveal beautiful images! Check with your VBS director to find out when to give these to the kids. They can receive them at any time during the first day. You can review them with the kids during the Apply It! section of the lesson if you have time, or group guides can go over them during snack time. These are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary/Toddler ESV (1230900)
- Pre-Primary/Toddler KJV (1231380)

**Emerald Crossing Maps:** Use these maps with stickers as a fun, daily review of each day’s stop in Ireland.

- Pack of 10 maps (1230780)

**Bookmarks:** These are available in packs of 10 and can be passed out at the end of class or at the end of the day.

- Gospel (1230760)—Day 1
- The Lord Is My Shepherd (1230770)—Day 5 or any day

# Decorating Decisions

A colorful and engaging environment helps children learn better, remember more, and leave with happy memories. So be creative and use the tools and ideas in this section to capture the imagination of the kids with your classroom decorations.



## Key Decorating Elements

### Classroom Set

To serve as a focal point for the teaching, the *Emerald Crossing* classroom set features an old stone bridge on a farm in the Irish countryside. The bridge is an essential part of the set and is used to display the daily theme. Place it in front of a backdrop of rolling green hills under a blue sky, then decorate with clouds, rocks, flowers, a stream, sheep, and other animals. **Clip art images** are available. Add a farmhouse or barn in the background if desired.

For the rolling hills, paint each a different shade of green to make the backdrop more colorful. Dot the hills with small painted sheep.

For the bridge, there are a number of ways to paint faux stone or brick. One simple method is to paint the entire surface a solid color, then after it has dried, use a

large rectangle sponge, dipped in a contrasting color, to create a brick or block pattern. For example, if you want the mortar to be black, paint the surface black, then use a lighter gray for the stones or bricks.

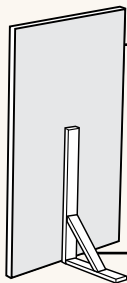
For a stream, buy a plastic tablecloth with a water motif and place it under/up against the bridge. Or purchase a blue metallic fringe curtain for your stream.

For clouds, make 2D versions by painting them on cardboard, cutting them out, and hanging them from fishing line. For 3D clouds, glue Poly-fil to white rice balls or white pizza boxes and hang from fishing line.

Add 2D or 3D flowers and cattails. Paint them for a 2D effect and attach to the set, or put fake flowers in baskets. Include some butterflies and birds as well.

Check out [Pinterest.com/answersvbs](https://www.pinterest.com/answersvbs) for colorful photos of decorations from our test churches!

Visit [YouTube.com/answersvbs](https://www.youtube.com/answersvbs) for how-to decorating videos!



Prop up your set and any freestanding decorations with wooden jacks made from 2 x 4-in., 2 x 3-in., or 2 x 2-in. boards. Smaller decorations will need smaller jacks and larger decorations will need larger ones. If necessary, jacks can be weighed down with bags of sand or road salt.

## Classroom Scene Setter

As a quick and easy alternative to making your own classroom set, a scene setter is available for purchase (1231260). Simply mount the panels onto a rigid material using double-sided carpet tape, clear packing tape, or staples, and prop them up. Or you can attach them directly to a wall with mounting putty, Mavalus tape, or double-sided tape on top of painter's tape. Add a few freestanding animals, clouds, rocks, or flowers to give it dimension.



## Crossing Signs

**Crossing Signs** are mounted to the bridge, then changed each day according to the theme. See the daily lessons for more information. You can reduce or enlarge the signs to fit your particular bridge. If purchasing the classroom scene setter, the crossing signs are included and just need to be cut out.

## Resource Posters

Contained in the **Teacher Resource Kit** are the teaching, memory verse, and animal pal posters. These are important visuals for the kids and should be displayed in an organized fashion on a wall (or walls) adjacent to your set. The memory verse posters should be stacked with Day 1 on top and Day 5 on the bottom so the whole psalm can be easily read in order. The Map of Ireland Poster (a teaching poster) should be mounted and hung on the wall. It consists of two posters that need to be put together to make one big map.

Each poster has a label at the bottom indicating which age group and day it is used with.

## Clip Art Images

Use a laptop connected to a projector or an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the **clip art images** onto roll paper, poster board, corrugated cardboard, or foam insulation sheets. Prop them up with wooden supports (jacks) or mount them to a wall.

### HOW TO ENLARGE AND TRANSFER CLIP ART

1. If not using a laptop and projector, then photocopy the clip art onto transparencies.
2. Place roll paper or a rigid material against a wall.
3. Using an overhead projector to enlarge the clip art, shine the image onto the paper or rigid material, adjusting it as necessary for the size desired.
4. Trace the image outlines onto the paper or rigid material.
5. Paint the image, if necessary, and cut out.

## Other Tips and Miscellaneous Ideas

- Think “farm” in your decorating—in particular, “Irish sheep farm.”
- Place a green grass rug or raised platform in front of your backdrop to create a stage.
- Prop up a staff (1230580) against the set.
- Place a kid's wheelbarrow off to the side.
- Place a few buckets and crates around.
- Kids love color, so make sure your classroom is colorful.
- Kids also love animals, so include some in your decorating. **Clip art images** of sheep, cows, chickens, a border collie, and other farm animals are available. Or use large stuffed farm animals.

## Tips for Painting Cardboard

- Add a thin (½-inch) black border to your painted props. This helps them stand out better and makes the colors appear more vibrant.
- Because corrugated cardboard tends to curl when only one side is painted, first apply a quick single coat of paint to the back.

## Puppet Stage

Because puppets are used daily in the Pre-Primary classrooms, you will need a puppet stage. Use one of the rolling hills on the set for this purpose and have the puppet appear from behind the hill. Or paint a separate hill that is propped by a jack and placed off to the side that is specifically for the puppet. Alternately, you can make a puppet stage out of a large cardboard box or a trifold display board. Cut out a rectangular hole in the box or display board, cover the hole with fabric, and then paint or decorate the outside.

# Exploration Stations

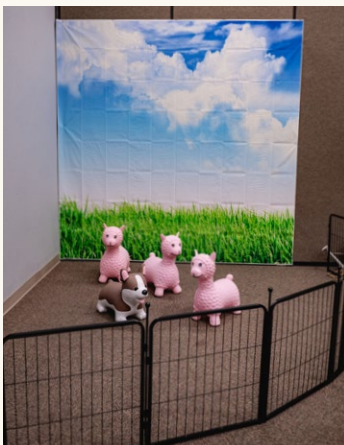
Pre-Primary classes enjoy Exploration Stations, which include a Discovery Center, two sensory tables, a Dramatic Play area, and a Coloring Corner. Further information about these stations can be found in the lessons, but check out the following for details on how to make the Dramatic Play area and Coloring Corner.

## Fitzpatrick's Farm Dramatic Play Area



The Dramatic Play area is a favorite and should resemble the inside of an old Irish farmhouse kitchen. Designate a corner of the room and decide how large of an area to decorate. Next, cover the walls with white or light tan plastic tablecloths or roll paper; or use rustic wood board or cobblestone wall scene setters or tablecloths purchased online. Make an old stove or fireplace from a large box or borrow/buy a wooden kitchen set or a vintage-looking plastic play kitchen. Make windows from light blue poster board (as if it's the sky) with plastic tablecloth "curtains." Put a child's wooden table and chairs in the center. Add baskets, a play broom, tin pails, a basket or crate with dress-up clothes, play food, play pots and pans, play plates and cups, a dog bed and stuffed animal dog, and other such items, keeping in mind that everything needs to be safe.

## Coloring Corner



Set up an area to resemble a sheep pen the kids can sit in as they color their memory verse pages. Possible ideas include the following: using boxes as a fence border; buying hay bale cube boxes online and using them as a border; using cardboard play bricks that are rustic looking, such as Mondo Bloxx Timber Pack; or borrowing/buying a

child's wooden playpen or a dog playpen or configurable dog gate. (Check sites that sell good used items for these.

Make sure they are safe for children and sturdy.) Add in some inflatable bouncer/hopper sheep and other farm animals. (One test church bought inflatable farm hopper llamas that looked like sheep.) Or add in nice-sized stuffed farm animals—sheep in particular.

Next, add a backdrop that is a grassy field. Plastic tablecloths with a grass motif can be used, or buy a simple sky/field backdrop online. Put crayons in tin pails and coloring sheets in rectangular baskets.

## Additional Exploration Station Ideas

Each day's instructions have suggested stations, but here are some extra ideas if you would like to add more.

- Reading Nook**—Make a cozy nook and place a variety of children's books in a woven basket. Include children's picture Bibles, accurate books about King David, Psalm 23, rainbows, shepherds, God's attributes, sheep, farm animals, etc.
- Farm Animals**—Borrow or buy stuffed or plastic farm animals you might see on an Irish farm (sheep, for sure!) and free play with them.
- Farm Puzzles**—Gather some farm-themed puzzles and set them out for fun play.
- Texture Trays**—Provide various textures on which and in which the kids can trace words or pictures of key Bible concepts they learn about. Possible textures include shaving cream or hair gel in zippered baggies sealed with duct tape, burlap, trays of salt, thick fleece, magic slates, or chalkboard and chalk. Supervise carefully and make sure they know not to put their hands in their mouths.
- Play Dough**—Play dough is always a favorite, so you may want to feature a station with it all week, adding thematic supplies that have to do with the day's teaching, such as using only white and black and sheep cookie cutters on Day 1 to make sheep; using only green and blue on Day 2 for green pastures and still waters; making rods and staffs on Day 3; making play food to go on the "table" God prepares for us on Day 4; and making the letters "G" for *goodness* and "M" for *mercy* on Day 5. Add in thematic cookie cutters each day.

### Play Dough Recipe:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 c. flour             | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 tbsp. oil       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ½ c. salt              | <input type="checkbox"/> Food coloring     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 c. warm water        | <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: glitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 tsp. cream of tartar |  |

Combine the first five ingredients in a saucepan. Mix in several drops of food coloring. Stir over low to medium heat until the dough is formed and is no longer sticky. Remove from the pan and knead until smooth. Add some glitter if desired. After it has cooled, store in an airtight container.



# DAY 1

## Lost to Found

### BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:1  
1 Samuel 17:34–37

### LESSON FOCUS

Like David, I can be a child of God and have the Lord as *my* shepherd.

### APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Is the Lord a distant God? Did he create the universe and then just sit back and watch?

### MEMORY VERSE

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
Psalm 23:1

### NAME OF GOD

Shepherd

### ANIMAL PAL

Mia (My-a) the Connemara Sheep

### TODAY'S EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Sheep Memory Game  
Wet Sensory Table: Sheep Washing  
Dry Sensory Table: Lost Sheep  
Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm  
Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:1

### Today's Lesson at a Glance

- Introduce it!  
Sheep Farm in Donegal
- Teach it!  
Part 1: Gospel Presentation  
Part 2: Puppet Pal—Lost to Found  
Part 3: Animal Pal Review
- Apply It!  
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse  
Part 2: Go and Do  
Song 1: “Mary Had a Little Lamb”  
Song 2: “Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Sheep Gone”

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23 several times. Memorize it.
- Read 1 Samuel 17:34–37 several times.
- Read “Leading a Child to Christ,” found on the inside back cover of this guide.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, visit [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).
- Pray.

# Devotion 1: The Lord Is My Shepherd

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1*

There's no doubt about it—our kids are anxious. Over 22% of children are in therapy, while 40% of high schoolers have experienced persistent hopelessness or sadness. They deal with household substance abuse, parental incarceration, neighborhood violence, and unmet basic needs. Social media, interpersonal relationship drama, and world events all contribute to instability among our youth. They don't know where to turn for comfort.

Moralistic, therapeutic deism is a dominant worldview among their parents. They believe in a god—a supreme being—who has no connection to the world he created, no personal involvement in their lives, and no demands on how they live. This worldview has an appearance of morality—the highest good is to be good to others—but no basis for saying one action is wrong and another is right. They ignore the biblical foundation for morality and instead impose their own idea of right and wrong; morality is based on “my truth” rather than absolute truth. And this worldview is therapeutic—the purpose for living is my own personal happiness; there is no higher purpose.

Without an anchor for their soul and the knowledge of a sovereign Savior who loves them and is working out all things for their good, it's no wonder our kids are lost. They're wandering on the wrong path of their own making, filled with worry and fear, depressed about their lack of happiness, and unsure of what the future holds for them.

This week, we are introducing kids to the gentle Good Shepherd through the life of David and Psalm 23. They will meet the God who created them in his image, with great care, for his glory, and the good of all of us. The God who loved the world so much that he gave his Son as a sacrifice for sin. The God who leads us on the right path, who offers comfort in every trial, who provides for all our needs, and in whom every promise is “yes” and “amen.”

Today, as you prepare to share with the children, first remind yourself of who Jesus is—is he *your* shepherd? Have you crossed from being a lost sheep to a beloved member of his fold? Does he know you (John 10:14)? Do

you run to the chief shepherd and overseer of your soul when you are anxious (1 Peter 2:25)? Is he the shepherd and rock on which you build your life (Genesis 49:24)? Do you know that he will lovingly carry you forever (Psalm 28:9)?

What amazing mercy that we can say, “The Lord is *my* shepherd.” That the Creator of the universe is *my* personal shepherd. Is he yours? May we pray that we live our lives in light of this Good Shepherd as the Puritans did.

Lord of all being,  
There is one thing that deserves my greatest care,  
that calls forth my ardent desires,  
That is, that I may answer the great end for which  
I am made—  
to glorify thee who hast given me being,  
and to do all the good I can for my fellow men;  
Verily life is not worth having  
if it be not improved for this noble purpose.  
Yet, Lord, how little is this the thought of mankind!  
Most men seem to live for themselves,  
without much or any regard for thy glory,  
or for the good of others;  
They earnestly desire and eagerly pursue  
the riches, honours, pleasures of this life,  
as if they supposed that wealth, greatness,  
merriment,  
could make their immortal souls happy;  
But, alas, what false delusive dreams are these!  
And how miserable ere long will those be that sleep  
in them,  
for all our happiness consists in loving thee,  
and being holy as thou art holy.  
Help me to know continually  
that there can be no true happiness,  
no fulfilling of thy purpose for me,  
apart from a life lived in and for the Son of thy love.

— Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 13.

# Exploration Stations

See page 12 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

## Discovery Center: Sheep Memory Game

### MATERIALS

- Memory Game Sheep Cards
- White card stock

### PREP

Print two of each MEMORY GAME SHEEP CARDS onto white card stock and cut apart.

### DIRECTIONS

First, share the teaching tie-in. Show the different sheep on the cards, then shuffle the cards and place them face down. The children will take turns flipping over two cards, trying to get matches.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Show the MEMORY GAME SHEEP CARDS. Sheep don't all look alike, do they? God could have made just one type of sheep, but look at some of the varieties. There are black sheep, white sheep, speckled sheep, long-haired sheep, short-haired sheep, some with horns, some without horns, and many others. What an amazing and creative God he is!

## Wet Sensory Table: Sheep Washing

For wet and dry sensory tables use an under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or "official" sensory table.

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Water
- Waterproof play sheep—at least 6
- Waterproof play person or people (shepherd or shepherds)
- Small scrub brushes (e.g., nail brushes)
- Soap or "tearless" shampoo

### PREP

Partially fill the sensory table with water. Add the items.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have students use the shepherd to pretend to wash the sheep.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our shepherd here. Shepherds take care of sheep. Did you know one thing shepherds do to take care of sheep is give them a bath? This helps get bugs and dirt off of them. Good shepherds take care of their sheep in many ways, just like God takes care of us.

## Dry Sensory Table: Lost Sheep

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic sand (preferred) or play sand (not regular sand), found at hardware stores
- Baby wipes if using play sand—all week
- Lots of play sheep—either cotton balls or pom-poms to represent sheep, laminated sheep pictures, or rubber toy sheep (should all be the same except one in a different color)
- Tongs, spoons, sand toys for digging

### PREP

Put the kinetic sand or play sand in the table to be used all week. Make or gather the sheep, making sure they are all the same except one.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have students dig through the sand to find the lost sheep (the different one).

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Sheep are one of the most talked about animals in the Bible. One account tells of a time when there were 100 sheep, and one got lost (Luke 15:4–7). The shepherd left the rest of the sheep and went to find the one lost sheep. He found it and brought it back. He was so happy! This is how God feels about each one of us when we decide we want to be one of his children (his sheep).

## Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm

### MATERIALS

Choose from any of the following, depending on your situation. These will be used all week.

