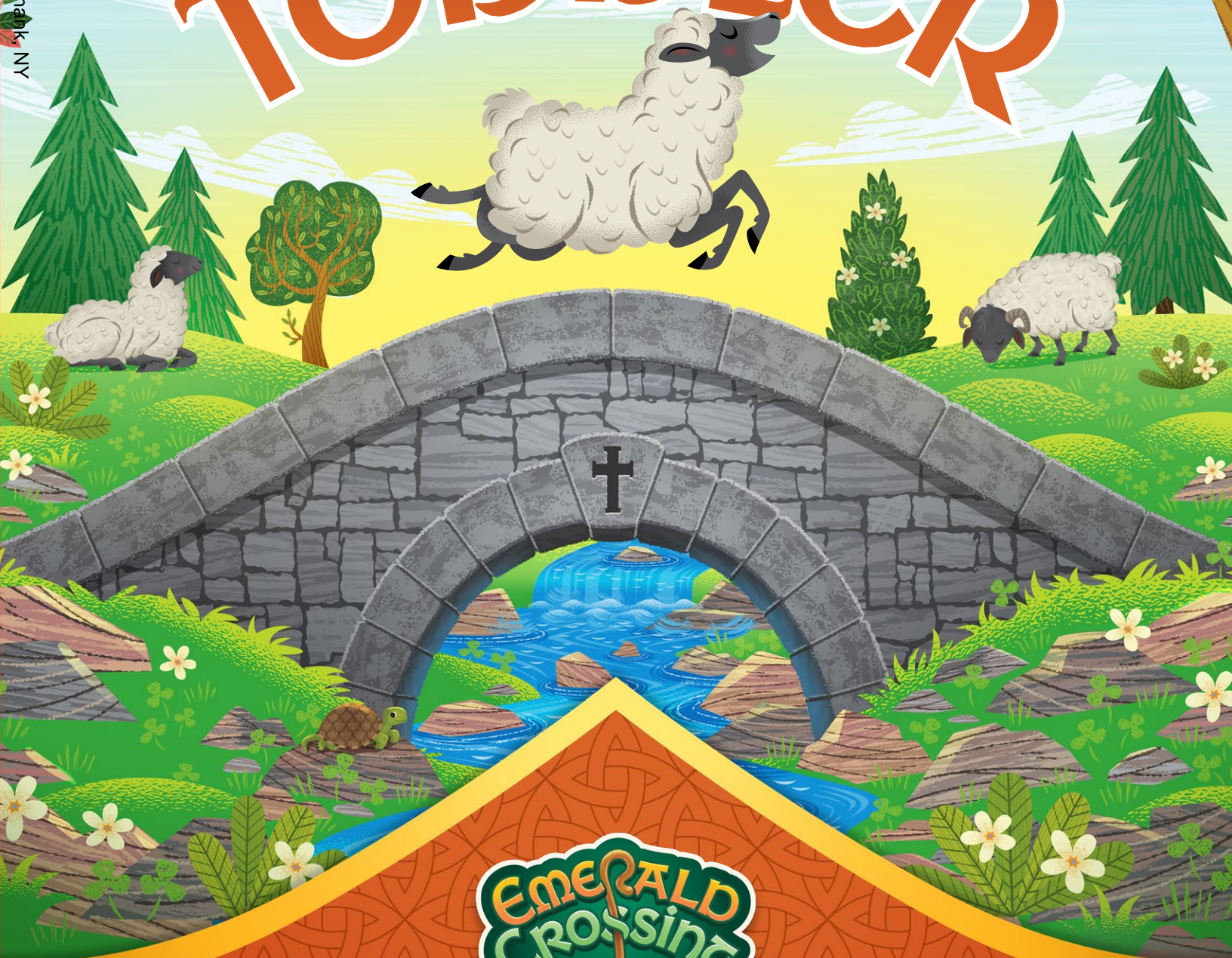


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FLOCK TALK TIME  BIBLE LESSONS

TOPPLER



EMERALD
CROSSING
Answers **VBS**



Visit the Teaching folder at:
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	
Titles	Lost to Found	Wrong Path to Right Path	Fearful to Peaceful	Grumbling to Grateful	Shaky to Sure	
Locations	Sheep Farm in Donegal	Green Pastures in County Galway	Black Valley in County Kerry	Enemy Territory in Dublin	Higher Lands in County Antrim	
Bible Passages	Psalm 23:1 1 Samuel 17:34–37	Psalm 23:2–3 1 Samuel 17	Psalm 23:4 1 Samuel 19–23	Psalm 23:5 1 Samuel 16:1–13	Psalm 23:6 1 Chronicles 22	
Lesson Focus	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.	
Apologetics Content	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?	
Memory Verses	Psalm 23:1	Psalm 23:2	Psalm 23:4	Psalm 23:5	Psalm 23:6	
Names of God	Shepherd	Leader	Comforter	Provider	Promise Keeper	
Animal Pals	Mia the Connemara Sheep	Guide the Border Collie	Shadow the Raven	Pesky the Woolly Aphid	Shirley the Highland Cow	
Exploration Stations	Discovery Center	Sheep Memory Game	Can “Ewe” Guess the Smell?	Ewe-nique Eyesight	New Pastures	Now You See It
	Wet Sensory Table	Sheep Washing	Still Water	Take Away the Shadows	Filled to Overflowing	Rainbow Colors
	Dry Sensory Table	Lost Sheep	Play Paths	Highs and Lows	Bugs, Bugs, Bugs	Higher Lands
	Dramatic Play	Fitzpatrick’s Farm	Fitzpatrick’s Farm	Fitzpatrick’s Farm	Fitzpatrick’s Farm	Fitzpatrick’s Farm
	Coloring Corner	Psalm 23:1	Psalm 23:2	Psalm 23:4	Psalm 23:5	Psalm 23:6
Celtic Corner Science	Sticky Sheep	Growing Green Pastures	Shadows and Light	Oil and Water Mix-Up	Making Rainbows	
Celtic Corner Crafts	Fluffy Cotton Sheep Sheep Headband	My Shepherd Picture Frame Border Collie Stick Puppet	Raven Hanger He Makes Me Lie Down Night-Light	Psalm 23 Sensory Book You Prepare a Table Place Mat	Ribbon Rainbow Hanger Rainbow Promise Crown	
Green Meadow Games	Shift the Sheep Follow the Shepherd	Good Doggies How Tall Was Goliath?	Birds of a Feather Relay Blindfold Crawl	Hunt for Woolly Quiet, Quiet	Animal Pal Pretend God’s Promise Game	
Still Water Snacks	Sweet Sheep Hay Bales	Border Collie Paw Prints Avocado Toast	Bread Staffs with Butter Mini Birds’ Nests	Shamrock “Biscuits” Bug Bites	Mini Cow Patties Jello Jigglers	
Cool Contests	Guess the Rainbow Skittles	Group Spirit Day	Dress-Up Day	Bible Challenge	Mission Money Mania	



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Toddler 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**, a high-energy beginning that includes wacky intros, lively songs, a Mission Moment, and prayer.

Then Toddlers will experience their own special schedule in a self-contained room that highlights five fun sites:

Flock Talk Time, where God's Word is 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 some 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, 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-chart, 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 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.

Get ready! Get set! Get excited! 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.

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 Irish animals, 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 of 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 Toddler 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 [downloadable resources](#). Begin to pray and plan now, then continue to pray during and after VBS.
3. Attend the Teacher Workshop and the Gospel Workshop. Be prepared to share the good news of salvation!
4. In this guide:
 - » Teaching tips are marked with a .
 - » Materials are listed next to each activity.
 - » The "teacher says" portion is bold.
5. If possible, gather all the supplies for the Exploration Stations and lessons before the week begins. It's particularly helpful to organize them by station and by day so they are ready to easily switch.
6. Ask group guides to help man the Exploration Stations. Post the directions and teaching tie-ins at each station every day as easy references for your helpers.
7. Modify the Exploration Stations as your situation warrants. Set them up as suggested or incorporate one or more ideas into the lesson time to do with the whole group together.
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. 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.
10. 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 different pockets in a vest. Teach in a way that makes you feel comfortable.
11. Call the children by name as you interact with them. Name tags help with this.
12. Think safety. Read the [Child Safety Precautions](#) for more information.
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. 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.
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 it, 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 each 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 a unique and special creation from the hand of our amazing Creator. With all their uniqueness, however, kids often share some common characteristics. Use the following guidelines as a benchmark 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 characteristics of children in general and then characteristics of Toddlers, ages 2–4 years, specifically.

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 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 about God.

Characteristics of Toddlers

Physical Characteristics

Toddlers are active! They're on the move—running, climbing, and exploring. They're beginning to perform simple tasks, like using scissors. They can easily get hurt as they are rapidly developing physical skills but don't have wisdom to know when to stop running, climbing, etc.

Takeaways for Us

- Keep Toddlers moving. Engage them actively as much as possible. Have them do motions to songs and actions to Bible accounts.
- Supervise them carefully.
- Provide chunky, nontoxic materials.
- Intersperse periods of sitting with something active.

Emotional/Social Characteristics

Toddlers want to do things by themselves, such as picking out their clothes and dressing. They like imaginative, dramatic play. They're testing their powers and saying "no" a lot. They often want to please adults and try to mimic their behaviors. They're affectionate toward others. Toddlers are fearful of things that are loud and out of the ordinary.

Takeaways for Us

- Let Toddlers be helpers. Give them simple one-step jobs to do. 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.
- Be consistently present all week; establish routines and stick with them.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Adults—don't dress in elaborate costumes that may seem unfamiliar and scary.
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

Spiritual/Mental Characteristics

Toddlers are curious and want to touch, smell, feel, see, and experience their world. They have short attention spans and learn/communicate in short sentences. They understand short and simple directions. They believe what you say. Their attitude toward God and others is in the process of being formed during these years.

Takeaways for Us

- Involve Toddlers' senses in learning! The more they can touch, smell, see, taste, and feel, the better!
- Give clear, simple directions.
- Keep activities and lessons short. Toddlers' attention spans are only a few minutes long before they need to switch to something new, so keep it moving!
- 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.

Toddler Schedule

When working with this age group, flexibility is key. In some cases, they are dropped off early and picked up late by parents who have VBS responsibilities. It may be important to revamp the schedule as necessary by removing some activities and allowing for more rest and free play.

Be aware that young ones get tired as the day wears on—even more so as the week wears on. The schedule may work fine at the beginning of the day or week, but toward the end, less is often better.

Exploration Station Time

There are five Exploration Stations: Discovery Center, Wet Sensory, Dry Sensory, Dramatic Play, and Coloring Corner. These stations should be set up at the end of the room opposite where the lesson time is held or in an adjoining room. See the Exploration Stations Supply List on the back cover for all the supplies needed each day.

If stations aren't possible, simply choose one or more of the station activities to incorporate somewhere in your lesson as a group activity.

Children may rotate together through each station every few minutes, or they may independently move from one station to another, which is what our test churches do. They don't need to do every station each day, although the coloring page should be sent home daily—colored or uncolored. Many of these stations are big hits and can be repeated on other days.

Check the decorating section for more specifics on setting up the Dramatic Play area as the farmhouse kitchen on Fitzpatrick's Farm. In the Wet Sensory area, use a small wading pool or a large, clear, under-the-bed storage container. Place it on a plastic tarp or tablecloth to catch the spills. The Coloring Corner is set up as a sheep pen.

Post the signs with each station's name. Also, consider posting the directions and Teaching Tie-In for each station so the group guides can share the main point with the kids. (See the Resource Downloads at AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources.)

Lesson Time

The lesson time is divided into three sections:

- Introduce It!
- Teach It!
- Apply It!

The lesson time works best with a two-person team. One person serves as Teacher One and the other as Teacher Two, who is also the puppet player. Decide ahead of time who will do what. The lesson can also be taught alone, but find someone, such as a group guide or other staff person, to help when you need an extra set of hands, especially during the puppet time.

Check the Resource Catalog for a fun T-shirt and hat to wear while you teach!

Below is a sample schedule with descriptions of each time period. Check with your director for a copy of your specific schedule and room assignment.

Sample Schedule

Based on a 3-Hour VBS

Note: This schedule reflects a 30-minute period before VBS begins to accommodate VBS parents' schedules.

8:30–9:00	Arrival/Free Play Morning VBS Program—Breakfast Snack
9:00–9:15	Emerald Isle Assembly—Opening
9:15–9:40	Exploration Stations (Session 1)
9:40–10:05	Flock Talk Time
10:05–10:30	Green Meadow Games
10:30–10:45	Celtic Corner Science and Crafts (Session 1)
10:45–11:00	Exploration Stations (Session 2)
11:00–11:20	Still Water Snacks and Rest Time
11:20–11:35	Celtic Corner Science and Crafts (Session 2)
11:35–11:55	Emerald Isle Assembly—Closing
11:55–Noon	Return to Room/Dismissal