- Decorating supplies (see Decorating Decisions)—inside a farmhouse kitchen
- Dress-up supplies in a basket or crate—modern-day Irish farmer/shepherd clothes such as rain boots, flannel shirts, raincoats, overalls, fisherman-type vests
- Stuffed farm animals—particularly sheep (or use white balloons with faces drawn on them for "sheep")
- Props you'd find in a farmhouse kitchen such as play food, play cooking utensils and pots and pans, play plates and dishes, tin pails, woven baskets, play broom, play dog bed and stuffed animal dog, etc.

### PREP

Make or gather all materials. You may want to put out only part of the supplies today and add new ones each day.

Fisherman-type vests can be made from bolts of felt (from the fabric store) or more inexpensively, from large brown grocery sacks. Ask your local grocery store to donate the sacks. Cut a neckhole in the "bottom" of the

sack and armholes on the sides. Cut down the middle front from the neckhole to the top of the sack. Make sure to not cut the back of the sack.

#### **DIRECTIONS**

Share the teaching tie-in, then have kids dress up and pretend to be farmers/shepherds at an Irish sheep farm.

#### **TEACHING TIE-IN**

Did you know there are lots of sheep farms in Ireland? A farmer who raises sheep is sometimes called a shepherd. What are some things a shepherd might do to take care of his sheep? [Take responses](#). In Psalm 23 in the Bible, God shows us he is like the shepherd and we are like the sheep. God is gentle and takes good care of us.

### **Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:1**

#### **MATERIALS**

- [Day 1 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#)
- Decorating supplies for the Coloring Corner (see Decorating Decisions)—inside a sheep pen
- Markers or crayons in a woven basket or tin pail

- Optional: glue sticks and additional decorative, textured materials to add to the sheets

#### **PREP**

Print the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE COLORING SHEET**, 1 per person. Make or gather the decorating supplies and set up the Coloring Corner. This will be used all week. Gather additional decorative materials to glue onto the coloring sheets, such as cotton balls, feathers, stickers, etc.

#### **DIRECTIONS**

Have the children color the sheet, then add decorative materials, if desired.

#### **TEACHING TIE-IN**

Practice saying the memory verse on the sheet. Discuss its meaning.

# Introduce It!

## Sheep Farm in Donegal (5 minutes)

Study your lessons each day and know them well but feel free to say things in your own way. An **EDITABLE VERSION** of each lesson is available to download, as well as a shortened (20 minutes) **ONE-PERSON LESSON**.

**Prep:** Prepare your set backdrop and costumes. Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Cut apart the **DIFFERENT SHEEP POSTER** and hide the pictures so they are partly visible. Remember to hide them again after each rotation. Cover the Days 1–5 pictures on the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER** and hang them so they look like one big map. Hang the five **MEMORY VERSE POSTERS** going down the wall so Day 1 is on top and Day 5 is on the bottom. Cut apart the **LOST/FOUND CROSSING SIGNS**. Learn the Psalm 23:1 hand motions.

**Teacher 1:** Hello from Ireland, lads (boys) and lasses (girls)! Or should I say “*dia duit*” (*dee-uh-gwit*), which means “hello” in the Irish language. Have everyone say “*dia duit*” to each other. My name’s \_\_\_\_, and this is \_\_\_\_. We’re going to take you on a shepherd’s tour of the Emerald Isle (a nickname for Ireland), starting right here at the Emerald Crossing bridge.

**Teacher 2:** Do you know where Ireland is? Take responses. Point to the **MAP OF IRELAND**. In Ireland, there are lots of green pastures (fields), farms, and sheep.

**Teacher 1:** What does a sheep say? Pause for “*baa.*” Yes, “*baa.*” We’ll be talking about sheep a lot this week as we learn from Psalm 23, which is right here in the Bible. Show. It has a lot to say about sheep and shepherds—the people who care for sheep. Show the **DAVID AS SHEPHERD POSTER**. It was written by a man named King David who was a shepherd himself early on in his life.

**Teacher 2:** So let’s begin our journey. First, let’s fly to Ireland. Jog in place for a few seconds and then put out your arms and “fly.” Now, let’s put on some rain boots because it rains a lot in Ireland! Pretend to do so. We better put on our raincoats too. Pretend to do so. Put your hood up. Pretend to do so. And let’s not forget our shepherd’s staff! Pretend to pick one up.

**Teacher 1:** Okay, now it’s time to go. Let’s start at this sheep farm in the town of Donegal, which is here. Show the farmhouse on the map and uncover the Day 1 Sheep Farm picture. Can you hear the sheep baaing? Do you feel the light rain coming down? Do you see a rainbow over there?

**Teacher 2:** Sometimes sheep get separated from their shepherds, so let’s pretend we have to find some lost sheep on this farm. Look around and see if you can find any sheep pictures. You can each pick up one and bring it back to me. Do so.

**Teacher 1:** Once they’re settled again, show the **DIFFERENT SHEEP PICTURES** as you’re saying the following. Sheep can be black, white, or mixed. Some have horns and some don’t. Some have long hair and some have short hair. Some are fluffy and some aren’t. They can be big or small. They don’t all look alike. But they all have this in common—they can stray, or get lost, from their shepherd. Have you ever gotten lost? Pause for quick responses.

**Teacher 2:** Sheep and people have a lot in common, including being lost at times. That’s why God compares us to sheep in many places in the Bible. We’re going to check out Psalm 23 to hear more about going from lost to found. Put up the **LOST/FOUND CROSSING SIGNS** on the top blocks of the bridge. Now let’s practice today’s verse with hand motions. Stand up. Here we go. Do so.

# Teach It!

## Part 1: Gospel Presentation (10 minutes)

**Prep:** Practice drawing a simplified version of the seven pictures on the **GOSPEL POSTER**. Cover each picture and word on the **GOSPEL POSTER** with a piece of paper or sticky notes.

**Teacher 1:** Now let’s pretend we’re in a sheep pen and you’re the sheep and I’m the shepherd. Do so.

**Teacher 2:** Did you know shepherds protect sheep from animals that try to attack them? Let’s pretend a coyote is coming to get a sheep, and the shepherd fights him off. Act this out with the kids being the sheep, Teacher 2 being the coyote, and Teacher 1 as the shepherd.

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ◆ Different Sheep Poster
- ◆ David as Shepherd Poster
- ◆ Days 1–5 Memory Verse Posters

- ★ Lost/Found Crossing Signs
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player

- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape for posters
- Blank paper to cover photos on map (see Prep)



- ◆ If co-teaching, decide daily which parts of the lesson each of you will be responsible for teaching. Both should plan to dress in costumes.

- ◆ Think of fun names for yourselves: Farmer Mac, Shepherd Sean, Farmhand Finn, Lamb-Lover Lucy, Caretaker Kelly, Sheep Herder O'Hara.

- ◆ The Bible is listed just once daily in the supply list but is used throughout, so keep it handy and marked to the correct passages ahead of time.

- ◆ Mounting putty (also known as sticky tack or poster putty) or tape is listed just once daily but will be used whenever you hang up posters. Hang them up as you talk or hold them up while teaching and hang them up after class.

- ◆ Gospel Poster

- Blank paper or sticky notes to cover Gospel Poster
- Dry-erase board or white poster board
- Markers or dry-erase markers in various colors

✦ Make an area to simulate a sheep pen if desired. See Coloring Corner on page 12 for ideas.



**Teacher 1:** Did you also know that the shepherd would lie down at the gate of the sheep pen so nobody could get in to hurt the sheep? Let's act that out. *Do so.*

**Teacher 2:** The shepherd would actually lay down his life for the sheep. This is a picture of what Jesus does for us. The Bible calls Jesus our Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his "sheep"—all of us. That means he died for us.

**Teacher 1:** You see, we were in danger but didn't even know it. Thankfully, the Good Shepherd came to rescue us. Let's hear more as \_\_\_ draws some pictures.

**Teacher 2:** Draw a simple tree on a dry-erase board or poster board. Ask the kids to guess what you are drawing. Then uncover the tree on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** Back at the beginning of time, God made a beautiful garden full of trees and bushes and flowers. He filled it with animals and the first two people, Adam and Eve. It was a perfect place. So to review, I said Adam and who? *Pause for responses.* Right, Eve.

**Teacher 2:** Draw a simple snake and have them guess what you are drawing. Then uncover the snake on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** God gave the first man a loving command—he could eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Do you think he obeyed God? *Pause for responses.* No. A sneaky snake came along, who was the devil. Let's wiggle our hands like a snake. *Do so.* He tempted Eve to eat the fruit, and she and Adam did.

**Teacher 2:** Now sin came into the world. Sin is when we don't obey God. Adam and Eve didn't obey God. And guess what—ever since then, every person sins and doesn't obey God perfectly. God says to be kind. Have you ever been unkind? *Pause for responses.* That's sin. God says to tell the truth. Have you ever told a lie? *Pause for responses.* That's sin. God says to be thankful. Have you ever whined or been grumpy or rude? *Pause for responses.* That's sin.

**Teacher 1:** God said the punishment for sin is death and being apart from God. Let's say, "Oh no!" *Do so.* That's the worst news ever! But wait. There's good news too!

**Teacher 2:** Draw a simple drawing of a baby in a manger and have them guess who it is. Then uncover baby Jesus on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** God knew we needed to be rescued from our sin. Just one sin separates us from God because he is holy and perfect and wants us to be the same. So he sent his only Son, Jesus, to earth. He came as a little baby—the only perfect baby who has ever been born. We sin, but Jesus never sinned! Let's rock our baby. *Do so.*

**Teacher 2:** Draw a man to represent Jesus and have them guess who it is. Then uncover grown-up Jesus on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** Jesus grew into a man—the only perfect person who has ever lived. He did lots of amazing things, like healing people, making storms stop, and raising people from the dead. Let's say, "Wow!" *Do so.*

**Teacher 2:** Draw a cross and have them guess what it is. Then uncover the cross on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** Jesus lived a perfect life and never did anything wrong. But some bad people killed Jesus by putting him on a cross. Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for the wrong things we've done so we wouldn't have to. Let's quietly pretend to cry. *Do so.*

**Teacher 2:** Draw the tomb with the stone rolled away and have them guess what it is. Then uncover the tomb on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** Here's amazing news. Jesus didn't stay dead! They killed him, but because he's God, he brought himself back to life! Let's jump up and down and shout, "Hooray!" *Do so.*

**Teacher 2:** Draw a gift and have them guess what it is. Then uncover the gift on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

**Teacher 1:** Jesus did all this because he loves you. He loves you so much, he laid down his life. That means he died for you. He wants you to be one of his sheep, one of his children. That's the best gift you can ever receive—the gift of being in God's family. Let's call our puppet pal, Paddy, and talk a little more about this.

Sing a song to give one teacher time to get behind the puppet stage and to allow kids to move a little before the puppet show. Songs are at the end of each day's lesson.

## Part 2: Puppet Pal—Lost to Found (5 minutes or less)

**Prep:** Tape one PUPPET SCRIPT inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference.

Each day, the puppet pal will teach part of the lesson or reinforce what the kids just heard. It's always a favorite, so try to include it even if you have to cut something else.

Decide which of you will be the puppet and figure out when you need to leave the previous teaching so you will be positioned in time for the start of the puppet pal time.

If you don't have a teaching assistant or co-teacher, enlist someone (a group guide or other volunteer) ahead of time to work the puppet each day. If you're alone, have the puppet come up from behind a suitcase with the lid flipped up or just stand and work the puppet. (It's fine if your lips move. No need to be a ventriloquist.)

You can use either a boy or a girl puppet. Its name is Paddy (for Patrick or Patricia). Use a consistent voice for the puppet all week. Speak clearly and exaggerate words and expressions. For instance, draw out certain words for emphasis or make an exaggerated action for things like groaning, turning its head, or sneezing. Use your free hand to do things with the puppet's hands or arms. For example, if the puppet is "thinking," put the puppet's hand on its chin. When the puppet is talking, make sure the mouth is open. (This is the opposite of what people often do!) In other words, the mouth should be open on most syllables. You don't have to open very wide, which will help you move the mouth faster and more naturally.

Your puppet should come out from behind a hill. (See Decorating Decisions.) When the puppet is entering, hold your arm back and down and have the puppet take three steps up, getting higher each time, until the puppet is out and visible. When exiting, turn the puppet toward you and take three steps down until out of sight.

**Teacher:** Can you help me call for Paddy? Here we go. Do so.

**Puppet:** Come up.

**Teacher:** Hi there, Paddy.

**Puppet:** Wave. Top o' the mornin' (evenin') to ya!

**Teacher:** What have you been up to today?

**Puppet:** Well, I've been out in the fields trying to find a lost sheep.

**Teacher:** Oh no! That's baa-d!

**Puppet:** I know. I had a whole pasture full of sheep, and I had to leave them to go look for the one that wandered off.

**Teacher:** Did you find him?

**Puppet:** I sure did. He was down in the valley near the Emerald Crossing bridge.

**Teacher:** He'd still be lost if you hadn't found him.

**Puppet:** That's for sure.

**Teacher:** You know, that reminds me of a Bible lesson that talks about a lost sheep.

**Puppet:** Oh yeah?

**Teacher:** Yeah. Right here (point to Luke 15:3–7), it says there were 100 sheep and then 1 wandered off. The shepherd left the 99 and went to find the lost 1.

**Puppet:** I hope he found him.

**Teacher:** He did. Just like you found your sheep, the shepherd found his lost sheep.

**Puppet:** Then what happened?

**Teacher:** Everyone was so happy. It was a celebration. Let's do a happy dance! Do so, making the puppet go crazy.

**Puppet:** I'm so glad they found him!

**Teacher:** This reminds us that *we're* like sheep who are lost and wandering from our Good Shepherd, Jesus. We need to follow him.

**Puppet:** How do we follow Jesus?

**Teacher:** Remember how we said everyone sins (Romans 3:23)? Everyone does wrong things—everyone. Uncover the word *Admit* on the GOSPEL POSTER. God wants you to admit

◆ Gospel Poster

★ Day 1 Puppet Script  
(2 copies)

- Boy or girl puppet and puppet stage
- Clipboard

◆ The puppet can be dressed in a small VBS T-shirt or farm-hand type shirt. To make a small VBS T-shirt, print, cut out, and laminate a color copy of the logo and tape it to a baby-sized T-shirt.

◆ If you want to get snazzy, use a quick musical introduction and exit when it's time for the puppet to come and go.



✦ You may want to have counselors ready to talk more with interested students about salvation in a safe place.

◆ Day 1 Animal Pal Poster

- Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



✦ Gospel Opportunity

✦ The front page of each day's Student Guide is an overview of today's lesson. The back page matches this section.

you do wrong things—admit you're a sinner. You need to tell him you don't obey all the time and you're sorry for it (Mark 1:15).

**Puppet:** Then what?

**Teacher:** Uncover the word *Believe* on the GOSPEL POSTER. Then you must believe what the Bible says—that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins (Romans 10:9–10). But then, he rose from the dead. This shows us God was pleased with his payment.

**Puppet:** Admit and believe. Anything else?

**Teacher:** Uncover the words *Forever Receive* on the GOSPEL POSTER. Yes. Forever receive Jesus by asking him to forgive you and make you part of his family. You aren't automatically part of God's family. You aren't born belonging to the Good Shepherd. But you can become one of his sheep—one of his children—by admitting, believing, and forever receiving (John 3:16). If you do, you'll not only be part of your family here on earth, but you'll have God as your heavenly Father, and you'll be part of his family.

**Puppet:** I hope everyone here believes in Jesus and wants to be his child!

**Teacher:** I do too! If you want to be a child of God, make sure you talk to your leader or parents or me today.

**Puppet:** Admit, believe, forever receive!

**Teacher:** Yep! Well, bye for now, Paddy. See you tomorrow!

### Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Summarize the lesson, using the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER and the questions below.

Hold up the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER. Let's take a look at our animal pal poster to remember what we talked about today.

- Our animal pal is what kind of animal? A sheep.
- Do sheep wander, or get lost, from their shepherd? Yes.
- Can people get lost too? Yes. We need the Good Shepherd, Jesus.
- The sheep's name is Mia (My-a). Mia is a popular name in Ireland. It means "mine." The Lord is *my* shepherd. Can you say the Lord is mine—he's your shepherd? Take answers.

Continue reviewing with the following questions and have the kids "baa" like a sheep if the answer is yes and get on all fours like a sheep if it is no.

1. Does God compare us to bears in Psalm 23? No—get on all fours. He compares us to sheep.
2. Is God the Good Shepherd? Yes—"baa."
3. In Jesus' story, did the shepherd leave the 99 sheep and find the 1 who was lost? Yes—"baa."
4. Is it possible for us to go through life without ever doing *anything* wrong? No—get on all fours. We all disobey God. This is called sin when we don't obey God.
5. Is whining or grumbling an example of sin? Yes—"baa."
6. Will God forgive our sin if we ask? Yes—"baa." Review the gospel if time.