Arrival	In some cases, children in this age group will arrive earlier than the rest of the VBS children. Therefore, make sure you're there early as well! Be ready to greet your little ones with smiles, hugs, and love. Follow your church's check-in procedures and safety precautions.
Free Play	Provide inviting toys ready for free play. Help kids become familiar with their VBS space.
Still Water Snacks Breakfast Snack	If you are running a morning VBS, offer a small snack. This helps the children get used to their setting as they focus on food rather than being dropped off at the nursery! See page 23 for snack ideas, or choose mini muffins, fruit, or another light breakfast item.
Emerald Isle Assembly— Opening	Walk the children to the opening assembly. Request to be seated in the front on small chairs or in a special spot so the children can see. Plan to leave before or during the last song so you are back in your room before the other children leave.
Exploration Stations (Session 1)	Allow the children to explore the stations during this time. Patterns are available to download.
Flock Talk Time	This is the heart of the day. If some of the other activities need to go, make sure this one <i>does</i> happen! Present the lesson early before fatigue sets in. At the same time, if you notice the kids are especially antsy or tired, remain flexible and switch activities. You can come back later to finish the lesson, or you can break it up and finish it the next day.
Green Meadow Games	Play inside or outside. Just spend time playing! Young children learn as they explore their world. See page 14 for game ideas.
Celtic Corner Science and Crafts (Session 1)	Toddlers and young preschoolers need simple crafts. Gluing sensory items—such as cotton balls, sandpaper, or fabric—onto papers, attaching stickers, and coloring are always a hit. See page 17 for craft specifics. There is also one simple science activity available for each day, which you can choose to do now or later in session 2. See page 21 for science activities.
Exploration Stations (Session 2)	Allow the children to continue exploring the stations.
Still Water Snacks and Rest Time	Make sure all snacks are bite-size and not choking hazards. Be alert to any allergies children may have.
Celtic Corner Science and Crafts (Session 2)	If the children seem up for it, try a second craft or the simple science activity before heading out to the closing assembly.
Emerald Isle Assembly—Closing	Take the kids to the closing assembly, once again sitting close to the front. Leave five minutes early so they are back in their room when VBS is dismissed. Follow your church's safe dismissal procedures.

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-Primaries 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). Streaming options are available at AnswersVBS.com/streaming.

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. Purchase these items from AnswersVBS.com.

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 to be completed with a parent or caretaker, which is what our test churches do. The Student Guides are available in packs of 10.

- Toddler ESV (1230740)
- Toddler KJV (1231350)

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! They can receive them at any time during the first day (preferably as they arrive), and you can review them with the kids during the Apply It! section of the lesson. 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 Psalm 23.

- 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

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.

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 to the background if desired.

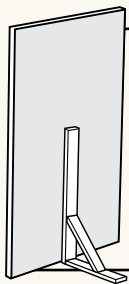
For the rolling hills, paint each a different shade of green to make the backdrop more colorful. Dot the hills with small painted sheep.

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 or blue metallic fringe curtain and place it under/up against the bridge.

For clouds, choose 2D varieties that are painted, cut out, and hung, or 3D varieties that use Poly-fil glued to white rice balls or white pizza boxes, then hang from fishing line.

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 items like animals or flowers to add dimension.



Crossing Signs

Crossing Signs are featured prominently in the Pre-Primary, Primary, and Junior lessons—Lost/Found on Day 1, Wrong Path/Right Path on Day 2, Fearful/Peaceful on Day 3, Grumbling/Grateful on Day 4, and Shaky/Sure on Day 5. Each day, that day's signs are mounted to the top blocks of the bridge, with the past days' signs moving down the bridge. The signs are optional in the Toddler lessons but can be a great addition. You can reduce or enlarge the signs to fit your particular bridge. If purchasing the classroom scene setter, they 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 attached to a wall going from Day 1 at the top to Day 5 at the bottom so the whole psalm is going down the wall in order.

Clip Art Images

Use a laptop and projector or an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer **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 you are not using the 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 Miscellaneous Ideas

- Place a green grass rug or raised platform in front of your backdrop to create a stage effect.
- Rest a lightweight plastic staff somewhere against your set.
- Place a kid's wheelbarrow along an outer edge of the set.
- 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 animals are available. Or use large, stuffed farm animals.

Tips for Painting Cardboard

- Add a thin (1/2-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 these 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 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

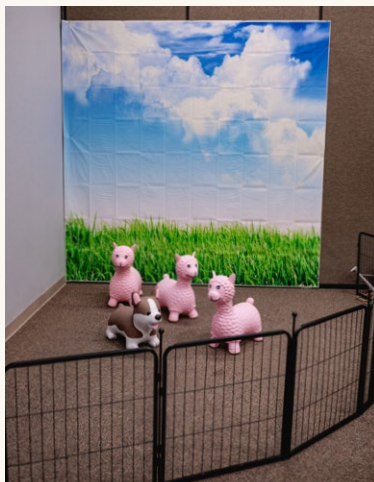
Toddler and Pre-Primary classes enjoy Exploration Stations, which include a Discovery Center, two sensory tables, a Dramatic Play area, and a Coloring Corner. Further information about these stations can be found in the lessons, but check below for details on how to make the Dramatic Play area and Coloring 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 that has plastic tablecloth curtains attached. Put a child's wooden table and chairs in the center. Add baskets, dress-up clothes, a play broom, tin pails, play food, play pots and pans, play plates and cups, a play dog bed and stuffed animal dog, and other such items, keeping in mind that little hands will be playing with them. Everything should be safe, big enough, and nontoxic.

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 using boxes as a fence border; cardboard cube hay bales, available online; cardboard play bricks such as Mondo Bloxx Timber Pack; or borrowed or bought child's

wooden playpen, dog playpen, or configurable dog gate. (Check sites that sell good used items for these. Make sure they are safe 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 animal—sheep in particular. 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 and accurate books about God's attributes, King David, Psalm 23, rainbows, shepherds, 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.

Green Meadow Games

Playing is what this age group does best! While they're playing, they're learning. These games are an important part of the teaching process because they help cement the lessons into the kids' minds in a fun way.

Consider having an outdoor playtime if you have a good space for it. The outdoor location should be enclosed so no one wanders off. If you don't have a safe area, use tarp-covered hay bales or snow fencing to create one. Ask church families to bring plastic slides, big wheel riding toys, and other age-appropriate outdoor equipment. Make sure they're labeled so they can be returned easily after VBS.

For game time, use the following suggestions or other options from the Game Guide, such as the Pre-Primary games. Also, it's fun to repeat favorites throughout the week.

Day 1

Shift the Sheep

Prep: Place two Hula-Hoops on the floor a few feet from each other. Pour cotton balls inside one hoop.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the kids work together to move all the cotton balls into the other hoop as fast as they can. Optional: race against a timer (set for one minute) or use a stopwatch and see if they can beat their time in a second round. For an outdoor option on a hot day, move sponge balls between two wading pools with water.

TEACHING TIE-IN

A shepherd takes his sheep to the best pastures where they can find green grass. After sheep have eaten the good grass in one pasture, a shepherd may lead them to another pasture. Who is our animal pal today? Mia the sheep. Since Mia (My-a) is a sheep, she will follow her shepherd to good pastures. In this game, we will all be shepherds and work together to move the sheep from one pasture to another as fast as we can.

Follow the Shepherd

Prep: Set out obstacles such as the following: a blue tablecloth spread out like a river to jump over (or step across on paper stepping stones); two or three Hula-Hoops for holes to tiptoe around; boxes for hills or mountains to walk around; stuffed animals can be wild and scary, causing a detour; a blanket over a table for a tunnel to crawl through.

Class Time: Children will pretend to be sheep following their shepherd. Play Follow the Leader around the obstacles. Finally, end in a play area to jump and skip, then rest while finishing with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What do you think would happen if a sheep didn't follow its shepherd? Take responses. A sheep could go the wrong way and get lost. It might fall into a hole or tip over and need help to get up. Wild animals might chase it. So it's important that sheep follow their shepherd. It's also important that we follow the Good Shepherd, Jesus. He will help his children.

Day 2

Good Doggies

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the kids line up like doggies on all fours. Have the leader stand across the room/play area and give dog commands (demonstrate as needed) as the doggies move forward together: Come—crawl; Stay—stop; Sit—squat on feet; Good doggies—once they reach the leader.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Who is our animal pal today? Guide the border collie. Guide is a good dog. He obeys the shepherd and helps take care of the sheep. If Guide didn't listen to the shepherd, some of the sheep could go the wrong way or get hurt. God's Word, the Bible, is our guide. When we obey and do what it says, we will be able to follow our Good Shepherd, Jesus.

How Tall Was Goliath?

Prep: Print and tape together the [Goliath Picture](#), then laminate it. Tape the picture on a wall at the children's height.

Class Time: Have the kids take turns touching the picture. Move it up a few inches and ask, "Was Goliath this tall?" Continue moving it, allowing kids to jump and touch it. Eventually, it will be high enough that only you can jump up to touch it. (You don't have to go the whole nine feet, just explain that he was even taller than you.) Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

When the enemy Philistines wanted to fight the Israelites, they sent out their biggest, "baddest" champion. What was his name? Goliath. No one wanted to fight Goliath. He was so tall and scary. The Israelites were afraid because they forgot that God was with them. But David remembered how great and powerful God is. He knew he could trust God to help him. So David put a stone in his sling and threw it. Zoom! The stone flew through the air and hit that big ol' giant. And Goliath fell down. David won because he followed God. The Bible can help us follow God just as David did.

Day 3

Birds of a Feather Relay

Prep: Gather packages of colored feathers. Determine which colors you will use and attach one of each color to a separate basket.

Class Time: Have the children line up and give them each a feather. On their turn, they must run to the basket with the same color as their feather to deliver it, then return to start. Take turns running until all the feathers are distributed. Check to see how many were put in the correct baskets. If you have a larger class, you may want to divide into two lines but use the same baskets. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What kind of bird is our pal, Shadow? A raven. Ravens have dark feathers, but there are many other birds with lots of different colors, like we saw in our game. The Bible tells us that God cares about all his creatures—even the birds. So if God takes care of something as small as a bird, he will take care of us too, right? Birds don't worry, and we don't need to worry either. Whenever you're feeling worried or afraid, remember you can talk to God about it, then trust him to help you.

Blindfold Crawl

Prep: Place stuffed animals in the play area.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Blindfold the kids, using scarves or sleep masks, then have them crawl around the area searching for the stuffed animals. You may have them collect the animals in a specific spot or shout when they find one, then leave it there for others to find. Play until everyone has found at least one animal. If you have a large class, divide into two groups to take turns or set up two areas to play at the same time.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We've been talking about shadows and feeling afraid today. Sometimes things don't go well, and we may feel sad or scared. But God says we can trust him to help us keep trying to do what we need to do, whether things seem bright and happy or dark and sad. In this game, you won't be able to see what's going on, but you can keep trying, and we'll find out how well you do.

Day 4

Hunt for Woolly

Prep: Print and cut out the [Woolly Aphid Cards](#), then laminate them. Hide the cards around the area for the kids to find.

Class Time: Have the kids bring the cards to a container. If playing outdoors, have some spray bottles ready with water (pretend bug spray) for leaders to spray the bugs when the children find them. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Show a card. **Today's animal pal is a bug called a woolly aphid. Pesky bothers plants. He likes to eat them! There's another kind of bug that bothers sheep. It likes to fly and crawl around a sheep's face. That would surely bother me if a fly were crawling on my face. Sometimes things may bother us. We might have a hard time that makes us upset or grumpy. But God doesn't want us to grumble. He wants us to remember his goodness and thank him for all the good gifts he gives to us.**

Quiet, Quiet

Prep: None.

Class Time: Play this game like Ring Around the Rosie, using the same tune. Have the children stand in a circle, holding hands. As everyone moves to the right, sing: "Jesus is my Shepherd. He leads me by still waters; quiet, quiet, we all lie down." At "lie down," the children drop to the floor/ground. Play a few times, singing quietly then loudly. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Loud noises can scare sheep. If a shepherd led his sheep to a noisy, rushing river, the sheep probably wouldn't drink from it. Good shepherds know their sheep like quiet places to drink and eat and rest. They will take their sheep to the best places because they care about them. Who is our Good Shepherd? God/Jesus. Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He knows everything about you, and he loves you very much.

Day 5

Animal Pal Pretend

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the children stand facing you. Explain that they must copy your movements for each animal pal. Call out which animal pal you will act out: Mia the sheep—get on all fours and "baa!"; Guide the border collie—run in place and bark; Shadow the raven—spread your arms and soar in a circle; Pesky the woolly aphid—flap your hands quickly and say "buzz"; Shirley the Highland cow—lie down on all fours and say "moo." Play a few rounds, going faster and faster each time.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Each of our animal pals reminds us of something we've learned this week. Mia (My-a) the sheep reminds us that the Lord is our shepherd. Jesus wants you to follow him. Guide the border collie reminds us that the Bible will guide us when we do what it says. Shadow the raven reminds us that we don't need to be afraid because Jesus is with us. Pesky the woolly aphid reminds us that even when things aren't going right, we don't need to grumble. Instead, we can be grateful and thank God for good things. Shirley the Highland cow reminds us that we can trust God to keep his promises because all of God's promises surely are true.

God's Promise Game

Prep: Inflate balloons if you're using them.

Class Time: Have the kids line up at the starting line. Give each child a ball or balloon. Show the kids the finish line. The children will use their hands to push their ball or balloon across the area and over the finish line. Optional challenge: Have the children place the ball or balloon between their knees as they run. Finish with the teaching tie-in. (If any balloons pop, pick up the pieces right away.)

TEACHING TIE-IN

Was it easy or hard to get to the finish line? *Take responses.*
As you grow up, some things might be hard, and some things might be easy. But no matter what happens, if you believe and trust in Jesus and follow him as your Good Shepherd, then you have his promise to be with him in heaven forever. God keeps his promises. And that's for sure!

Celtic Corner Crafts & Science

Simple. Simple. Simple. Young children need simple crafts that are fun to touch and explore. More prep needs to take place so the children are left with simply decorating, attaching stickers, and gluing. This hands-on fun time helps kids connect with what they're learning. Science is a great connection to the spiritual themes as well.

As with all other items used with the Toddlers and young preschoolers, ensure that items are not choking hazards and that all items are nontoxic. Use chunky

crayons. Remember to put names on all crafts as children work on them.

Plan two craft times a day or one craft and one science time, but be prepared to skip one or both if the children need more rest time. Decide who will be in charge of preparing the craft and science materials (craft/science leaders, Toddler teachers, or someone else). Whatever ideas you choose, have fun and use the crafts and science to reinforce the big themes of the week.

Thematic Crafts

Several of these crafts require materials for the craft volunteers and leaders to use, such as an office paper cutter, scissors, glue, hole punch, tape, ruler, and pen or pencil. These items may not be listed in the supply lists below.