Pass out the maps and add today's sticker. Since the maps are all the same, it's best to not put names on them until the last day when kids can take them home. It goes much faster passing them out without names.

## Apply It!

In the remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. You won't have time to do them all, but these ideas are also on the back of the Pre-Primary Student Guides. Send the Student Guides home each day as a fun review and also encourage the kids to do the practical ideas in the Go and Do section that apply today's lesson to real life. They're important!

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover. Decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

## Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse

**Today's Verse (also the theme verse):** The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

Practice the verse several times by playing the appropriate song from the memory verse music and using the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference.

**Challenge:** Say the verse using the **PSALM 23 HAND MOTIONS** video. You can either play the video and have the kids do the motions along with the person in the video, or you can learn them ahead of time and do the motions for and with the kids. Then, for fun if you have time, pretend you're a sheep and walk around on all fours as you say today's verse.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. Psalm 23:2

Try the challenge again, this time with tomorrow's verse.

## Part 2: Go and Do

1. Make a poster showing sheep and a shepherd. Place yourself where you think you belong—either with the flock and shepherd or lost and on your own.
2. Ask someone if the Lord is *their* shepherd.
3. Tell someone something you learned today about sheep.
4. With someone's help, check [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids) for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Is the Lord *my* shepherd?

## Song 1: Mary Had a Little Lamb—Psalm 23 Version

Explain that Jesus' mother is named Mary and Jesus is called the Lamb of God in the Bible.

### VERSE 1:

Mary had a little lamb (Clap)  
 Little lamb, little lamb (Clap)  
 Mary had a little lamb (Clap)  
 His name was Jesus Christ (Clap)

### VERSE 2:

He was born in Bethlehem (Rock a baby)  
 Bethlehem, Bethlehem (Rock a baby)

He was born in Bethlehem (Rock a baby)  
 Just as the Bible said (Rock a baby)

### VERSE 3:

He came to save sinners like me (Turn around)  
 Sinners like me, sinners like me

(Turn right and left)

He came to save sinners like me (Turn around)  
 I can become his child (Turn right and left)

## Song 2: Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Sheep Gone?

### VERSE 1

Oh where, oh where has my little sheep gone?  
 (Put your hand above your eyes and "search")  
 Oh where, oh where can he be? (Repeat)  
 Of the hundred sheep, one has wandered off.  
 (Use two fingers to make a sheep wandering off)  
 Oh where, oh where can he be?  
 (Repeat first motion)

### VERSE 2

Oh where, oh where has my little sheep gone?  
 (Repeat first motion of verse 1)  
 Oh where, oh where can he be? (Repeat)  
 I will go to look for my little lost sheep. (March)  
 Oh where, oh where can he be?  
 (Repeat first motion)

### VERSE 3

I've found my sheep. I will bring him home.  
 (Smile and put "sheep" around your neck)  
 How happy, happy I'll be. (Smile as you bob  
 your head to each side)  
 Let's rejoice, be glad, the lost sheep is found.  
 (Jump up and down)  
 How happy, happy we'll be.  
 (Bob your head from side to side)

Repeat Verse 1

- ◆ Theme Verse/Day 1 Memory Verse Poster
- ◆ Optional: Day 2 Memory Verse Poster

★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player

- Optional: Memory verse music and player
- Optional: Student Guides and supplies



★ "Mary Had a Little Lamb" song

★ "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Sheep Gone" song

- Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)

- Device to play songs

◆ As you introduce new songs this week, if there are some the kids really like, feel free to just keep singing those instead of adding more.



## DAY 2

# Wrong Path to Right Path

### BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:2–3  
1 Samuel 17

### LESSON FOCUS

Like David, I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.

### APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Is the Bible a trustworthy guide to lead me through life?

### MEMORY VERSE

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. Psalm 23:2

### NAME OF GOD

Leader

### ANIMAL PAL

Guide the Border Collie

### TODAY'S EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Can “Ewe” Guess the Smell?  
Wet Sensory Table: Still Water  
Dry Sensory Table: Play Paths  
Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick’s Farm  
Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:2

### Today’s Lesson at a Glance

- Introduce it!  
Green Pastures and Still Waters in County Galway
- Teach it!  
Part 1: David and Goliath  
Part 2: Puppet Pal—Bible Basics  
Part 3: Animal Pal Review
- Apply it!  
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse  
Part 2: Go and Do  
Song 1: “The B-I-B-L-E”  
Song 2: “Old MacDonald”

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23 and recite it from memory.
- Read 1 Samuel 17 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, see [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).
- Pray.

## Devotion 2: The Lord Is My Leader

*He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Psalm 23:2–3*

The algorithms on TikTok and other social media channels bombard our kids with doubts about the existence of God and the reliability of his Word. They learn in school that the universe came into existence on its own and that they are products of evolutionary processes acting over millions of years. They are asking, “Does God really exist?” It’s a question that has crossed the mind of every person at some point. Before we answer that question, let’s ask another question: How can we even know to question the surety of God’s existence?

Here’s the answer: Apart from the perfect, truthful, unchanging, eternal God of the Bible, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3) and from whom comes knowledge and understanding (Proverbs 9:10), we cannot know anything. Think about it. If there is no god—no ultimate standard of truth and knowledge—and we are simply the product of random processes operating on chemicals over time, then the thoughts in our brains are nothing more than the product of random chemical interactions. How could we *know* anything? The one true God of the Bible has created each person in his image and given us the ability to think rationally, to question thoughtfully, to know truth fully. And he has revealed himself to all people so that everyone is without excuse (Romans 1:18–21). We can know the one true God exists because we have the ability to know in the first place. And we can praise him that he freely gives wisdom to those who ask for it (James 1:5).

Since God exists, we can also know that his Word is true and trustworthy. Over 3,000 times, the authors of the Bible claimed to be speaking or writing the words of God, and they reference the godly authority of other writers (Daniel 9:2; 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Peter 1:21, 3:15–16). While on earth, Jesus referred to the Old Testament scriptures as truth and from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 19:4; Mark 12:36; Luke 11:49–51; John 5:46, 17:17). And God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Since the Bible is the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16), we can trust that God has given us accurate historical accounts and that he will lead us on righteous paths when we obey the guidelines he has set for his creation through the power of the Holy Spirit. We can joyfully

cross from the wrong path to the right path when we become his children through repentance and faith in Jesus and willingly submit to the way he wants us to live. We can anchor our morality in the Word of the Good Shepherd who wants only good for us.

Today, as we encourage our children to look to the Lord and to follow his righteous paths, let’s think about the behaviors and activities we may participate in that aren’t on the right path. Do you gossip in the neighborhood chat? Tell white lies on social media? Envy the lives of those on Instagram? Do you anger quickly? Are you impatient with your children? Christ is calling us to the path of righteousness (Colossians 3:5–10). Are you engaging with his Word and desiring for him to conform you to his image through it? May we pray this with the Puritans:

O God of truth,  
I thank thee for the holy Scriptures,  
their precepts, promises, directions, light.  
In them may I learn more of Christ,  
be enabled to retain his truth  
and have grace to follow it.  
Help me to lift up the gates of my soul that he  
may come in  
and show me himself when I search the Scriptures,  
for I have no lines to fathom its depths,  
no wings to soar to its heights.  
By his aid may I be enabled to explore all its truths,  
love them with all my heart,  
embrace them with all my power,  
engraft them into my life. . . .  
From it show me how my words have often been  
unfaithful to thee,  
injurious to my fellow-men,  
empty of grace, full of folly,  
dishonouring to my calling.  
Then write thy own words upon my heart and  
inscribe them on my lips;  
So shall all glory be to thee in my reading of  
thy Word!

— Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 190.

# Exploration Stations

See page 12 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

## Discovery Center: Can “Ewe” Guess the Smell?

### MATERIALS

- 8–10 covered containers with various smelling objects or cotton balls with drops of a different smell on each

### PREP

Gather real objects or cotton balls with drops of juice or extract in covered containers. For example, use pickle slices or pickle juice; a cut lemon or lemon juice; peppermint candies or peppermint extract; a rose or rose water; etc. Make sure you poke holes in the cover so the smell will come out but the objects can't be seen.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then instruct the students to try to guess what each smell is.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Did you know God gave sheep an excellent sense of smell? They use their sense of smell to help find their baby lambs, smell animal enemies coming, and find food. God is an amazing Creator!

## Wet Sensory Table: Still Water

For sensory tables use an under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or “official” sensory table.

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Water
- Sand buckets that are taller than the water level
- Small rocks
- Waterproof play sheep

### PREP

Partially fill the sensory table with water.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the children swish their hands in the water. Discuss if sheep would want to drink from noisy, swishing water. Help make pools of still water by placing rocks in the buckets so they are well weighed down, adding water, then standing them in the table. Have the children swish their hands again, keeping outside of the buckets. Notice which water is noisy and which water is calm.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Psalm 23 says, “He leads me beside still waters.” Sometimes shepherds use rocks to build a small pool so the sheep won't have to go near fast, noisy water. Sheep can drink from the calm little pool without being afraid. Sometimes we're afraid too. What's something you get scared of? [Take responses](#). But Jesus, our Good Shepherd, helps us stay calm and not be afraid.

## Dry Sensory Table: Play Paths

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic or play sand
- Craft sticks and small pebbles
- Small plastic play sheep
- Small plastic sheepdog

### PREP

Gather the supplies and place them in the table with the sand.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the students play with the items, making paths in the sand with their sticks and pebbles and having the sheep walk along the paths with the sheepdog guiding them.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Sheep can use guidance so they don't go the wrong way. Sheepdogs, like border collies, help guide the sheep on the right path. God guides us, too, so we stay on the right path and don't get into danger. Isn't God kind? The Bible is the book he uses that helps us know the good path to follow.

## Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm

### MATERIALS

- Day 1 Dramatic Play materials
- Additional stuffed or plastic animals, such as sheepdogs
- Green plastic tablecloth cut in a “path” (see Prep)
- Painter's tape
- Bible (that can be child-handled)

### PREP

Cut the tablecloth to resemble a path and put it on the ground for the kids to follow. Tape it down. Place the Bible at the end of the path. Add the sheepdog and other stuffed animals.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the kids follow the path as they are guided by the sheepdog. Direct them to stay on the path and get to the Bible.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Sheepdogs, like border collies, lead and guide sheep so they stay on the right path. Did you know God as our shepherd leads and guides us too? He doesn't use a sheep path. He uses the Bible! When we read the Bible, it tells us what to do to stay on the right path and not get into bad stuff. The Bible is our special book to guide us through life. I hope you grow to love it and learn it!

## Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:2

See directions for Day 1 but use the [Day 2 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#).

# Introduce It!

## Green Pastures and Still Waters in County Galway (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Cue the Irish jig music (e.g., on a phone, a computer, or a video player). Learn the motions to verse 2. Move the Day 1 Crossing Signs down one block on each side of the bridge. Each day from here on out, all the crossing signs move down another block each day, leaving the top blocks open for the current day's signs. Cut apart the **WRONG PATH/RIGHT PATH CROSSING SIGNS**.

**Teacher 1:** Welcome back, lads and lasses! Let's start off with a lively Irish jig. People in Ireland enjoy this fun dance. You're going to dance until you hear us start to count. When that happens, stop dancing, sit down, and be completely still. Ready? Let's do our jig! Play music or a video loudly from your device and have the kids hop around or just watch/listen.

**Teacher 2:** 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 . . . caaalmmm. As soon as everyone is still, continue. Wow, that was really loud, but now we're calm. Today, we're going to explore things our Good Shepherd does to calm us, like lead us to green pastures and calm, still waters.

**Teacher 1:** Do any of you see something green in our room? Take responses. Today, we're traveling to a place with lots of green pastures (grassy fields) and still waters. It's right here. On the map, show the two lambs in the pasture by still waters near Galway, then uncover the Day 2 Green Pastures photo.

**Teacher 2:** Green pastures are a great place for sheep to hang out. But did you know sheep on a farm are helped by having *someone guide them to good places*? Shepherds lead and guide them to green pastures.

**Teacher 1:** Also, *sheep like calm waters*. They won't lie down when they're afraid, so they just stand if they're by really fast water. A shepherd sometimes builds a calm little pool for them to drink from.

**Teacher 2:** Just as sheep can be guided to good, calm places, we need the Lord to lead and guide us. He does that through the Bible. It keeps us on the right path. Put up the **WRONG PATH/RIGHT PATH CROSSING SIGNS** on the top blocks of the bridge.

**Teacher 1:** Let's stand and say Psalm 23:1 with our motions, and then we'll try verse 2. Do so.

# Teach It!

## Part 1: David and Goliath (10 minutes)

**Prep:** Measure and mark off 9 feet, 9 inches on a visible wall (or as high as you can get it). Tape the two sheets of the **GOLIATH PICTURE** together and attach it to the wall. Hang the **DAVID AND GOLIATH MOTIONS POSTER** on the wall so both teachers have their hands free to do motions.

**Teacher 1:** Now remember we said King David wrote Psalm 23? He wrote it when he was older, but he would have remembered his younger days as a shepherd when he had to fight off enemies.

**Teacher 2:** Enemies like Goliath, a giant who stood over 9 feet tall! Let's check out how tall that is on the wall. If Goliath were standing here, his face would be way up there! Point out the **GOLIATH PICTURE** on the wall.

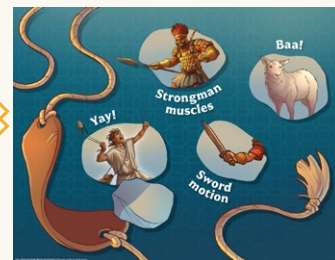
**Teacher 1:** Let's listen to the account of David fighting Goliath told right here in the Bible. Point to your open Bible at 1 Samuel 17. You're going to see how David had a strong relationship with God. God led David throughout his life. It didn't start right when he met Goliath. David had already been spending time with God long before this.

**Teacher 2:** Hold up the **DAVID AND GOLIATH MOTIONS POSTER**. While we tell you about this, be listening for these things: Every time we say, "David," you should cheer. Every time we say, "Goliath," make strongman muscles. Every time we say, "Fight," make a sword motion. And when we say, "Sheep," you should baa. Ready? Here we go!

**Teacher 1:** There were two groups of people: the Philistines, which included Goliath (do the strongman motion with them), and the Israelites, which included David (cheer).

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ★ Wrong Path/Right Path Crossing Signs
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player
- Irish jig music (audio or video) and player
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape

- ◆ David and Goliath Motions Poster
- ◆ David and Goliath Poster
- ★ Goliath Picture
- Measuring tape





◆ Gospel Opportunity

- ◆ Bible Basics Poster
- ★ Day 2 Puppet Script (2 copies)
- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard

**Teacher 2:** These two groups of people got in a fight (*fight motion*). Goliath's people (*strongman motion*) were on one mountain, and David's people (*cheer*) were on the other, with a valley in between.

**Teacher 1:** Goliath (*strongman motion*) shouted out a challenge. He told the Israelites to choose someone to fight him (*fight motion*). The two would battle it out, and whoever won would be the winner for their whole country. But the losing country would have to become their servants.

**Teacher 2:** The problem was that Goliath (*strongman motion*) and his people didn't believe in God or obey God. David (*cheer*) and his people were God's special people, and he loved and followed God. So when Goliath (*strongman motion*) threw down that challenge, he was really saying something like, "Who do you think you are? Do you really think your God can win over us? I challenge you to a fight (*fight motion*) to show we are greater than your God."

**Teacher 1:** Well, that scared the Israelites. Can you make a scared face? *Do so*. It's too bad they were getting scared because they had God as their guide. They were forgetting how great and mighty he is.

**Teacher 2:** But then . . . along came David (*cheer*). He'd been out caring for his sheep (*baa*). When he heard Goliath (*strongman motion*) shouting his challenge, David (*cheer*) said he would go to battle against him.

**Teacher 1:** He reminded everyone he had taken care of sheep (*baa*), and sometimes, he had to fight (*fight motion*) a bear or a lion to keep the sheep (*baa*) safe. So he knew God would be with him as he fought Goliath (*strongman motion*).

**Teacher 2:** And that's exactly what happened. Even though David (*cheer*) didn't have armor and fancy battle gear on, he had something much more important. He had a relationship with God. He had been spending time with the Lord all that time he was out in the fields with his sheep (*baa*). David (*cheer*) knew he could count on God to lead him in this fight (*fight motion*).