Day 1

Craft 1: Fluffy Cotton Sheep

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Bell Pattern**, 20 cotton balls, two Q-tips, 2- or 3-inch smooth foam half ball, one 1½- to 2-inch pom-pom, three ¾-inch pom-poms OR three felt triangles, two ¾-inch plastic wiggle eyes OR wiggle eye stickers (found online), and one 6-inch length of narrow yarn



To share—yellow card stock, extra paper plates for glue

Ahead of time, print/copy on yellow card stock and cut out one **BELL PATTERN** per child. Punch a hole in the top of the bell and thread the yarn through. For the legs, cut the Q-tips in half and insert each half stick evenly into the flat side of the foam half ball. Place them in a wide square, evenly spaced, about ½ inch from the outer edge. (Use a drop of glue to hold.) If using felt instead of pom-poms, cut small triangles about 1½ x 1½ x 2 inches. Cut yarn into 6-inch lengths.

During class, pour shallow puddles of glue onto paper plates for children to share. For the body, pass out the foam half balls with legs attached. Have the children dip one side of each cotton ball and press them close together, filling the round side of the foam. For the head, glue the large pom-pom on top of the cotton at one side of the body. Add half a cotton ball on the top center of the head. Place eyes on the front of the head, then add two smaller pom-poms for ears and the third one for a tail OR loosely fold the felt triangles on the longest edge and glue

two on the head and one on the back. Tie the bell around the sheep's neck. Allow the glue to dry.

Craft 2: Sheep Headband

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Ear Pattern**, one paper plate with fluted edges, 40 cotton balls

To share—black card stock, fun foam or felt, glue sticks or extra paper plates for glue, double-sided tape



Ahead of time, print/copy and trace the **EAR PATTERN** onto black card stock, fun foam, or felt and cut out two ears per child. Make one cut through the edge of each fluted paper plate. Cut out the centers of the plates, leaving the fluted pattern.

During class, with the cut at the bottom, apply double-sided tape onto the back of each plate circle at the top edge (about 6 inches apart). Have the children attach the ears to the tape, making sure they extend past the top.

If using glue stick, have the children use the glue stick all around the plate then stick the cotton balls to it. (This option is less messy and does stick well if they use a lot of glue stick.)

If using actual glue, pour shallow puddles of glue onto paper plates for children to share. Have the children dip one side of each cotton ball in the glue and press them close together to cover the fluted plate circle. Allow to dry before wearing.

TEACHING TIE-IN (FOR BOTH DAY 1 CRAFTS)

We'll be talking a lot about sheep at VBS this week. That's because the Bible talks a lot about sheep too. Sheep look soft and fluffy. It's fun to pretend and say "baa!" like a sheep. But are we sheep? No. God made people different than the

animals. But the Bible says we can *act* like sheep sometimes. This week we'll be learning about Psalm 23 in the Bible. This psalm is like a song that tells how God takes care of his children just as a good shepherd takes care of his sheep.

Day 2

Craft 1: My Shepherd Picture Frame

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Frame Pattern**, one piece of thin craft foam, one brown chenille stem, one 2 x 3-inch photo (taken at VBS or parents can supply at home)



To share—white card stock, cotton balls, Easter grass or floral moss, crayons or markers, glue or double-sided tape

Ahead of time, print/copy and cut out the **FRAME PATTERNS**. Punch the holes at the top and cut out the photo space for each one. Cut foam into 6 x 4¼-inch pieces. Attach the pattern to the foam using glue or double-sided tape along the sides, bottom, and top corners. Leave the top center open for the photo to slide in. Be sure to keep glue away from all the edges of the photo opening. Make holes through the foam to match the punched holes near the top of the pattern. Score the foam with a craft knife, then push the tip of a pencil through.

During class, have the children color the pictures on their frame. Help them pull a cotton ball apart into thirds and attach ⅓ to each sheep body. Add craft moss or Easter grass to the area between the sheep. Cut the chenille stem in half. Bend each half at one end and attach them as the shepherds' staffs. Tie yarn through the holes for hanging. Slide a photo in from the top or have the parents do that at home.

Craft 2: Border Collie Stick Puppet

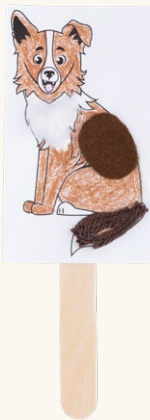
Gather the following supplies:

Per child—**Puppet Pattern**, large craft stick

To share—white card stock, black or brown felt, black or brown yarn, cotton balls, crayons or markers

Ahead of time, print/copy on white card stock and cut apart the **PUPPET PATTERNS**, keeping the rectangular frame. Cut out 1½-inch-long ovals from the felt. Cut yarn into 1¼-inch lengths. Pull some cotton balls apart to make small, thin tufts.

During class, have the children color the dog, then glue the felt onto the dog's back. Attach the yarn to the tail and



add the cotton tuft on the chest. Glue the puppet about halfway down on the large craft stick. Allow to dry.

TEACHING TIE-IN (FOR BOTH DAY 2 CRAFTS)

On a farm, sheep might wander around on their own, but they can get hurt or lost that way. It's a good thing for sheep to follow a shepherd. He will guide them and take care of them. Some shepherds have dogs that help guide the sheep and keep them from going the wrong way. If the sheep follow their shepherd, he will take them to good pastures with fresh, green grass and cool, quiet water. Then they can lie down and rest, knowing their shepherd is near. The Bible says that we are like sheep, and we should follow Jesus as our Good Shepherd.

Day 3

Craft 1: Raven Hanger

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—**Body Pattern**, three black cupcake liners, two plastic wiggle eyes or stickers

To share—dark purple or blue card stock, gray or silver crayons or markers, black feathers (optional: mix in purple or dark blue feathers), yarn



Ahead of time, print/copy on dark purple or blue card stock and cut out the **BODY PATTERNS** along the solid line, then fold on the centerline. Glue the two sides together. Punch a hole near the front between the wings. For each child, fold two cupcake liners into quarters and one cupcake liner in half.

During class, have the children color the beak, claws, and folded legs on both sides of the body. Attach plastic wiggle eyes or stickers. For the tail: Unfold the half-folded cupcake liner and add a small amount of glue on the inside. Have the children place the ends of four feathers onto the glue, then refold the liner in half, sandwiching the feather ends inside. Spread glue on the tip of the tail. Drape the liner over the tail so the feathers point backward from the body. For the wings: Unfold a quarter-folded cupcake liner once so it's still in half. Add a small amount of glue on the inside. Have the children place the ends of four feathers onto the glue, then refold the liner into a quarter, sandwiching the feather ends inside. Match up the flat corner of the liner with the marks at the bird's shoulder and glue in place so the feathers point upward. Repeat with the other liner on the other side. Tie yarn through the punched hole for hanging. Allow to dry.

Craft 2: He Makes Me Lie Down Night-Light

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Night-Light Label**, one 4 oz. clear plastic



jar with lid (page 44 of the Craft Guide has specific recommendations), one battery-powered tea light

To share—green or light blue card stock, light/dark green and blue tissue paper, glue stick, Mod Podge or glue/water mixture and small paintbrushes for gluing

Ahead of time, print/copy on green card stock and cut out the **NIGHT-LIGHT LABELS**. Tear or cut tissue paper into 1- or 2-inch pieces and place on paper plates for children to share. For finishing, if not using Mod Podge, mix equal parts of glue and water and pour into bowls. Provide small paintbrushes for each child or for an assistant.

During class, pass out one jar to each child and one glue stick. Have the children glue stick the jar and stick pieces of tissue paper on it, including the sides and the lid, overlapping the tissue for a stained glass effect. For a finished look, have the children or an assistant Mod Podge the jar (or use a glue/water mixture), covering all the tissue paper. Allow to dry. Glue one label on the top of each lid. Place a tea light inside each jar, then tighten the lids.

TEACHING TIE-IN (FOR BOTH DAY 3 CRAFTS)

Psalm 23 talks about times when a shepherd may have to lead his sheep through dark valleys and shadows. Our animal pal, Shadow the raven, reminds us that some days may seem sad or dark. But if we follow the Lord Jesus as our shepherd, he will always stay with us and guide us on bad days and good days.

Day 4

Craft 1: Psalm 23 Sensory Book



You may want to work on one page per day. To simplify, choose one sensory item per page rather than two, and do not add the cotton balls to the cover. Also, Pre-Primaries are making a mini version of this that is featured in the Craft Guide, so check the labels at the bottom of the patterns to get the right ones for this Toddler craft.

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one set of the **Sensory Book Pages** (1–5) printed on white card stock, 1 **Sensory Book Cover** sheet printed on colored card stock, 2 sheets of 9 x 12-inch craft foam, 1 coffee stirring stick, and 1 brown chenille stem

To share—**Sensory Book Patterns**, cotton balls, Easter grass or floral moss, blue tissue paper or bubble wrap, lightweight cloth or felt, heart stickers, smiley stickers, brown or gold yarn, crayons or markers, double-sided

tape, glue and Q-tips, and curling ribbon or extra yarn for binding

Ahead of time, print/copy on colored card stock and cut out the **SENSORY BOOK COVER**. On white card stock, print/copy sets of the five **SENSORY BOOK PAGES**. Print the **SENSORY BOOK PATTERNS**. Trace and cut the **TABLECLOTH PATTERN** from lightweight cloth or felt. Trace and cut the **POND PATTERN** from tissue paper or bubble wrap. Cut chenille stems into 8-inch lengths, then bend about an inch on one end for a shepherd's staff. Cut curling ribbon into 12-inch lengths for the binding. Make the books by punching holes in the margin of each page and one end of each foam sheet, matching holes on the pages. (For the foam, you may need to make cuts with a craft knife, then push the tip of a pencil through to form the holes.) String the ribbon or yarn through the holes and tie securely, allowing room to turn the pages.

During class, have the children add sensory materials to their books, using a Q-tip to spread glue or double-sided tape as needed for each page. **For the front cover**, add cotton to the sheep on the cover picture, then attach it to the front cover foam. **For page 1**, color, then attach some cotton to the sheep. **For page 2**, color, then add the blue tissue paper or bubble wrap oval to the pond and Easter grass or floral moss to the pasture. **For page 3**, color, then attach a coffee stirring stick for the rod and the bent chenille stem for the staff. **For page 4**, color, then attach the cloth or felt piece to the table. **For page 5**, add smiley stickers around the word *Goodness* and heart stickers around the word *Mercy*. Draw a smile on the face and add brown or gold yarn for hair.

Craft 2: You Prepare a Table Place Mat

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Place Mat Pattern**

To share—colored card stock, food stickers, crayons or markers, clear contact paper

Ahead of time, print/copy on card stock and trim the footer from the **PLACE MAT PATTERNS**. Cut contact paper into 10 x 12-inch sheets, two per child.

During class, have the children color the silverware and dishes, if desired, then add food stickers to the dishes. Teachers then seal each place mat between two sheets of contact paper.

TEACHING TIE-IN (FOR BOTH DAY 4 CRAFTS)

We've been learning about Psalm 23 in the Bible. It tells us the Lord Jesus is our Good Shepherd. When we believe in Jesus and follow him, he takes care of us on bad days and good days. God is always good. He gives us all we need—but not just a little—his goodness is overflowing!



Day 5

Craft 1: Ribbon Rainbow Hanger

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Rainbow Sign**, half a yellow paper plate

To share—yellow card stock, curling ribbon in red, orange, yellow, green, light blue, dark blue (indigo), and purple, double-sided tape, raindrop stickers, cotton balls

Ahead of time, print/copy on yellow card stock and cut apart the **RAINBOW SIGNS**, keeping the rectangular frame. Cut each paper plate in half. Place a 2-inch strip of double-sided tape in the center at the cut edge of the plate. Just above that, add a 3-inch strip of double-sided tape. Cut the ribbon into 12-inch lengths, one piece of each color per child. Punch two holes in the top edge of the plate about 3 inches apart.

During class, peel the outer paper off of the double-sided tape along the cut edge. Help the children make a row of ribbons by sticking one end of each color across the edge—red, orange, yellow, green, light blue, dark blue for indigo, purple. Allow most of the ribbon length to hang past the edge then curl the ends with scissors. Have the children place the sign in the center of the half-plate on the 3-inch piece of tape. Have children glue a few cotton balls on the plate and add raindrop stickers. Tie ribbon through the punched holes for hanging.



Craft 2: Rainbow Promise Crown

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—one **Crown Label**, one 18- to 22-inch length of bulletin board border, curling ribbon ~18 inches each of the following colors—red, orange, yellow, green, light blue, dark blue for indigo, purple

To share—colored card stock, rainbow stickers, glue sticks, tape

Ahead of time, print/copy and cut out the **CROWN LABELS**. Cut bulletin board border into 18- to 22-inch lengths. Cut each color of curling ribbon into 6-inch lengths. Make clusters of the seven colors of ribbon. Use scissors to curl one end of each ribbon piece then tape the straight ends together. Make 3 clusters per child.

During class, have the children glue the label in the center of the bulletin board border. Stick rainbow stickers on the border. Then flip the border over and tape the straight ends of the ribbon clusters on every other tall curve so the curls extend past the border edge. Tape the ends of the border to form a crown.



TEACHING TIE-IN (FOR BOTH DAY 5 CRAFTS)

After Noah's flood, God put a rainbow in the sky to promise he would never send a flood to cover the whole earth again. God has kept that promise. Rainbows can remind us that God keeps every promise. In the last part of Psalm 23, God promises that goodness and mercy will follow his children every day through their whole life. Then they will go to heaven and live with King Jesus forever. So you can be sure he will always do what he says.

Thematic Science Activities

Day 1

Sticky Sheep

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—4 x 4-inch piece of faux wool fleece (or quilt batting with a similar feel)

To share—[Sheep Family Pictures](#), [Shearing Pictures](#), variety of natural objects (e.g., smooth leaves, feathers, stones, grass, prickly and smooth seeds or nuts, small pine cones, maple seeds, small sticks), paper plates, and (optional) small piece of real sheep fleece

Prep: Print one copy of the SHEEP FAMILY PICTURES and SHEARING PICTURES to show. Cut the wool fleece into 4 x 4-inch squares. Place the natural objects on one or more paper plates for children to share.