**Teacher 1:** Hold up the **DAVID AND GOLIATH POSTER**. So with just a sling and five smooth stones, he beat that giant. His first shot hit Goliath (*strongman motion*) on the forehead, and the giant fell down dead. Let's act out that sling move. *Raise arm up or to the side and move in a circle, then push hand forward in front of you.*

**Teacher 2:** David (*cheer*) trusted God to lead and guide him, and God did.

**Teacher 1:** We need to trust in God to lead and guide us too. Yesterday, we talked about how to become part of God's flock. Do you remember? *Take responses and do a quick review of the gospel.*

**Teacher 2:** Once we're part of his flock, we need God to lead and guide us. One main way he does that is through the words he's written in the Bible. *Hold it up*. Let's stand and sing "The B-I-B-L-E," and then we'll talk a little bit more about the Bible with our friend Paddy. *Move behind the puppet stage during the singing.*

## Part 2: Puppet Pal—Bible Basics (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference.

**Teacher:** Have the kids help you call for Paddy to come up.

**Puppet:** Stay hidden and say: Just a minute! Teacher looks behind the hill, wondering what's taking so long, and then Paddy arrives.

**Teacher:** Hey, what were you doing?

**Puppet:** Working on a puzzle.

**Teacher:** Fun! How many pieces?

**Puppet:** 40.

**Teacher:** That's a lot of pieces.

**Puppet:** Yeah, it is. It's gonna make a picture of the Bible when all the pieces are in place.

**Teacher:** Reference the **BIBLE BASICS POSTER** as you go along through this script. You know, that's cool because the Bible's kind of like a puzzle.

**Puppet:** I know it's a special book—the most special in the world—but what do you mean it's kind of like a puzzle?

**Teacher:** Well, the Bible isn't like any other book ever written because it was written by God!

**Puppet:** God? He wrote a book?

**Teacher:** Yep. He wrote the Bible.

**Puppet:** Did he get out a pen and write it?

**Teacher:** He chose some men and helped them know what to write. And of course, since God is perfect, his book is perfect and completely true. God can't lie, so every word is true. We can completely trust the Bible to lead and guide us through life.

**Puppet:** Kind of like how a shepherd or a border collie leads and guides the sheep?

**Teacher:** Right!

**Puppet:** But I still don't get how the Bible's like a puzzle.

**Teacher:** Well, God wrote the Bible over many, many years—1,500 years! That's a really long time.

**Puppet:** Wow! That is a long, loooong (*exaggerate*) time, all right!

**Teacher:** And the people God picked to write his words lived in different places, spoke different languages, and had different jobs.

**Puppet:** What kinds of jobs?

**Teacher:** Anything from fishermen to kings to doctors to shepherds! The Bible was written over a long period of time by people who didn't know each other or even speak the same language or live at the same time. Yet the Bible all goes together perfectly like a beautiful puzzle.

**Puppet:** It's comforting to know we can trust the Bible.

**Teacher:** It is. God's Word will never lead us the wrong way.

**Puppet:** I want to follow Jesus and do what he tells me so I can make right choices and walk down the right path.

**Teacher:** Yep, just as Psalm 23 says. Let God—through his Word—lead and guide you. Learn the Bible, love the Bible, and obey the Bible. Well, we've got to go, Paddy, but I hope you remember what we talked about today.

**Puppet:** For sure! I can trust the Bible completely, and I want to always treasure it! In fact, I'm going to go listen to it right now.

**Teacher:** That's awesome! And kids, I hope you listen when you hear the Bible too. It's God's special words that lead and guide you through life!

### Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Share the **DAY 2 ANIMAL PAL POSTER** to summarize the teaching of the day.

Our animal pal today is a border collie.

- A border collie is what kind of animal? *A dog.*
- Dogs are fun, aren't they? *Pause.*
- A border collie is really good at leading sheep on the right path. Our animal pal's name is **Guide**. How does his name remind us of Psalm 23? *Take responses. A border collie is a guide for sheep, and the Bible is a guide for us.*

Continue reviewing with the following questions and have the kids bark like a dog if the answer is yes and run in place if it is no.

1. Does a border collie guide sheep? *Yes—bark like a dog.*



#### ◆ Day 2 Animal Pal Poster

- Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



2. **Did Goliath beat David?** No—run in place. David beat Goliath!
3. **Are there any mistakes in the Bible?** No—run in place. It's a perfect book and a perfect guide through life.
4. **Did God write the Bible?** Yes—bark like a dog. He chose some men and helped them know what to write.
5. **Is the Bible like a puzzle?** Yes—bark like a dog. It was written over many years by many writers who didn't know each other, but it all goes together perfectly.
6. **Do I want to learn more from the Bible?** Yes—bark like a dog.

Pass out the maps and add today's stickers.

## Apply It!

In the remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. These are also on the Pre-Primary Student Guides and can be done at home with a parent or caretaker if you are out of time.

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover. Decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

### Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse

**Today's Verse:** He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. Psalm 23:2

Try the following challenge using the **DAY 2 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference and the memory verse music if you have it.

**Challenge:** Say the verse using the **PSALM 23 HAND MOTIONS**. You can either play the video and have the kids do them along with the person in the video, or you can learn them ahead of time and do the motions for and with the kids. The Pre-Primary verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, run like a border collie and say the verse.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Psalm 23:4

Try the challenge again, this time with tomorrow's verse.

### Part 2: Go and Do

1. Draw a picture with two paths. One will be God's path. Put a Bible on it. The other is the wrong path. Do you want to be on God's path, following the Bible, or the wrong path?
2. Pray and ask God to help you always love and obey the Bible.
3. Ask someone to read a Bible account to you every day or evening.
4. Check [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids) for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Do I like to listen to the Bible?

### Song 1: The B-I-B-L-E

Sing at a regular volume until the last line, which should be enthusiastically shouted.

#### CHORUS

The B-I-B-L-E

(Pretend to open a book with your hands)

Yes, that's the book for me

(Pulse index finger upward with the beat)

**I stand alone on the Word of God** (Take a step forward with your left foot, then right foot)

The B-I-B-L-E

(Pretend to open a book with your hands)

**The BIBLE!** (Shout this and jump)

Repeat

### Song 2: Old MacDonald

#### VERSE 1

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically march in place, pumping arms and legs)

E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

And on that farm he had some sheep

(March in place)

E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**With a baa, baa here**

(Turn head to the left and "baa")

**And a baa, baa there**

(Turn head to the right and "baa")

◆ Day 2 Memory Verse Poster

◆ Optional: Day 3 Memory Verse Poster

★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player

□ Optional: Memory verse music and player

□ Optional: Student Guides and supplies



★ "The B-I-B-L-E" song

★ "Old MacDonald" song

□ Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)

□ Device to play songs

Here a baa, there a baa  
 (Turn head to the left and right and "baa")  
 Everywhere a baa, baa (Face the front  
 and "baa")  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**VERSE 2**

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically  
 march in place, pumping arms and legs)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 And on that farm he had a shepherd  
 (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 With a rod and staff here  
 (Turn to the left and pretend to hold a staff)  
 And a rod and staff there  
 (Turn to the right with pretend staff)  
 Here a rod, there a staff  
 (Turn to the left, then right with pretend staff)  
 Everywhere a rod and staff  
 (Face the front with the pretend staff)  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**VERSE 3**

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically  
 march in place, pumping arms and legs)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 And on that farm he had a collie  
 (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 With a ruff, ruff here  
 (Turn head to the left and bark)  
 And a ruff, ruff there  
 (Turn head to the right and bark)  
 Here a ruff, there a ruff  
 (Turn head to the left, then right)  
 Everywhere a ruff, ruff (Face the front)  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**VERSE 4**

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically  
 march in place, pumping arms and legs)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 And on that farm he had a pasture  
 (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

With a green field here (Move left hand hori-  
 zontally to the left to show the pasture)  
 And a green field there  
 (Do the same to the right)  
 Here a field, there a field  
 (Do the same to the left, then right)  
 Everywhere a green field (Face center and  
 spread out both hands horizontally)  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**VERSE 5**

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically  
 march in place, pumping arms and legs)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 And on that farm he had some water  
 (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 With a drip, drip here  
 (Use left hand and touch thumb and third  
 finger together twice on the words "drip")  
 And a drip, drip there  
 (Do the same with the right fingers)  
 Here a drip, there a drip  
 (Do the same with left, then right fingers)  
 Everywhere a drip, drip (Do it with both hands'  
 thumbs and third fingers)  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)

**VERSE 6**

Old MacDonald had a farm (Enthusiastically  
 march in place, pumping arms and legs)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 And on that farm he had a path  
 (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)  
 With a clip, clop here  
 (Move your left foot, then right foot to the left)  
 And a clip, clop there  
 (Move your left foot, then right foot to the right)  
 Here a clip, there a clop  
 (Step with the left foot, then the right)  
 Everywhere a clip, clop (Face front and move  
 your left foot, then right foot on "clip, clop")  
 Old MacDonald had a farm (March in place)  
 E-I-E-I-O (Clap three times)





## DAY 3

# Fearful to Peaceful

### BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:4  
1 Samuel 19–23

### LESSON FOCUS

Like David, I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I'm feeling anxious or afraid.

### APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Why do we even have hard times?

### MEMORY VERSE

I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Psalm 23:4

### NAME OF GOD

Comforter

### ANIMAL PAL

Shadow the Raven

### TODAY'S EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Ewe-nique Eyesight  
Wet Sensory Table: Take Away the Shadows  
Dry Sensory Table: Highs and Lows  
Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm  
Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:4

### Today's Lesson at a Glance

- Introduce it!  
Black Valley in County Kerry
- Teach it!  
Part 1: David and Saul  
Part 2: Puppet Pal—Think on Such Things  
Part 3: Animal Pal Review
- Apply it!  
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse  
Part 2: Go and Do  
Song 1: "Cheer Up Ye Saints o' God"  
Song 2: "Shepherd in the Dell"

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23. Recite it.
- Read all or part of 1 Samuel 19–23 and Philippians 4:6–8 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, see [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).
- Pray.

# Devotion 3: The Lord Is My Comforter

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalm 23:4*

After a frustrating day, a friend asked, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Yet we know that no one is good—no, not one—except the Good Shepherd, who defines goodness.

As the infinitely good God, the Creator fashioned a world that manifested his goodness according to his pleasure and for his glory. He established rules for his creation to follow. The standard to which he holds his creation is himself: absolute goodness. With one bite of fruit, Adam fell short of that standard. With every act of disobedience, we too fall short.

Because God is absolutely pure and holy, untouched by sin, he cannot partake in sin nor approve of it in others. He established a penalty for falling short of his standard: death. The goodness and holiness of God demands that he judge sin. As the righteous judge, he had no choice but to carry out the punishment that he had set for breaking his rules. He placed a curse on his beloved creation. All of creation now groans under the weight of that curse. He imposed a sentence from which we have no means of escaping on our own. We can’t get away from our punishment for sin, which is death, eternal separation from our Creator.

When a murderer is given a sentence for his crime, do we blame the judge who sentenced him? The answer to the age-old question “Why?” lies not at the feet of the Creator but in the bite of a fruit by man.

When we walk through the valley brought on by the curse, we can know that the same God who cursed his creation also provided a way of escape from the curse—Jesus Christ. Jesus took on flesh so that he could live the obedient life Adam didn’t live while experiencing every temptation we experience. Because he knows what it means to be human (for Jesus walked through the valley

of the shadow of death many times with those around him), he can offer the comfort we need when we go through our own valleys. Knowing that Jesus is sovereign over all and that nothing happens apart from his good decrees for us, we can cross from living in fear to walking in the peace that only he can give.

As you share the Lord as comforter with our children, be careful to emphasize that the mess we find ourselves in is not the fault of our good and loving Creator. This will help children answer the “why” question when they encounter a tragedy or simply have a bad day. In general, these are results of living in a cursed world, which is the deserved punishment for sin. We need to also continually point them toward the great gift that the Creator has for us (salvation through Jesus Christ) and the comfort he provides through his Word.

Read Psalm 89:14 and think about the words of this Puritan prayer.

Thou Maker and Sustainer of all things,  
Day and night are thine,  
heaven and earth declare thy glory;  
But I, a creature of thy power and bounty, have  
sinned against thee  
by resisting the dictates of conscience,  
the demands of thy law,  
the calls of thy gospel;  
yet I live under the dispensation of a given hope.  
Deliver me from worldly dispositions,  
for I am born from above and bound for glory.  
May I view and long after holiness  
as the beauty and dignity of the soul.

— Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 139.

# Exploration Stations

See page 12 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

## Discovery Center: Ewe-nique Eyesight

### MATERIALS

- ☐ [Close-up Pictures](#)

### PREP

Print each of the **CLOSE-UP PICTURES** and fold in half. You'll show the close-up picture first each time.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then show a close-up picture. Have the students guess what is in the picture, then show the full picture. Continue with the other pictures.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Did you know God gave sheep really good eyesight? They can see almost all the way around without even turning their heads, so it's difficult for another animal to sneak up on them. When an animal gets close, the sheep scurry away. Let's check out some close-up pictures of things and use our eyes to guess what they are.

## Wet Sensory Table: Take Away the Shadows

For wet or dry sensory tables use an under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or "official" sensory table.

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- ☐ Cold water
- ☐ Ice cubes (in different shapes) made with dark food coloring
- ☐ Tongs, scoops, spoons, bowls

### PREP

Mix some dark-colored water and pour into ice trays. Use various shapes and sizes of ice trays, if desired.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then place the dark-colored ice cubes in the table. Add just enough cold water to make the ice float. Have the children use the utensils to take out as many ice cubes/shapes as they can and place in the bowls.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Psalm 23 talks about walking through valleys and shadows. This refers to days when things seem to go wrong or even get a little scary. But when we tell God how we feel, he can help us trust him even when there are shadowy, hard times. Let's pretend the ice cubes are shadows and take them away.

## Dry Sensory Table: Highs and Lows

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- ☐ Kinetic or play sand
- ☐ Sand buckets
- ☐ Digging tools—toy hand shovels and trowels, craft sticks, large spoons
- ☐ Toy cars

### PREP

Add the supplies to the play sand.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have students play with the sand, using the buckets and digging tools to build up sand to make mountains and remove sand to make valleys. Have the cars drive up and down the mountains and valleys.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Do you know what a valley is? [Take responses](#). It's an area of land that's lower than the hills or mountains around it. Sometimes valleys can be dark or scary places. Psalm 23 tells us that even if we walk through a valley—like a dark, scary time—we don't have to be afraid because God is with us. God, our Shepherd, never leaves us no matter what we're going through. Let's use our buckets and diggers to make some mountains and valleys.

## Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Day 1 and Day 2 materials
- ☐ Shepherds' staffs (item 1230580 is adjustable, or canes can work)
- ☐ Stuffed sheep or balloon sheep

### PREP

Add in the staffs. Make sure there are plenty of sheep. Use white balloons with a face drawn on for children to "guide" with the staffs.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the kids dress up and use the staffs like shepherds on a sheep farm.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

A shepherd's staff is a long stick with a curved hook at the end. Shepherds use their staff to rescue sheep from danger and to gently guide them away from scary places by nudging them with it. Let's pretend we're shepherds using our staffs to care for our sheep and help them stay on the right path.

## Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:4

See directions for Day 1 but use the [Day 3 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#).

# Introduce It!

## Black Valley in County Kerry (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Learn the motions for verse 4. Move the Days 1 and 2 Crossing Signs down and cut apart the **FEARFUL/PEACEFUL CROSSING SIGNS**.

**Teacher 1:** Welcome back, lads and lasses! Let's see if you can remember some things about sheep we've talked about. If you think this is true, stand up. If not, stay seated.

- Sheep can wander away from their shepherd and get lost. *They should stand up, then sit back down.*
- Sheep all look alike. *Stay seated.*
- Sheep like calm water more than really fast water. *Stand, then sit back down.*
- Sheep follow a good leader. *Stand, then sit back down.*

**Teacher 2:** Okay, let's learn a little more about sheep. We'll tell you something, and then we'll all act it out. Ready? Here we go.

**Teacher 1:** *Sheep can get scared.* If one sheep starts to run, they all get scared and start to run. I'm going to start to run like a sheep, and you all follow me. *Do so, baaing as you go.*

**Teacher 2:** Sometimes a sheep gets scared because it's a cast sheep. This means it ends up on its back and can't get up. *You may want to have students (who aren't wearing dresses or other loose clothing) act this out.*

**Teacher 1:** Sheep get scared and need the comfort of the shepherd. But remember—we're like sheep too. We get scared sometimes, don't we? What's something scary you can think of? *Discuss together for a moment what kinds of things are scary to them—keeping it age-appropriate.* God knows what you're thinking, and he knows what you're afraid of. He wants to help you.