Introduction: If I say, “Baa!” what do you think of? Sheep! We’ll be talking a lot about sheep this week. Have you seen sheep before? Here are some pictures of some sheep. Show SHEEP FAMILY PICTURES, explaining which is which.

If you have a piece of real wool, let them feel it now. God made wool to keep sheep warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Sheep have to be shaved, or sheared, every year so their wool doesn’t get tangled. Show the SHEARING PICTURES. Then we can use the wool for making things like warm sweaters and socks for us to wear.

Pass out one piece of wool to each child. Touch your piece of wool. What does it feel like? Take responses. The wool feels soft and smooth, doesn’t it? Can you pick out one piece of wool, like one hair? Do so. Each hair is called a fiber. Say that with me. Do so. If you looked at just one wool fiber under a microscope, you would see that it’s bumpy! God made these bumpy fibers to stick to each other. But other things can stick to them too. Things like seeds might stick to a sheep. Then when the sheep moves to another place to eat, the seeds fall off and grow into a plant. This is one way God makes new plants grow in new places. Isn’t that neat? Let’s experiment and see what kinds of things stick to sheep’s wool.

Directions: Lay the paper plates with the objects on the table to share. Have the children experiment by rubbing the objects on the wool to see if they stick.

Day 2

Growing Green Pastures

Gather the following supplies:

Per child—small clear plastic cup with lid (with a straw slit in it), potting soil to fill cup about $\frac{3}{4}$ full, craft stick

To share—[Grass Growth Chart](#), bowl or bowls of grass seed, spray bottle(s) with water, permanent marker

Prep: One or two weeks before class, prepare a sample grass seed cup. Place potting soil to about $\frac{3}{4}$ full in the

cup. Sprinkle grass seed around the soil, especially near the edges so the roots can be seen through the cup. Mist the seeds with water and keep warm with partial sunlight. Before class, pour grass seed into one or more bowls (1–2 bowls per table) and fill spray bottles. Print one GRASS GROWTH CHART to show.

Introduction: Raise your hand if you like to play outdoors in the green grass. Do so. Aren’t you glad God made grass? It can be cool and soft and fun to play and run in.

Our animal pal, Guide, is a dog that likes to play in the grass too. But when he’s working in the grassy pastures, Guide must listen for the shepherd to tell him what to do. Then he runs fast and guides the sheep where they need to go.

Baby sheep like grass too. Lambs jump and play in the grass. What else do sheep do with grass? Take responses. Sheep eat grass! Grass is important for sheep. God made sheep to be herbivores. Say that with me. Do so. A herbivore is an animal that eats only plants. Sheep love to munch on grass, clover, and other small plants.

Today, we’re going to plant some grass seed of our own. Show the sample cup. What do plants need to grow? Take responses. Show the GRASS GROWTH CHART. Most plants, including grass, need sunlight, water, and soil to grow. When plant seeds begin to grow, the roots go down into the soil and soak up water and nutrients to make them strong. Point out the roots in your sample cup.

Directions: Give each child a cup and have them grab a pinch or two of grass seed from the bowl to put in their cup. Pat it down. Finish with a mist of water from the spray bottle. Put the lid on. Write the name of each child on a craft stick and have them slide it through the straw slit of their lid into the soil.

You may want to make the Border Collie Stick Puppet craft to slide into the soil instead of a plain stick or put a small sheep on the end of the craft stick.

Day 3

Shadows and Light

Gather the following supplies:

To share—large, plain wall or sheet to hang as a screen, large flashlight or projector, variety of small objects in a closed container (e.g., plastic animals, small dolls, feathers, sticks, toy cars), and a table

Prep: Collect a variety of small objects and keep them hidden in a closed container on a table. Set up a “screen” area (plain wall or hang a sheet).

Introduction: Today’s memory verse reminds us that we don’t need to be afraid because God is with us even when we feel scared. That reminds me of what shadows are like. Usually when we think of shadows, we think of dark, scary places. But watch carefully as I make a shadow of my hand

on the wall. *Do so.* Ooh! The shadow might seem a little scary. But look at my hand. My hand isn't scary, is it?

What did I need to have in order to make that shadow? *Take responses.* I needed light. A shadow is a dark shape that's made when something gets in the way of the light. That means you can't make a shadow if light isn't there.

The Bible teaches us that even when we feel afraid or things seem kind of dark, like a shadow, we can trust that God is there. He's like the light. When we remember God is with us, things won't seem so scary any more.

Let's have some fun with shadows now. I'll put some things up in front of this light. You look at the shadow and see if you can guess what is making it. Ready?

Directions: Hold up several items one at a time in front of the light to project a shadow on the wall. Have the children guess what the item is before you show it to them. Optional: Allow children to take turns making a shadow of themselves by standing in front of the light source.

One test church had small flashlights for each 1–2 children. The kids made shadows on the wall using their flashlights and had a blast doing it.

Day 4

Oil and Water Mix-Up

Gather the following supplies:

To share—pipettes or droppers, small bowls that won't tip easily (e.g., ramekins), large glass measuring cup, long-handled mixing spoon, vegetable oil, water, food coloring in several colors. Optional: Plastic tablecloth, large container with low sides (to hold measuring cup)

Prep: Fill the large measuring cup about halfway with vegetable oil. Fill small bowls $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water and add food coloring to make several colors. Place pipettes or droppers next to each bowl. Optional: Place the cup inside a large container and put a plastic tablecloth on the work surface to catch and soak up spills.

Introduction: Psalm 23 talks about a lot of ways a Bible-time shepherd would care for his sheep. He would make sure his sheep got everything they needed, including fresh water to drink. A shepherd would also keep the flies away from his sheep by spreading oil on its face. God made oil and water to be different so we can use them for different things.

Can you think of some ways you use water at home? *Take responses.* You drink water, your mom or dad uses water for cooking, you take a bath in water, and you wash your hands in water.

What about oil? How do your parents use oil at home? *Take responses.* There are many kinds of oil. There's oil used for car engines, called motor oil. There are oils that help things work better, like keeping a squeaky door quiet. There are special oils used for cooking too, like olive oil, grape-seed oil, and vegetable oil. Wow! That's a lot of oil.

But you know what? All of these oils have something that's the same—none of them mix with water. Today, we'll see what happens when we try to make oil and water mix.

Directions: Show the cup with oil. Allow children to touch some oil and describe what it feels like. Have children take turns using the pipettes/droppers to squeeze drops of colored water into the oil. Use the large mixing spoon to stir the oil and water drops to see if it mixes or separates.

Day 5

Making Rainbows

Gather the following supplies:

To share—*Rainbow Colors Illustration*, several (safe for kids) prisms, at least one per leader, and sunlight or flashlights, one per leader. Optional: Spray bottle with water and white paper

Prep: Print one copy of the RAINBOW COLORS ILLUSTRATION to show.