**Teacher 2:** We're going to talk about moving from being afraid to not being afraid today as we pretend to visit a place called the Black Valley. It's right here. *On the map, show the black mountains near Kerry and uncover the Day 3 Black Valley picture.* Put up the **FEARFUL/PEACEFUL CROSSING SIGNS**. Sometimes shepherds have to move sheep through valleys. Valleys can be dark and have shadows, which can feel a little scary. But we're going to learn that God is with all of us who are part of his flock even in the scary times.

**Teacher 1:** Let's say the first verses we learned of Psalm 23 together with motions, and then we'll try verse 4, which talks about fear and valleys. *Do so.*

# Teach It!

## Part 1: David and Saul (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Cover the two sections of the **DAVID AND SAUL POSTER** so you can take off one at a time.

Storytelling is an art in Ireland, and young kids love to hear stories. Share the following true accounts from the Bible with the kids as they circle up and listen, making sure they realize they aren't pretend stories but actual, real-life accounts. *Do so with excitement—they are dramatic!*

**Teacher 1:** Here's a question for you. Talking about fear, do you think you'd be afraid if a bad guy was chasing you? *Pause for answers.* Well, that's what happened to David, the shepherd who wrote Psalm 23. King Saul didn't like David and started chasing David around, even though David had been nice to Saul.

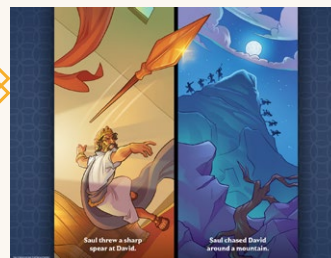
**Teacher 2:** Right here in the Bible (point to your Bible opened to 1 Samuel 19:9–10), we learn of a time Saul tried to hurt David. *Uncover picture 1 on the DAVID AND SAUL POSTER.* David and Saul were sitting together in Saul's house. David was peacefully playing an instrument called a lyre, sort of like a harp. Saul was holding a spear in his hand. Let's pretend this pool noodle is Saul's spear. All of a sudden, Saul tried to hit David with the spear! I'm going to throw our pretend spear at the wall. Pretend David is over there. Do you think the spear will hit David? *Take answers, throw it at the wall, then continue.* You may even want one of the teachers to act like David and dodge the pool noodle. No, David got away

- ◆ **Map of Ireland Poster**
- ★ **Fearful/Peaceful Crossing Signs**
- ★ **Psalm 23 Hand Motions** and video player
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape

✦ Children's fears can include things like fear of the dark, spiders, or monsters, fear of speaking, fear of something happening to a loved one, or fear of death. Validate their responses, as there are many things that can be a source of anxiety for a child. Point them to what we are talking about today—how to experience peace that comes from knowing God as your shepherd and walking closely with him.

✦ Gospel Opportunity

- ◆ **David and Saul Poster**
- Blank paper to cover the David and Saul Poster
- Pool noodle
- Optional: action figures
- Shepherd's rod (can use a walking stick)
- Shepherd's staff (item 1230580 or a cane)
- Stuffed animal wolf (or a picture of a wolf)



from it and escaped into the night. David hadn't done anything wrong, but Saul went after him.

**Teacher 1:** Another time, Saul and his army chased David around a mountain. [Uncover picture 2 on the DAVID AND SAUL POSTER](#). David was on one side and Saul was on the other, with the mountain and valley in between (1 Samuel 23:26–28). Saul was hurrying around one side of the mountain, trying to catch David, while David and his army were hurrying around the other side, trying to get away from Saul. *You may want to show with action figures, or the two teachers can act it out quickly.*

**Teacher 2:** Just as Saul and his army were catching up to David, a messenger came to Saul and told him he had to hurry back home to take care of an emergency. So Saul quit chasing David and went back home. Whew! David was safe! But that wasn't the last time Saul chased David.

**Teacher 1:** After all these chases, I can see why David wrote Psalm 23:4 about going through the valley of the shadow of death. Don't you think it would have been scary having Saul trying to hurt him? But David remembered to trust in God. We know he did because the verse says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you [God] are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

**Teacher 2:** Do you know what a rod and staff are? *Pause for responses.* Here's what a shepherd's rod looks like. *Hold up a rod.*

**Teacher 1:** One way a shepherd used a rod was to protect the sheep from their enemies, like wolves or foxes. I need someone to come up and pretend to be a sheep. *Choose someone.* I'll be the shepherd holding my rod, and Teacher 2 will hold a pretend wolf, who is trying to hurt the sheep. *Act out the wolf trying to catch/hurt the sheep.* Teacher 1 uses the rod to stop the wolf by either carefully tossing it at the wolf (startling it and causing it to run off) or gently swatting it with the rod (also causing it to run off).

**Teacher 2:** Another use of the rod is to count the sheep to make sure they're all there. *Tap each person on the arm to count them.*

**Teacher 1:** Here's what a staff looks like. *Hold it up.* A shepherd would use a staff to guide a sheep that was getting off the right path. *Show how a staff would be used to gently guide a sheep (Teacher 2) by placing it on someone's side as he moves along.*

**Teacher 2:** And the hook part of the staff was used to bring back a sheep that was heading toward danger. *Teacher 1 shows how the hook part could be used to pull back a wandering sheep using Teacher 2 as the sheep.*

**Teacher 1:** So the rod and staff were used to protect the sheep and help them not get lost and scared. Sheep felt comforted by the shepherd using them. Let's talk to Paddy about how God can help us, like sheep, be comforted if we're scared.

## Part 2: Puppet Pal—Think on Such Things (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Tape one PUPPET SCRIPT inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference.

**Teacher:** Kids, help me call for Paddy. *Do so.*

**Puppet:** *Come up shaking and hopping around.* Boy, am I glad to see you!

**Teacher:** Why? What happened?

**Puppet:** A huge spider just ran up my leg.

**Teacher:** Yikes! That's scary.

**Puppet:** Yeah, it is. But that's not as bad as some of the other things I'm scared of.

**Teacher:** Like what?

**Puppet:** Oh, I get scared and anxious of the dark and bad guys and monsters under the bed and being away from my parents and bad storms and having to get up on stage all by myself. You know, stuff like that.

- ★ [Philippians 4:6, 7, and 8 Verse Sheets](#)
- ★ [Day 3 Puppet Script](#) (2 copies)
- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard

**Teacher:** I understand that. We all feel scared sometimes, just like David did when Saul was chasing him. But did you know God talks to us in the Bible about what to do when we're scared?

**Puppet:** Really?

**Teacher:** Yep! He tells us right here (show your Bible opened to Philippians 4:6–8) to not be anxious, which means scared or worried, but instead to talk to God and thank him for his goodness to you. Then tell him what you're scared about.

**Puppet:** So I shouldn't spend time worrying, but instead I should pray to God?

**Teacher:** Right! Don't worry . . . just pray. Show the PHILIPPIANS 4:6, 7 VERSE SHEETS and read all or part of the verses to the kids.

**Puppet:** What else does it say in the Bible?

**Teacher:** It says God will help us go from being fearful to peaceful. He can give us peace, so we're not so afraid anymore, when we trust in him.

**Puppet:** Sounds like I need to talk to God more and let him know about my fears.

**Teacher:** Yes, we all do. And we also need to think about God more.

**Puppet:** How does that help?

**Teacher:** Show the PHILIPPIANS 4:8 VERSE SHEET. The Bible says to think about things that are true and lovely and good. Instead of thinking over and over about scary stuff, think about how good and kind and loving God is.

**Puppet:** So I shouldn't keep thinking about monsters under my bed when I'm in the dark?

**Teacher:** Nope! When scary thoughts pop into your head, start thinking about how great God is and all the things you can thank him (praise him) for.

**Puppet:** How do you do that?

**Teacher:** Let's say you get in bed and it's dark and you start to get scared.

**Puppet:** Shudder. Ooo . . . creepy.

**Teacher:** So start talking to God! Tell him some good things you're thankful for, like the yummy food you ate today and the hugs you got and the fun you had and anything else good you can think of.

**Puppet:** Today I had pizza—yum!—and I had fun running around in the yard with my dog.

**Teacher:** Terrific! Think about those good things and thank God for them! And think about Jesus, the Good Shepherd himself. He's right there with you in that dark bedroom. In fact, he's always with you, wherever you are.

**Puppet:** That's comforting to know you're not ever really alone.

**Teacher:** God's always with his children. So remember—don't worry, just pray. And think on good things and the Good Shepherd. And one other thing . . . it helps if we think of others, too, and how we can help them and pray for them.

**Puppet:** I will. I'm going to go think of lots of good things I can thank God for today.

**Teacher:** That's fantastic! And if you get anxious tomorrow, think about God and good things again. Ad do it again the next day . . . and the next . . . and the next. Always go to God for help. Well, we'll see you tomorrow. Let's say bye to Paddy, everyone. Do so.

### Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Share the DAY 3 ANIMAL PAL POSTER to summarize the teaching of the day.

Our animal pal today is a raven. A raven is a kind of bird.

- What color is he? Black. One place he lives in Ireland is called the Black Valley.
- His name is Shadow. Sometimes there are creepy shadows in valleys. So why do you think his name is Shadow? Help with answers and mention that the memory verse talks about walking through the valley of the shadow of death. That can mean going through any hard or scary time.

◆ Day 3 Animal Pal Poster  
 □ Emerald Crossing Maps,  
 1 per person



- When you're going through tough times, who is right there with you even though you can't see him? *God/Jesus.*

Continue reviewing with the following questions and have the kids flap their wings if the answer is yes and caw if it is no.

1. Do sheep get scared? Yes—flap your wings.
2. Do people get scared sometimes too? Yes—flap your wings.
3. Should we keep thinking and thinking about something that scares us? No—caw.
4. Should we forget about God when we're afraid? No—caw.
5. Should we pray to God when we're afraid? Yes—flap your wings. Tell God what you're afraid of and ask for his help.
6. Should we thank God and think about his goodness? Yes—flap your wings.

Pass out the maps and add today's sticker.

## Apply It!

In any remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. These are also on the Pre-Primary Student Guides and can be done at home with a parent or caretaker if you are out of time.

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover. Decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

### Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse

**Today's Verse:** I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Psalm 23:4

Try the challenge using the **DAY 3 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference and the memory verse music if you have it.

**Challenge:** Say the verse using the **PSALM 23 HAND MOTIONS**. You can either play the video and have the kids do them along with the person in the video, or you can learn them ahead of time and do the motions for and with the kids. The Pre-Primary verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, flap your wings like a raven and say the verse.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** You prepare a table before me. . . . My cup overflows. Psalm 23:5

Try the challenge again using tomorrow's verse.

### Part 2: Go and Do

1. We can think about good things God gives us when we're afraid. How many good things can you think of right now? Tell God thank you for them.
2. When you are worried or afraid, pray and tell God your concerns. Thank him for being with you.
3. Make a sign or put up your craft sign that says: "Don't worry. Just pray." Keep it where you can see it.
4. Check [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids) for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Do I remember to talk to God when I am worried?

### Song 1: Cheer Up Ye Saints o' God

This is a super fun song that can be sung in an Irish brogue. You may want to repeat this one each day of the week! A few of the words to explain: a-boot is about, doot is doubt. It's fun to roll your "R's" as you sing.

**Cheer up ye saints o' God**

(Make a fist and bend your arm at the elbow.  
Rock your arm back and forth the whole  
song. March in place if desired)

There's nothin' to worry a-boot  
Nothin' to make ye feel a-fraid  
Nothin' to make ye doot  
Remember Jesus never fails

So why don't you trust 'im and shout  
You'll be sorry you worried at all  
Tomorrow mornin'

Repeat

- ◆ Day 3 Memory Verse Poster
- ◆ Optional: Day 4 Memory Verse Poster

- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and player

- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Memory verse music and player



- ★ "Cheer Up Ye Saints o' God" song
- ★ "Shepherd in the Dell" song

- Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)
- Device to play songs

## Song 2: Shepherd in the Dell

Explain that a dell is a small valley. Shepherds may go to this valley to protect their sheep. They use their rod and their staff to do so.

### VERSE 1

The shepherd in the dell (Walk in place)

The shepherd in the dell (Repeat)

Hi, ho, the derry-o (Clap)

The shepherd in the dell (Walk in place)

### VERSE 2

The shepherd's with his sheep

(Walk in place, then make little sheep on the word *sheep* by wiggling your second and third fingers back and forth)

The shepherd's with his sheep (Repeat)

Hi, ho, the derry-o (Clap)

The shepherd's with his sheep (Repeat)

### VERSE 3

The shepherd takes his rod

(Walk in place, then hold a pretend rod)

The shepherd takes his rod (Repeat)

Hi, ho, the derry-o (Clap)

The shepherd takes his rod (Repeat)

### VERSE 4

The shepherd takes his staff

(Walk in place, then pretend to "hook" a sheep with the staff)

The shepherd takes his staff (Repeat)

Hi, ho, the derry-o (Clap)

The shepherd takes his staff (Repeat)

Repeat Verse 1





## DAY 4

# Grumbling to Grateful

### BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:5  
2 Samuel 9:3–7  
1 Samuel 16:1–13

### LESSON FOCUS

Like David, I can have an attitude of gratitude no matter what.

### APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Are good things because of “good luck” or a good God?

### MEMORY VERSE

You prepare a table before me. . . . My cup overflows.  
Psalm 23:5

### NAME OF GOD

Provider

### ANIMAL PAL

Pesky the Woolly Aphid

### TODAY'S EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Shaving Cream Shearing  
Wet Sensory Table: Filled to Overflowing  
Dry Sensory Table: Bugs, Bugs, Bugs  
Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm  
Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:5

### Today's Lesson at a Glance

- Introduce it!  
Enemy Area in Dublin
- Teach it!  
Part 1: Prepare a Table  
Part 2: Puppet Pal—God's Goodness  
Part 3: Animal Pal Review
- Apply it!  
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse  
Part 2: Go and Do  
Song 1: “Give Me Oil in My Lamp”  
Song 2: “God Is So Good”

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23. Recite it.
- Read 2 Samuel 9:3–7 and 1 Samuel 16:1–13 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, see [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).
- Pray.

# Devotion 4: The Lord Is My Provider

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Psalm 23:5*

“Good luck’ with that!” “I’ve had a bit of ‘bad luck’ lately.” We often say this in an offhand way, but if we aren’t careful with our words, we can inadvertently teach kids a sort of syncretism—I believe in God but I also believe in luck. Yet the two are mutually exclusive. God is sovereign, and nothing happens to us apart from his good plans for us. He is the one who prepares the table for us and overflows our cups. There is no room for inanimate luck to somehow drive our lives.

We may not kiss the Blarney Stone, but how often do we engage in activities that counter our trust in God and his provision for us? Ever read a horoscope? Checked the tarot cards? Hung a rabbit’s foot on the rearview mirror? Knocked on wood to keep bad circumstances away? Used crystals to promote good energy? Thanked “Mother Nature” for a good weather forecast? Asked for good vibes or good thoughts? Sent positivity into the universe? Hidden in a closet on Friday the 13th? Used Phil’s shadow on Groundhog Day to form your opinions on the advent of spring?

In his letter to the people of Colossae, Paul demonstrated the supremacy of Jesus in all things. As you read Colossians 1:15–20, think about what the acknowledgment of luck does to the sufficiency of our Creator and Savior.

David knew from reading about the life of his ancestor Abraham that the Lord provided what he needed (Genesis 22:1–14). On Mount Moriah, God had provided the ram for Abraham to sacrifice in place of Isaac. Later, David’s son Solomon would build the temple on Mount Moriah, providing a stable place for people to meet with God. And still later, near Mount Moriah, the descendant of Abraham and David who had been promised to both,

Jesus Christ, was sacrificed on the cross—the ultimate provision by the king of the universe.

When we are tempted to grumble about our circumstances, a form of idol worship (“I know better than God what is good for me!”), or praise luck instead of the provision of our God, let’s remember who God is and how he has provided in the past, provides in the present, and will continue to provide in the future.

May this Puritan prayer tune our hearts to sing our thankfulness to Jehovah Jireh, our provider, alone.

I bless thee for the soul thou hast created,  
for adorning it, sanctifying it, though it is fixed in  
barren soil;  
for the body thou hast given me,  
for preserving its strength and vigour,  
for providing senses to enjoy delights,  
for the ease and freedom of my limbs,  
for hands, eyes, ears that do thy bidding;  
for thy royal bounty providing my daily support,  
for a full table and overflowing cup,  
for appetite, taste, sweetness,  
for social joys of relatives and friends,  
for ability to serve others,  
for a heart that feels sorrows and necessities,  
for a mind to care for my fellow-men,  
for opportunities of spreading happiness around,  
for loved ones in the joys of heaven,  
for my own expectation of seeing thee clearly.  
I love thee above the powers of language to express,  
for what thou art to thy creatures.  
Increase my love, O my God, through time and  
eternity.

— Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 15.

# Exploration Stations

See page 12 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

## Discovery Center: Shaving Cream Shearing

### MATERIALS

- [Sheep Shearing Pattern](#), 1 per person, laminated
- Shaving cream, dollop per person
- Paper plates, 1 per person
- Craft sticks, 1 per person

### PREP

Print and laminate 1 **SHEEP SHEARING PATTERN** per person. Spray a little shaving cream on each sheep pattern.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then instruct the children to use their craft stick to spread the shaving cream around on their sheep pattern. Next, students will “shear” their sheep, using the edge of their craft stick to clear off the shaving cream. Put the used shaving cream on the paper plate. Discard when done.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

One way good shepherds take care of their sheep is by shearing them. That means they give their sheep a haircut! There are lots of reasons they do this, but one is to get rid of all the pesky bugs that get caught in their fleece. There are lots of bugs that really bug sheep. Bugs are a problem for sheep. They’re kind of like their enemies. In Psalm 23, God tells us he is good and will still give us good things and help us even though we may have enemies or hard problems. We can be so thankful for our good and kind God!

## Wet Sensory Table: Filled to Overflowing

For wet or dry sensory tables use an under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or “official” sensory table.

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Water
- Different kinds of cups
- Scoops, measuring cups, and funnels

### PREP

Partially fill the table with water. Add the supplies.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then instruct the students to get a cup and fill it just a little full. Now try half full. Now try almost all the way to the top. Now try filling it to overflowing!

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Psalm 23 says that my cup will overflow. Do you know what it looks like if a cup overflows? [Demonstrate with the water and a cup](#). This is a picture of God’s goodness and kindness to us, no matter what. He

doesn’t just give us a little, he gives us overflowing good things! Let’s try to fill our cups different amounts, including overflowing.

## Dry Sensory Table: Bugs, Bugs, Bugs

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic or play sand
- Plastic or rubber bugs
- Magnifying glasses and/or binoculars
- Spoons or tongs to “catch” the bugs
- Plastic jars to put the bugs in

### PREP

Bury some toy bugs in the sand.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then instruct students to try to find the bugs and put them in the jars.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Have you ever gotten a bug bite? [Pause for responses](#). Sometimes they’re really itchy and annoying, huh? Sheep have bug enemies that bother them too. There are some bugs called nose bot flies that pester sheep and get on their faces and even crawl in their noses! Eww! That would feel terrible. Sometimes we have things that bother us too. We need to talk to God about our problems. He’s always listening!

## Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick’s Farm

### MATERIALS

- Days 1–3 Dramatic Play materials
- Fake bugs, snakes, mice

### PREP

Add in the fake bugs, snakes, and mice.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then play with the fake bugs, snakes, and mice that are at Fitzpatrick’s Farm.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

We sometimes call animals like snakes, mice, and bugs pests. They might come near a house or barn to find something to eat. Some people have the job of catching and taking these pests away so they don’t become a problem. There are lots of other problems people live with because of sin in the world. But instead of grumbling about our problems, we should think about all the good things God does for us and be grateful. Remember to tell God thank you every day!

## Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:5

See directions for Day 1 but use the [Day 4 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#).

# Introduce It!

## Enemy Area in Dublin (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Move the Days 1, 2, and 3 **CROSSING SIGNS** down and cut apart the **GRUMBLING/GRATEFUL CROSSING SIGNS**. Learn the motions to verse 5.

**Teacher 1:** Nice to see you again, lads and lasses. Are you enjoying your pretend trip around Ireland? Today, we're moving to a city called Dublin, which was where there was an enemy attack. Show Dublin and the Viking ship on the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER** and uncover the Day 4 Enemy Territory picture.

**Teacher 2:** Have you ever heard of the Vikings? Show the **VIKING PICTURES**. Well, the Vikings were enemies of Ireland's people. They came and took over some areas, like Dublin. The Irish people weren't able to protect, or defend, themselves against the Vikings.

**Teacher 1:** This reminds me of sheep. Sheep are pretty helpless. Reference the **ANIMAL ENEMIES PICTURES** in this and the next paragraph. They can't protect themselves very well against their enemies, like foxes and wolves. Even bugs, like nose bot flies, drive them crazy.

**Teacher 2:** To defend themselves, some animals can use sharp teeth or claws, or they can blend in so they can't be seen, or they can run away fast. But sheep don't have any of those things. If an enemy comes, the sheep may kick at it or just huddle together. They might even run around scared in a panic.

**Teacher 1:** The best protection they have is when their good shepherd is protecting them. He comforts them and cares for them, even in the midst of their enemies, like the foxes and flies.

**Teacher 2:** That reminds me of the next part of Psalm 23. Let's stand and say verses one through four with motions, and then we'll try verse 5 about enemies and God's goodness. Do so.

**Teacher 1:** Even though David, the shepherd who wrote this psalm, had enemies, he was still thankful to God. He had an attitude of gratitude (thankfulness). Rather than grumble, he was usually grateful. Put up the **GRUMBLING/GRATEFUL CROSSING SIGNS** on the top blocks of the bridge. Let's hear more!

# Teach It!

## Part 1: Prepare a Table (5–10 minutes)

**Prep:** Use paper to cover the three sections of the **DAVID AS KING POSTER** so they can be removed as noted below. Buy or make the play dough (see recipe) and roll into balls about the size of ping-pong balls. Make a third brown, a third yellow, and a third red. Store in airtight containers. Laminate a **KING'S TABLE PATTERN** for each person if possible.

**Teacher 2:** When David wrote Psalm 23, he was a king. Let's pretend to put on a king's crown. Do so.

**Teacher 1:** Kings had big fancy tables full of food, didn't they? So when David wrote this, he may have been thinking about how good God was to him and about the big tables of food he had and how he could invite people to eat with him.

**Teacher 2:** Let's pretend we're sitting around a king's table with lots of yummy food. We're going to pass out supplies as we sit at our table. If possible, sit around a table for this. Pass out the **KING'S TABLE PATTERN**. Otherwise, give each child a hard surface like a clipboard with the pattern on it. Pass out the first of the three colors of play dough balls. The first one is brown for bread. When noted, pass out the second one (yellow for oil) and the third one (red for the overflowing cup). Passing out supplies goes faster if everything is organized ahead of time and ready to go.

**Teacher 1:** Okay, let's look at our "tables." What does that look like right here? Point to the picture of the bread. Right, bread. Using your brown play dough, make a loaf of bread and put it on the drawing of the bread while we talk.

**Teacher 2:** Psalm 23 says, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." David had a king's table of food, and he even shared it with his enemy's grandson.

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ★ Grumbling/Grateful Crossing Signs
- ★ Viking Pictures
- ★ Animal Enemies Pictures
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape

- ◆ David as King Poster
- ★ King's Table Pattern, 1 per person, laminated if possible
- Paper to cover David as King Poster
- 3 balls of play dough per person, 1 brown, 1 yellow, and 1 red (stored in airtight containers)
- Table to sit around OR 1 clipboard per person

### PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

- 2 c. flour
- ½ c. salt
- 2 c. warm water
- 4 tsp. cream of tartar
- 2 tbsp. oil
- Brown, yellow, and red food coloring

Combine the first five ingredients in a saucepan. Stir over low to medium heat until the dough is formed and is no longer sticky. Remove from the pan and knead until smooth, kneading in the food coloring by dividing the dough into thirds and making ⅓ brown, ⅓ yellow, and ⅓ red. After it has cooled, store in an airtight container.



✦ You may want to bag up 3 balls per person (one brown, one yellow, one red) and place with the other supplies under chairs ahead of time. Make sure you use zippered baggies. Reset after each rotation.

◆ “Good Luck” or Good God? Poster

★ Day 4 Puppet Script (2 copies)

- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Small empty cup and tape

Uncover the first section of the **DAVID AS KING POSTER**. Remember how Saul chased David around? Well, after Saul died, David invited Saul’s grandson to come and eat with him. Read or paraphrase 2 Samuel 9:3–7. Even though Saul had been his enemy, David showed kindness. This reminds us that God shows kindness to us, and we should show kindness to others.

**Teacher 1:** Now, what do you think that next thing is on your table? Point to the oil flask and take responses. It’s a container of oil. Pass out the second ball of play dough (yellow) and have the kids make the oil in the container while you continue talking. Shepherds used oil to help their sheep. You see, one of the sheep’s enemies was the nose bot fly. These flies got up in a sheep’s nose and drove the sheep crazy. So a shepherd would take oil mixed with other ingredients and rub it all over the sheep’s head and even put it up the sheep’s nose so the flies wouldn’t bother the sheep. Isn’t that a great picture of the shepherd’s kindness and goodness?

**Teacher 2:** Uncover the second section of the **DAVID AS KING POSTER**. God is our Good Shepherd, so when it says he anoints our head with oil, this is a picture of him being kind and good to us. Back when David lived, it was the custom to anoint, or pour oil, on the head of the man who would become the next king. David was anointed this way before he became king. See 1 Samuel 16:11–13. So the table prepared for us shows his goodness and so does the oil.

**Teacher 1:** Okay, what’s the last thing on your table? Yes, it’s a cup. Pass out the third ball of play dough (red). Make it look like the cup is overflowing (spilling over the sides) like this one. Uncover the third section of the **DAVID AS KING POSTER**.

**Teacher 2:** Psalm 23 says, “My cup overflows.” A shepherd would fill a large cup or bucket to overflowing so the sheep would have good water to drink. This is a picture of our Good Shepherd caring for us not just a little but a lot—to overflowing!

**Teacher 1:** Did you know every good thing you have is from God? Here’s a question: Did you sleep in a bed last night? Beds and food and places to live are good gifts from God. Did anyone smile at you or laugh with you this week? Those good gifts are from God (James 1:17). Do you have clothes on? Having clothes to cover you is also a good gift. Can you think of somebody who loves you? Take responses. Did you know love comes from God? We wouldn’t have love from *people* if God himself wasn’t love. And the best good gift of all is Jesus coming to be our Savior so we can be part of his family. All of these show God’s goodness to overflowing, which is something we should think about often. Let’s talk to Paddy more about it.

## Part 2: Puppet Pal—God’s Goodness (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Tape the cup to the puppet’s hand.

**Teacher:** Boys and girls, help me call for Paddy. Do so.

**Puppet:** Come up with an empty cup that supposedly had popcorn in it. Be mumbling and grumbling about it all falling out.

**Teacher:** Whoa! Whoa! What’s going on here?

**Puppet:** Well, I wanted some popcorn. I wanted a *mountain* of popcorn. So I filled my cup to overflowing.

**Teacher:** How high was it? Like this? Puppet indicates even more. This? Keep getting higher. Well, that sure was overflowing! But you know, that reminds me of Psalm 23.

**Puppet:** Say *incredulously*. Psalm 23 talks about *popcorn*?

**Teacher:** No, it talks about our cup overflowing.

**Puppet:** Why would it say that?

**Teacher:** Because it’s showing us that God not only provides good things for us, but he gives us *overflowing* goodness.

**Puppet:** But don’t people go through hard times sometimes? It doesn’t feel good then.

**Teacher:** This verse doesn't mean we never have a hard time. If we live on this planet, we *will* have hard times once in a while.

**Puppet:** Then how does that work?

**Teacher:** Well, even when we go through hard times or have enemies or hard people in our life, God is still God, and God is still good. And as long as we're his children, we have God. That's the best *goodness* we can ever have.

**Puppet:** You mean it's like that prayer that says: God is great; God is good; Let us thank him for our food?

**Teacher:** Yes. *God is great and God is good. And God is kind. And God is gentle. And God is caring. And God is with us. And . . .*

**Puppet:** You could probably go on forever telling how great God is!

**Teacher:** I could because God is everything good. And he shares his goodness with us. Sometimes it's in wonderful things he gives us, like food, a bed, and a pet. And besides those good things, anyone who's part of God's family has the Lord himself for his very own.

**Puppet:** Being a child of God must be the best gift God can give us.

**Teacher:** It is! *Review the gospel here if time.*

**Puppet:** But I have a question: Is it always God who gives us good things, or is it sometimes "good luck"?

**Teacher:** It's always God. There's no such thing as luck!

**Puppet:** But what about pots of gold at the end of rainbows? And lucky horseshoes? And wishing wells?

**Teacher:** There are lots of things we can enjoy just for fun like these. *Show the "GOOD LUCK" OR GOOD GOD? POSTER and point out the pictures.* But these are all just pretend. If we find a four-leaf clover or make a wish when we throw a penny in the wishing well or kiss the Blarney Stone—it's lots of fun, but we're not going to get "good luck." God is in control of everything, and *he* is the giver of all good things.

**Puppet:** Good to know! But even with all those good gifts God gives us, it's still so easy to grumble about stuff, like spilling all my popcorn.

**Teacher:** You can either be on the complain train or have an attitude of gratitude (thankfulness). It all depends on what you think about. God tells us to think about whatever is lovely and good and beautiful and true—not about stuff that bothers us and makes us upset.

**Puppet:** It sure is easy to think about what bugs me, though.

**Teacher:** It is. But try to start thinking about the goodness of *God* rather than the things of *life* that bug us.

**Puppet:** Gotcha! That's good to remember. I will start thinking more about God!

**Teacher:** Well, it's time to move on, so maybe you can go make yourself some more popcorn.

**Puppet:** I think I'll do that. And I'll thank God for it too.

**Teacher:** Sounds good, Paddy. See you tomorrow. Let's say bye, everyone. *Do so.*

### Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Share the [DAY 4 ANIMAL PAL POSTER](#) to summarize the teaching of the day.

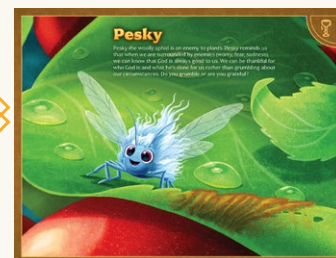
Our animal pal today is a fluffy bug called a woolly aphid.

- What other fluffy animal does our woolly aphid remind you of? *Take responses—a sheep.*
- Her name is Pesky the woolly aphid because she's a pesky little enemy to plants. She loves to eat plants. How do other bugs, like nose bot flies, bother sheep? *Take responses*

◆ Gospel Opportunity



◆ Day 4 Animal Pal Poster  
 Emerald Crossing Maps,  
 1 per person



and help them remember bugs can get in sheep's noses and drive them crazy. Bugs can be like a sheep's enemy.

- **When we're facing enemies or hard times, does God want us to whine and complain?** No. He wants us to remember his goodness and kindness and think on those things.

Continue reviewing with the following questions and have the kids fly around like a woolly aphid if the answer is yes and buzz if it is no.

1. Did David have lots of food on his king's table? Yes—fly around.
2. Did David invite his enemy's grandson, Mephibosheth, to join him? Yes—fly around.
3. Do sheep like it when flies go up their noses? No—buzz.
4. Do shepherds put oil on their sheep's heads? Yes—fly around.
5. Is God so good it's like our cup is overflowing with goodness? Yes—fly around.
6. Should we always be grumbling and complaining? No—buzz. Complaining can be like telling God you don't like who he is and you want more than what he's given you.
7. Should we be grateful (thankful) instead of grumbling? Yes—fly around.
8. Is there such a thing as "good luck"? No—buzz.

Pass out the maps and put on today's stickers.

## Apply It!

In any remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. These are also on the Pre-Primary Student Guides and can be done at home with a parent or caretaker if you are out of time.

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover. Decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

### Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse

**Today's Verse:** You prepare a table before me. . . . My cup overflows. Psalm 23:5

Try the challenge using the **DAY 4 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference and the memory verse music if you have it.

**Challenge:** Say the verse using the **PSALM 23 HAND MOTIONS**. You can either play the video and have the kids do them along with the person in the video, or you can learn them ahead of time and do the motions for and with the kids. The Pre-Primary verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, try saying it again while flying around like a woolly aphid.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. Psalm 23:6

Try the challenge again with tomorrow's verse.

### Part 2: Go and Do

1. Make a picture of some of your favorite things and thank God for his goodness.
2. Ask someone to help you make a snack, tell God thank you, then share it and enjoy it together.
3. When you're sitting around your dinner table each day, take time to go around and share good things you experienced that day.
4. Check [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids) for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Am I thanking God each day?

- ◆ Day 4 Memory Verse Poster
- ◆ Optional: Day 5 Memory Verse Poster
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and player
- Optional: Memory verse music and player
- Optional: Student Guides and supplies



## Song 1: Give Me Oil in My Lamp

Explain that Psalm 23 talks about anointing your head with oil. Anointing means to pour it on.

### VERSE 1

Give me oil in my lamp

(Touch your thumb and third fingers together twice on "oil" and "in," then act like you are pouring it in your lamp on the word *lamp*)

Keep me burning, burning, burning

(Wiggle fingers on "burning, burning, burning")

Give me oil in my lamp, I pray

(Repeat first line, then make praying hands)

Give me oil in my lamp (Repeat first line)

Keep me burning, burning, burning

(Repeat second line)

Keep me burning till the break of day

(Repeat second line, then fling hands out to make a big semicircle)

### CHORUS

Sing hosanna (Wave both arms back and forth over your head in time to the music)

Sing hosanna (Repeat)

Sing hosanna to the King of kings

(Repeat, then put a crown on your head)

Sing hosanna (Repeat)

Sing hosanna (Repeat)

Sing hosanna to the King (Repeat)

Repeat whole song

★ "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" song

★ "God Is So Good" song

Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)

Device to play songs

## Song 2: God Is So Good

Explain what "my cup overflows" means, which is in today's memory verse. God doesn't just take care of us, he does so to overflowing. Our cup of his goodness isn't just partway full. It's overflowing!

### VERSE 1

God is so good

(Point up, then cross arms over your heart)

God is so good (Repeat)

God is so good (Repeat)

He's so good to me

(Repeat, then point to yourself)

### VERSE 2

He gives me food

(Point up, then pretend to eat)

He gives me food (Repeat)

He gives me food (Repeat)

He's so good to me (Repeat last line in verse 1)

### VERSE 3

My cup overflows (Make a cup with one hand and pretend to fill it with the other hand acting like it's holding a pitcher)

My cup overflows (Repeat)

My cup overflows (Repeat)

He's so good to me (Repeat last line in verse 1)

Repeat verse 1



# DAY 5

## Shaky to Sure

### BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:6  
1 Chronicles 22

### LESSON FOCUS

Like David, I can be on the lookout for God's goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.

### APOLOGETICS CONTENT

What should rainbows remind us of?

### MEMORY VERSE

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me.  
Psalm 23:6

### NAME OF GOD

Promise Keeper

### ANIMAL PAL

Shirley the Highland Cow

### TODAY'S EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Feely Meely  
Wet Sensory Table: Rainbows  
Dry Sensory Table: Higher Lands  
Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm  
Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:6

### Today's Lesson at a Glance

- Introduce It!  
Higher Lands in County Antrim
- Teach It!  
Part 1: Goodness and Mercy  
Part 2: Puppet Pal—Promise Keeper  
Part 3: Animal Pal Review
- Apply It!  
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse  
Part 2: Go and Do  
Song 1: "I've Been Redeemed"  
Song 2: "Peace like a River"

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23. Recite it.
- Read 1 Chronicles 22.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, see [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq).
- Pray.

# Devotion 5: The Lord Is My Promise Keeper

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23:6*

If you are hosting your VBS in June, you are likely inundated with rainbows—those formed after the spring rains or those featured in storefronts and in parades. The former are a reminder that God is a promise keeper. After the flood that was sent in judgment on the wickedness of mankind, God gave the beautiful rainbow as a sign of his promise to never flood the earth again. The latter come from those who shake their fists at their holy Creator, determined to live their lives on their own terms, building their faith on the shaky ground of man-made morality.

Our kids are caught up in the undercurrents of this new morality—they have friends who are “out,” friends who are furries, friends who are whatever they choose to be. Once they become emotionally involved, it’s more difficult to say with certainty, “Thus says the Lord.” For example, a friend said, “But what about Steve, who is like an uncle to my kids? How can I tell him his lifestyle is wrong when he’s so fun to be around?” This is part of that moralistic, therapeutic deism worldview—if there is a god, he wants people to be happy in whatever they do and can’t lay claim to their lives.

Yet the *real* rainbow shows us there is a personal God—the one who created us in his image—who has defined right from wrong. Anyone who rebels in *any* way is under his wrath (Proverbs 6:16–19) and needs to repent of sin and trust in Jesus for salvation. In the days of Noah, God showed his wrath on sin and his provision of salvation from judgment through the ark. And he showed—through the rainbow—his mercy for those who walk in newness of life. For us, this personal God has given his personal revelation through his Word and provided his personal salvation through the Word, Jesus Christ. These promises, found in the Bible, provide a sure foundation on which we can stand and proclaim with boldness the need for all to repent, receive salvation, and walk the right path with their gentle Good Shepherd.

Today, as you share with the children, evaluate your own foundation. Are you tossed to and fro by every

“new” idea? Does your position on right and wrong change based on your involvement with others? Or do you stand firm on the unchanging Word of God, evaluating each teaching in light of what Scripture says, then sharing the true gospel with those around you who need to hear it?

May we pray with the Puritans that the Lord, our promise keeper, would continually remind us that his Word is sure and we can trust it. We look forward to the fulfillment of all his promises in that future time when his children will surely have a place in his courts forever.

Glorious Jehovah, my covenant God,  
All thy promises in Christ Jesus are yea and amen,  
and all shall be fulfilled.

Thou hast spoken them, and they shall be done,  
commanded, and they shall come to pass.

Yet I have often doubted them,  
have lived at times as if there were no God.

Lord, forgive me that death in life,  
when I have found something apart from thee,  
when I have been content with ephemeral  
things. . . .

Help me to leave my concerns in thy hands,  
for thou hast power over evil,  
and bringest from it an infinite progression of good,  
until thy purposes are fulfilled. . . .

Grant me a distinct advance in the divine life;  
May I reach a higher platform,  
leave the mists of doubt and fear in the valley,  
and climb to hill-tops of eternal security in Christ  
by simply believing that he cannot lie,  
or turn from his purpose.

Grant me the confidence I ought to have in him  
who is worthy to be praised, and who is blessed for  
evermore.

— Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 132.

# Exploration Stations

See page 12 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

## Discovery Center: Feely Meely

### MATERIALS

- Box with a lid (e.g., shoebox) OR pillowcase
- Optional: piece of black felt
- Objects for the box, representing items from sheep: ice cream scoop, stick of hard butter, cheese, wool scarf, wool socks, adhesive tape, cosmetics (for lanolin), carton of milk, yogurt container

### PREP

If using a box with a lid, cut a round hole in the side that the objects (and a child's hand) will fit through. Optional: place a piece of black felt inside over the opening. Put all the objects or one at a time (depending on gameplay) inside the box or into a pillowcase.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the children take turns putting their hand through the hole in the box (or into the pillowcase), trying to guess one item they are feeling before pulling it out for all to see. OR place one object at a time for all to feel before revealing it.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Did you know sheep aren't just cute creatures, but are really quite useful to us? God thought of everything when he made sheep! We get milk and cheese and butter from sheep and also things like clothes and tape and cosmetics. Let's see if we can guess some things we get from sheep as we play Feely Meely.

## Wet Sensory Table: Rainbows

For wet or dry sensory tables use an under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or "official" sensory table.

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Water
- Paper towels
- Washable markers in rainbow colors—reds, oranges, yellows, greens, blues, violets

### PREP

Partially fill the sensory table with water. On one end of the paper towels, draw a square with colors of the rainbow. Make a bunch of these, one per paper towel.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have each child dip the rainbow end of their paper towel in the water and see what happens. The colors will continue up the paper towel.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Ireland has lots and lots of rainbows—more than other places in the world. It rains a lot there, so lots of rainbows come out.

When I think of rainbows, I think of God, who gave us rainbows. Do you remember when the first rainbow happened? [Take responses—after the flood of Noah's time.](#) Just like God sent the rainbow and promised he would never flood the world again, he also promised in Psalm 23 that goodness and mercy shall follow his children all their lives. And they shall live in the house of the Lord forever. The rainbow is a great reminder that God keeps his promises.

## Dry Sensory Table: Higher Lands

### MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic sand or play sand
- Blocks to build a castle or other castle pieces

### PREP

Build up some areas of sand to make higher sections. Add in the castle pieces.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the kids build castles on the high areas of the sand.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Ireland has some places that are higher than others. These higher lands remind us of heaven. Someday we will live with God in heaven if we're part of his family—his flock. Is the Lord your shepherd?

## Dramatic Play: Fitzpatrick's Farm

### MATERIALS

- Days 1–4 Dramatic Play materials
- Any items you want to add in

### PREP

Add in any last supplies today you held back.

### DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the children dress up and pretend to be shepherds on the sheep farm.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

It's been an amazing time here in Ireland! Who can tell me something they learned at *Emerald Crossing* this week?

## Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:6

See directions for Day 1 but use the [Day 5 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#).

# Introduce It!

## Higher Lands in County Antrim (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Learn the motions to verse 6. Move the Days 1–4 **CROSSING SIGNS** down and cut apart the **SHAKY/SURE CROSSING SIGNS**.

**Teacher 1:** Well, here we are, lads and lasses, at our last spot in the Emerald Isle—the higher lands in Northern Ireland. The higher lands are way up high, so we're going to have to climb to get there. Pretend to climb and then sit down. Show the higher lands on the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER** and uncover the Day 5 Slemish Mountain picture. Explain that the higher lands can remind us of heaven.

**Teacher 2:** This picture of Slemish Mountain is thought to be where Ireland's most famous shepherd lived. Do you know who it is—St. Pat\_\_\_? Right, St. Patrick! Of course, David was the famous shepherd who wrote Psalm 23 (he lived in Israel), but St. Patrick was also a shepherd for a while. But he didn't start out as one. And he didn't start out with the name Patrick.

- St. Patrick was born in Britain to Christian parents and was given the name Maewyn. Have you ever met anyone named Maewyn?
- As a boy, he heard the truth about God but didn't believe it himself.
- When he was 16, he was captured by pirates and taken by ship to Ireland where he was sold as a slave. Can you imagine being captured by pirates?
- For the next six years in the Irish countryside, he was a shepherd to his master's sheep. It was during those lonely times he began praying to God.
- He claimed he was told in a vision (like a dream) that a ship was ready to take him home, so he escaped and hiked 200 miles to the coast, where he did indeed board a ship and eventually return home.
- Back in Britain, Maewyn claimed to have another vision in which he heard the people of Ireland calling him back.
- He studied about God and became a bishop, changed his name to Patrick, and headed back to Ireland. Show the **ST. PATRICK PICTURE**.
- Now he was a free man, and he used his next 30 years to tell the people of Ireland about God. It's said that 120,000 people became believers and over 300 churches were built through his work.
- He died on March 17, 461, the day we celebrate St. Patrick's Day.
- Although most St. Patrick's Day symbols have nothing to do with St. Patrick himself, one item he did use was the shamrock (clover). He used the three lobes to teach about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is not a perfect analogy, and we don't suggest using it.

**Teacher 1:** So both David and Patrick were shepherds and would have known a lot about sheep. We've learned that sheep can wander away and get lost from their shepherds, sheep like calm water, sheep are helped by someone to guide them, and they aren't great at protecting themselves. But did you know that *sheep know their own shepherd's voice and are loyal to him*? Let's pretend we're in a sheep pen, and we'll act this out. Tell the children which of you will be the shepherd to listen for. Have the "sheep" close their eyes and listen for the right voice. When they hear the wrong voice, they *shouldn't* look up. When they hear the right voice, they *should* look up. Explain that a few shepherds sometimes put their sheep in the same pen, but the sheep won't listen to any shepherd but their own.

**Teacher 2:** When the sheep hear their shepherd's voice, they listen and follow him wherever he goes. They're loyal to their shepherd because he's shown them love and care. That's like us. We should love our Shepherd, God, because our Shepherd loves us. He's loving, kind, and good. Let's stand and say the first part of Psalm 23 with our hand motions. Do so.

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ★ Shaky/Sure Crossing Signs
- ★ St. Patrick Picture
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes
- Mounting putty or tape

- ◆ Goodness Poster and Mercy Poster
- ★ Goodness and Mercy Footprints
- ★ Goodness and Mercy Boards, 1 per person
- Writing utensils, 1 per person
- White card stock
- Optional: small portion of M&M's per person

◆ Gospel Opportunity



**Teacher 1:** Now let's add the last verse. Do so. Put up the **SHAKY/SURE CROSSING SIGNS**. This verse has the word *shall*. It doesn't mean "maybe"; it means "for sure." Our verse says we *shall* have goodness and mercy following us, and we *shall* live with God forever.

## Teach It!

### Part 1: Goodness and Mercy (5–10 minutes)

**Prep:** Cut apart the **GOODNESS AND MERCY POSTERS**. Cut apart and place the **GOODNESS AND MERCY FOOTPRINTS** around the room. Reset the room for each rotation.

**Teacher 2:** What does our verse say will follow us all the days of our lives? **Goodness and mercy**. But what are goodness and mercy? Well, goodness is everything good we experience—all from God—like food, clothes, warmth, water, hugs, and lots of other things. And . . . goodness is God himself! The Bible says God is good, like we talked about yesterday! What letter does *goodness* start with? Take responses and show the **GOODNESS POSTER**.

**Teacher 1:** Mercy is when God is being kind to us and *not* giving us what we deserve. For instance, we really don't deserve to go to heaven because we're sinful and disobey God. But God shows us mercy and gives us eternal life when we admit, believe, and forever receive him. Review the gospel here as led. What letter does *mercy* start with? Take responses and show the **MERCY POSTER**.

**Teacher 2:** Let's have our goodness and mercy posters follow us as we walk around the room. While we do, be looking for little goodness and mercy footprints that are hidden somewhere. They look like this. Show one. Everyone up. Here we go! Walk around the room with Teacher 2 holding the **GOODNESS AND MERCY POSTERS** behind the line of kids as if goodness and mercy are following them. Encourage the kids to find and hold onto goodness and mercy footprints as they go. Hold off on reading them. When all footprints are found, sit back down. If time, pass out the **GOODNESS AND MERCY BOARDS** and a writing utensil, one of each per child. If short on time, just adapt the following and do it as a discussion without using the **GOODNESS AND MERCY BOARDS**.

**Teacher 1:** Now, let's read each footprint and see if you can find it on your **GOODNESS AND MERCY BOARDS**.

Hold up and read each footprint card, one at a time. Have kids find it on their sheet and circle it, then see if they can give an example. For instance, for food, they may say pizza or ice cream. Or if time, give each a small portion of M&M's and use those on the sheets instead of circling it. They can eat them when done as long as nobody has an allergy to them. Speed this up or lengthen it as time allows. Teacher 2 can leave part way through to get behind the puppet stage.

**Teacher 1:** Goodness and mercy are wonderful gifts from God. Let's talk to Paddy now.

### Part 2: Puppet Pal—Promise Keeper (5 minutes)

**Prep:** Tape a building block to the puppet's hand. Use the sheets of paper to cover the two sides of the **LORD'S HOUSE POSTER**.

**Teacher:** Have everyone help you call for Paddy.

**Puppet:** Come up with a block taped to one hand.

**Teacher:** Looks like you've got a building block there.

**Puppet:** Yeah, I was just gathering my blocks to see if I had enough to build a house.

**Teacher:** That sounds like King David.

**Puppet:** You mean the guy who wrote Psalm 23?

**Teacher:** Yep, the same one.

**Puppet:** Did he want to build a house out of blocks?

**Teacher:** Actually, he wanted to build a real house—a house for the Lord. It was going to be a really special place for God and his people.

**Puppet:** Like a church?

- ◆ Lord's House Poster
- ★ Day 5 Puppet Script (2 copies)
- Blank paper to cover Lord's House Poster
- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Building block and tape

**Teacher:** Kind of. It was called a temple. [Uncover the first picture on the LORD'S HOUSE POSTER.](#) David wanted to build this special place for God, but God told him just to gather all the supplies and then his son, Solomon, would actually build it.

**Puppet:** Is that what happened?

**Teacher:** Yep! David got everything ready, and Solomon built God's house, the temple. So when David was writing Psalm 23:6, he was probably thinking about that.

**Puppet:** After the goodness and mercy part, it does say, "I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

**Teacher:** Right! After Solomon built it, there was a house of the Lord here on earth. But something that's cool is . . . there's even *another* house of the Lord. [Show the second half of the LORD'S HOUSE POSTER.](#)

**Puppet:** Where is it?

**Teacher:** It's in heaven. When the psalm says, "I'll dwell in the house of the LORD forever," it means I'll live in heaven with God forever—if I'm in God's family.

**Puppet:** Wow! Is that for sure?

**Teacher:** It's for sure. God said it, so that settles it because God is a promise keeper. He even put a big rainbow in the sky to remind us that he keeps his promises!

**Puppet:** When was that?

**Teacher:** Do you remember hearing about Noah building a huge ship called an ark?

**Puppet:** Yes! Then God sent a big flood that covered the earth.

**Teacher:** Correct. Well, after the flood, God promised Noah he would never send another flood like that again.

**Puppet:** Did he keep that promise?

**Teacher:** Yes. God keeps every promise. The rainbow reminds us of that.

**Puppet:** Rainbows also remind us that there are pots of gold at the end of them.

**Teacher:** Hold on a second. Where'd you get that idea?

**Puppet:** I see pictures of rainbows with pots of gold all the time.

**Teacher:** There are real rainbows in the sky. Rainbows with pots of gold aren't for real.

**Puppet:** They aren't?

**Teacher:** Nope. The pictures you see of rainbows with pots of gold are just pretend, even if they're fun to look at. But sometimes people use rainbows in ways that are against God's design for rainbows.

**Puppet:** Well, I'm glad the ones in the sky are God's! They're so beautiful!

**Teacher:** They sure are. It's never boring to see a rainbow, is it? It's always a wow! When you see a rainbow in the sky, let it remind you that God is a promise keeper, and you really *will* live with him some day if you are his child!

**Puppet:** Admit, believe, forever receive. That's how we are part of the Good Shepherd's flock, God's family.

**Teacher:** Yep, that's right!

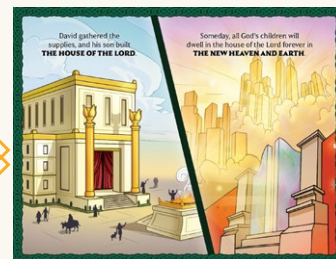
**Puppet:** Well, it sure has been "good luck" that I ran into you to talk about this—wait!—not "good luck." Let me try that again. It sure has been a *blessing* that I ran into you to talk about this.

**Teacher:** Way to go, Paddy. There's no such thing as luck. But it has been a blessing. Well, it's time to say bye to Paddy, everyone. Let's wave as he takes off. [Do so.](#)

### Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Share the [DAY 5 ANIMAL PAL POSTER](#) to summarize today's teaching.

Our animal pal today is a Highland cow.



◆ Day 5 Animal Pal Poster

□ Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



- The words “higher lands” sound kind of like “highlands.” What do higher lands remind us of today? Heaven.
- Our Highland cow is named Shirley. What does her name remind us of in Psalm 23:6? Start to say the verse together and take responses.
- If something is for sure, is it a maybe? Take responses—no, surely means it’s for sure and not shaky or a maybe. Surely God’s children will dwell in the house of the Lord—heaven—forever.
- What two things shall for sure follow us all the days of our lives? One starts with a “G.” Goodness. And one starts with an “M.” Mercy. So God promises his children goodness and mercy while on earth and a heavenly home forever. God is good!

Continue reviewing with the following questions and have the kids chew their cud if the answer is yes and moo if it is no.

1. Did David gather supplies to build God’s house? Yes—chew their cud.
2. Did David build the house for God himself? No—moo. His son Solomon did.
3. Will God’s children for sure live in heaven with God some day? Yes—chew their cud.
4. Does God always keep his promises? Yes—chew their cud.
5. God sent a worldwide flood during Noah’s time. Has he ever sent another worldwide flood? No—moo. There have been little floods here and there, but never another flood that covered the world. God keeps his promises.
6. Will all the promises in the Bible come true? Yes—chew their cud.
7. Do rainbows remind us that God is a promise keeper? Yes—chew their cud.

Pass out the maps and put today’s sticker on. They can keep these today to take home.

## Apply It!

In any remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. These are also on the Pre-Primary Student Guides and can be done at home with a parent or caretaker if you are out of time.

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover. Decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

You may want to show the **BOOKMARKS** that are available if you plan to give these out.

### Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse

**Today’s Verse:** Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. Psalm 23:6

Review the memory verse, using the **DAY 5 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference and the memory verse music if you have it.

**Challenge:** Say the verse using the **PSALM 23 HAND MOTIONS**. You can either play the video and have the kids do them along with the person in the video, or you can learn them ahead of time and do the motions for and with the kids. The Pre-Primary verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, try saying them again while moving around like a cow.

### Part 2: Go and Do

1. Use blocks to build a house. Make sure the bottom part, the foundation, isn’t shaky! See how tall you can make your house without it falling down. God’s promises are sure, not shaky.
2. Pray and tell God thank you for the good things he gives you and for his mercy, letting you become part of his family when you trust in Jesus.
3. Put a copy of Psalm 23 or your Psalm 23 book in your bedroom, bathroom, or kitchen and say it or read it out loud every day. Use your craft from today or make your own.
4. Check AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids for more fun information!

Ask yourself these questions: What’s something I’ve learned this week at VBS? Is Jesus my Good Shepherd?

#### ◆ Day 5 Memory Verse Poster

★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and player

- Optional: Memory verse music and player
- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Bookmarks, 1 per person



## Song 1: I've Been Redeemed

This is an echo song, so the leader sings it and the kids echo it back as noted. Explain that “redeemed” means to be saved by God—part of his family. There’s only one way to be part of God’s family—to admit, believe, and forever receive.

### CHORUS

I've been redeemed (Kids echo)  
 By the blood of the Lamb (Kids echo)  
 I've been redeemed (Kids echo)  
 By the blood of the Lamb  
 (Everyone sings together)  
 I've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb  
 (Everyone sings together while clapping)  
 Filled with the Holy Spirit I am  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 All my sins are washed away  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 I've been redeemed—praise the Lord!  
 (Sing together and clap, then raise hands on  
 “praise the Lord”)

### VERSE 1

Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In a rockin' chair (Kids echo)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In a rockin' chair (Everyone sings together)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven in a rockin' chair  
 (Everyone sings together while clapping)  
 Cuz' you'll rock and rock, but you won't get  
 there (Sing together and clap)  
 All my sins are washed away  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 I've been redeemed—praise the Lord!  
 (Sing together and clap, then raise hands on  
 “praise the Lord”)

### VERSE 2

Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In an old, old car (Kids echo)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In an old, old car (Everyone sings together)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven in an old, old car  
 (Everyone sings together while clapping)  
 Cuz' an old, old car won't go that far  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 All my sins are washed away  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 I've been redeemed—praise the Lord!  
 (Sing together and clap, then raise hands on  
 “praise the Lord”)

### VERSE 3

Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In a rocket ship (Kids echo)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven (Kids echo)  
 In a rocket ship (Everyone sings together)  
 Oh you can't get to heaven in a rocket ship  
 (Everyone sings together while clapping)  
 Cuz' a rocket ship won't make that trip (Sing  
 together and clap)  
 All my sins are washed away  
 (Sing together and clap)  
 I've been redeemed—praise the Lord!  
 (Sing together and clap, then raise hands on  
 “praise the Lord”)  
 Repeat the chorus

- ★ “I've Been Redeemed” song
- ★ “Peace like a River” song
- Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)
- Device to play songs

## Song 2: Peace like a River

Remind the kids that anyone who is God's child can have peace, joy, and love (goodness and mercy too!) following them all the days of their life.

### VERSE 1

I've got peace like a river  
 (Put up peace sign with second and third  
 fingers, then bob hand along horizontally to  
 make a river wave)  
 I've got peace like a river (Repeat)  
 I've got peace like a river in my soul (Repeat  
 and cross hands over heart on “soul”)  
 (Repeat those three lines)

### VERSE 2

I've got love like an ocean  
 (Draw a heart in the air with pointer fingers,  
 then place both hands in front of you, facing  
 out and dip them down and back to make a  
 big ocean wave)  
 I've got love like an ocean (Repeat)  
 I've got love like an ocean in my soul (Repeat  
 and cross hands over heart on “soul”)  
 (Repeat those three lines)



**VERSE 3**

**I've got joy like a fountain**

(Point to your smiling face, then make a fountain with your two hands coming together and splashing upward and out)

**I've got joy like a fountain** (Repeat)

**I've got joy like a fountain in my soul**

(Repeat and cross hands over heart on "soul")

(Repeat those three lines)

**VERSE 4**

**I've got peace like a river** (Put up peace sign with second and third fingers, then bob hand along horizontally to make a river wave)

**I've got love like an ocean** (Draw a heart in the air with pointer fingers, then place both hands in front of you, facing out and dip them down and back to make a big ocean wave)

**I've got joy like a fountain in my soul**

(Point to your smiling face, then make a fountain with your two hands coming together and splashing upward and out. Cross hands over heart on "soul")

(Repeat those three lines)





# Leading a Child to Christ

AnswersVBS presents many opportunities to share the gospel, and every teacher should be ready to explain how to be saved, whether it's one-on-one or with a small group. Use the following steps as a guide to explain salvation, ask questions, read Scripture, and pray with and for students.

**Pray.** Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone, but we can ask God to prepare a child's heart to receive the truth.

**Explain.** Prepare a clear presentation of the gospel. Avoid abstract phrases like "asking Jesus into your heart" and instead use clear biblical language, such as "becoming a child of God." You may want to use the following three key words to share how to receive eternal life:

- » **Admit** you have sinned (disobeyed God's commands). Ask God to forgive you of your sins. The penalty for sin is death (Romans 6:23).
- » **Believe** Jesus, God's Son, died in your place and rose again, paying the penalty for your sins (John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10).
- » **Receive** the gift of eternal life by telling God you want to be his child (John 1:12).

**Ask.** To encourage discussion and to gauge understanding, ask open-ended questions, such as the following:

- » What is sin?
- » Can you think of specific sins you have done?
- » Are you bothered by your sin?
- » Who is Jesus?
- » Why did Jesus have to die?
- » Why did Jesus rise from the dead?
- » When you receive the gift of eternal life, is there anything else you have to do? Emphasize that salvation is not based on what we do but is a gift from God through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9).

**Respond.** When children demonstrate a basic understanding of salvation, encourage them to talk with their parents about what it means to become a child of God (if parents are believers). If they come from a non-Christian home, encourage them to express belief in Jesus through prayer, confessing sin and asking Jesus to save them.

Some children may not be ready to make a decision. For children who have previously made a decision, they may need reassurance or want to confess sin.

- » Read Romans 10:9-10 and John 10:28-29 with those who need assurance, encouraging them to trust in God's promises.
- » For those wanting to confess sin, read 1 John 1:9 and remind them that God forgives when they repent (turn from sin).

**Celebrate.** Rejoice together! Read Luke 15:10.

**Grow.** Explain that children of God receive the Holy Spirit, who helps them understand and obey the Bible. Share practical ways for them to grow in faith and follow Jesus:

- » Read the Bible and obey what it says. (Provide a Bible.)
- » Attend a church that teaches that the Bible is God's true Word.
- » Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
- » Tell others about Jesus.

As you faithfully teach and guide children in the gospel, trust God to work in their hearts. Continue to pray for them and encourage them as they grow in their understanding of what it means to follow Christ.



# Supply List

## Every Day

- Map of Ireland Poster
- Memory Verse Posters
- Animal Pal Posters
- Puppet Scripts, 2 copies daily
- Psalm 23 Hand Motions
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape for posters
- Blank paper to cover photos on map
- Player for verse hand motions
- Boy or girl puppet and puppet stage
- Clipboard
- Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person
- Device to stream or Simple Songs for Kids CD
- Optional: Memory verse music and device to play it on

## Day 1

- Different Sheep Poster
- David as Shepherd Poster

- Gospel Poster
- Lost/Found Crossing Signs
- Blank paper or sticky notes to cover Gospel Poster
- Dry-erase board or white poster board
- Markers or dry-erase markers in various colors

## Day 2

- David and Goliath Motions Poster
- David and Goliath Poster
- Bible Basics Poster
- Wrong Path/Right Path Crossing Signs
- Goliath Picture
- Irish jig music and device for audio or video
- Measuring tape

## Day 3

- David and Saul Poster
- Fearful/Peaceful Crossing Signs
- Philippians 4:6, 7, and 8 Verse Sheets

- Blank paper to cover poster
- Pool noodle
- Optional: Action figures
- Shepherd's rod (can use a walking stick)
- Shepherd's staff (can use a cane)
- Stuffed animal wolf (or a picture of a wolf)

## Day 4

- David as King Poster
- "Good Luck" or Good God? Poster
- Grumbling/Grateful Crossing Signs
- Viking Pictures
- Animal Enemies Pictures
- King's Table Pattern, 1 per person, laminated if possible
- Paper to cover David as King Poster
- 3 balls of play dough per person, 1 brown, 1 yellow, and 1 red (in airtight containers)
- Table to sit around OR 1 clipboard per person

- Small empty cup and tape

## Day 5

- Goodness and Mercy Posters
- Lord's House Poster
- Shaky/Sure Crossing Signs
- St. Patrick Picture
- Goodness and Mercy Footprints
- Goodness and Mercy Boards, 1 per person
- Writing utensils, 1 per person
- White card stock
- Optional: Small portion of M&M's per person
- Paper to cover Lord's House Poster
- Building block and tape

## Student Extras

- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Bookmarks

# Exploration Stations

## Discovery Center

### DAY 1: SHEEP MEMORY GAME

- Memory Game Sheep Cards
- White card stock

### DAY 2: CAN "EWE" GUESS THE SMELL?

- 8–10 covered containers with various smelling objects or cotton balls with drops of a different smell on each

### DAY 3: EWE-NIQUE EYESIGHT

- Close-up Pictures

### DAY 4: SHAVING CREAM SHEARING

- Sheep Shearing Pattern, 1 per person, laminated
- Shaving cream, dollop per person
- Paper plates, 1 per person
- Craft sticks, 1 per person

### DAY 5: FEELY MEELY

- Box with a lid (e.g., shoebox) OR pillowcase
- Optional: Piece of black felt
- Objects for the box: Ice cream scoop, stick of hard butter, cheese, wool scarf, wool socks, adhesive tape, cosmetics, carton of milk, yogurt container

## Wet Sensory Table

### EVERY DAY

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Water

### DAY 1: SHEEP WASHING

- Waterproof play sheep—at least 6

- Waterproof play person or people (shepherd or shepherds)
- Small scrub brushes (e.g., nail brushes)
- Soap or "tearless" shampoo

### DAY 2: STILL WATER

- Sand buckets that are taller than the water level
- Small rocks
- Waterproof play sheep

### DAY 3: TAKE AWAY THE SHADOWS

- Cold water
- Ice cubes (in different shapes) made with dark food coloring
- Tongs, scoops, spoons, bowls

### DAY 4: FILLED TO OVERFLOWING

- Different kinds of cups
- Scoops, measuring cups, and funnels

### DAY 5: RAINBOWS

- Paper towels
- Washable markers in rainbow colors—reds, oranges, yellows, greens, blues, violets

## Dry Sensory Table

### EVERY DAY

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic sand (preferred) or play sand (not regular sand)
- Baby wipes if using play sand

### DAY 1: LOST SHEEP

- Lots of play sheep—either cotton balls or pom-poms to represent sheep, laminated sheep pictures, or rubber toy sheep (all alike except one)
- Tongs, spoons, sand toys for digging

### DAY 2: PLAY PATHS

- Craft sticks and small pebbles
- Small plastic play sheep
- Small plastic sheepdog

### DAY 3: HIGHS AND LOWS

- Sand buckets
- Digging tools—toy hand shovels and trowels, craft sticks, large spoons
- Toy cars

### DAY 4: BUGS, BUGS, BUGS

- Plastic or rubber bugs
- Magnifying glasses and/or binoculars
- Spoons or tongs to "catch" the bugs
- Plastic jars to put the bugs in

### DAY 5: HIGHER LANDS

- Blocks to build a castle or other castle pieces

## Dramatic Play:

### Fitzpatrick's Farm

#### EVERY DAY

- Decorating supplies as listed in Decorating Decisions—inside a farmhouse kitchen
- Dress-up supplies in a basket or crate

- Stuffed farm animals—particularly sheep (or use white balloons with faces drawn on them for "sheep")
- Props such as play food, play cooking utensils and pots and pans, play plates and dishes, tin pails, woven baskets, play broom, play dog bed and stuffed animal dog, etc.

### DAY 2

- Additional stuffed or plastic animals, such as sheepdogs
- Green plastic tablecloth cut in a "path"
- Painter's tape
- Bible (that can be child-handled)

### DAY 3

- Shepherds' staffs (canes can work)
- Stuffed sheep or balloon sheep

### DAY 4

- Fake bugs, snakes, mice

### DAY 5

- Any items you want to add in

## Coloring Corner

### EVERY DAY

- Memory Verse Coloring Sheet for each day
- Decorating supplies as listed in Decorating Decisions—inside a sheep pen
- Markers or crayons in a woven basket or tin pail
- Optional: Glue sticks and additional textured materials to add to sheets

\*Available in the Teacher Resource Kit.

\*Download from [AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources](http://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources).



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