Introduction: **How many of you have ever seen a real rainbow up in the sky?** *Take responses.* **The Bible tells us where rainbows came from. They are a sign of a promise from God!**

Many years ago, God had to punish sin in the world. So he sent a flood that covered and destroyed the whole world. But God told Noah to build an ark. The ark was a big ship that Noah's family and two of every kind of land animal (seven of some) could ride in when the flood came.

After it was all over, God made a promise to Noah that he would never send another flood like that again. Then God showed Noah a rainbow in the sky to remind him of God's promise. Whenever we see a rainbow, we can remember that God always keeps his promises.

Rainbows are made when the light shines through something, like a raindrop, and gets bent. When light bends, we can see many different colors. Do you know what colors we usually say are in a rainbow? *Take responses.* Show the RAINBOW COLORS ILLUSTRATION. We can see red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Indigo and violet both look purple-ish, but indigo has more blue. And there are many more colors in between all of these!

Let's make some rainbows and remember that God always keeps his promises.

Directions: Shine the flashlights or sunlight through the prisms to create rainbows on the walls. Explain that the light is like the sun, and the prism is like a raindrop. Have the children try to catch the rainbows or sit and point to them.

Shine the flashlight onto the wall or a piece of white paper. Spray some water between the paper and the light to create a rainbow. Explain that the light is like the sun, and the water spray is like raindrops. Move the spray around at different angles if needed, keeping the light still.

Still Water Snacks

Day 1

Sweet Sheep (per child)

- 1 mini powdered donut
- 2 pretzel sticks
- 1 chocolate wafer
- Small dab of white icing



Break each pretzel stick in half to create 4 small sticks. Carefully insert each halved pretzel stick into the bottom of the mini donut at an angle. Place a small dab of white icing where the “face” of the sheep will go. Immediately attach the chocolate wafer on the icing and press gently to secure.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at your sweet sheep. What do sheep say? Take responses. Do you know who takes care of sheep on a farm? A person called a shepherd. God is like our shepherd—he takes care of us! Let’s thank God for our snack sheep and for being the Good Shepherd to his people. Do so.

Hay Bales (makes 8)

- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese
- 1 packet ranch seasoning mix
- 1 c. shredded parmesan cheese



Mix ranch seasoning into softened cream cheese. Divide into 8 portions and shape each portion into the shape of a hay bale. Roll in shredded cheese. Refrigerate.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack. What does it look like? Take responses. It looks like a little bale of hay, doesn’t it? What kind of animals eat hay? Take responses. Sheep eat hay! This week, we’ll be talking a lot about sheep. Who created sheep? Take responses. God did, on day six of creation! Let’s thank God for sheep and for this snack. Do so.

Day 2

Border Collie Paw Prints (per child)

- 1 small flour tortilla
- 2 tbsp. marinara sauce (adjust for tortilla size)
- ¼ c. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 large pepperoni slice
- 4 small pepperoni slices



Spread marinara on each tortilla, covering evenly. Cover with shredded cheese. Add one large pepperoni to the

center of each tortilla. Place the 4 small pepperoni evenly above the large pepperoni to create a paw print. Bake at 350° for 5 minutes or until cheese is melted.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at your snack. It looks like a dog’s paw print, doesn’t it? Do any of you have a pet dog? Take responses. Our animal pal today is a dog called Guide the border collie. His job is to lead the sheep where they need to go. Guide teaches us that God is our leader, and we can trust him to show us where to go. God uses the Bible to guide us. Let’s thank God for this snack and for being a guide to us. Do so.

Avocado Toast (per child)

- 1 slice of bread, toasted
- 1 tsp. oil or butter
- ½ avocado or premade avocado spread
- Pinch of salt



Spread the butter or oil evenly on the toast. Cover with smashed avocado or premade spread. Top with salt to taste.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What color is our snack today? Take responses. Yes, it’s green. Can you think of something else that’s green? Take responses. There are lots of green fields (pastures) in Ireland where shepherds take good care of sheep. God tells us he is like a shepherd leading us to good places (green pastures) too. Let’s thank God for this green snack and for being a kind shepherd. Do so.

Day 3

Bread Staffs with Butter (per child)

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 tsp. Kerrygold or other butter
- J-shaped cookie cutter

Cut each bread slice into three J’s, using the cookie cutter. Toast the bread, if desired, then spread with softened Kerrygold butter (a staple in Ireland) or substitute any other butter. Place the J’s upside down on the plate to resemble shepherds’ staffs.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack today. What does it look like? Take responses. Yes, it looks like shepherds’ staffs! Shepherds use their staffs to keep their sheep safe. They use the hooked part to pull their sheep close. God is like a shepherd too! He takes care of his people and is always near. Even though you can’t see him, he is near you. Isn’t that great? Let’s thank God for this snack and for God always being near. Do so.

Mini Birds' Nests (makes 8)

- 1 c. pretzel sticks
- 1 c. chow mein noodles
- ½ c. butterscotch baking chips
- 2 tsp. butter
- Toddler-safe soft candy for birds' eggs



Slightly crush pretzels and chow mein noodles in a bowl. Melt butter and butterscotch chips together using 30-second intervals in the microwave or using a double-boiler on the stove. Once the butter and chips are melted, pour over pretzel/chow mein mixture, then stir to combine. Spoon mixture into a greased mini muffin tin, making a well in the middle of each portion, like a bird's nest. Place a soft candy in the middle for a bird's egg. (This is pictured with a Robin Egg candy for older kids. Trade that out for something like an M&M or two.) Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack. What does it look like? *Take responses.* **It looks like a bird's nest, doesn't it? Have you ever seen a bird's nest? Many birds lay eggs in nests, and then their babies hatch out of the eggs. Who created all those baby birds?** *Take responses.* **God did!**

Our animal pal today is a bird called Shadow. Can you say Shadow? *Do so.* **Shadows remind us of hard and sad things that might happen in our lives. The good news is that God is with us even in sad times. Let's thank God for this snack and for being with us all the time.** *Do so.*

Day 4

Shamrock "Biscuits" (one cookie per child)

- Premade sugar cookie dough
- Green sugar sprinkles
- 1 container of white icing
- Shamrock cookie cutter



Roll out the premade sugar cookie dough and cut with a shamrock cookie cutter. Bake according to package directions. Once cooled, lightly ice with white icing and dip in green sugar sprinkles.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack. What does it look like? *Take responses.* **Your cookie (or "biscuit" as it is called in Ireland) is in the shape of a shamrock. Shamrocks are tiny plants that grow with the grass. God gives sheep good things to eat like grass and shamrocks. He gives us good things to eat too. Can you name one of your favorite foods to eat?** *Take responses.* **Let's thank God for this snack and for being our good provider.** *Do so.*

Bug Bites (see packaging for serving size)

- Kellogg's or Keebler Grahams Bug Bites

Serve a portion to each child.
Note: At the time of this writing, these were easily found at Walmart or on Amazon.



TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at your snack. What does it look like? *Take responses.* **That's right, a bug! Our animal pal is a bug called a woolly aphid. Woolly aphids can be pesky little bugs. They remind us that sometimes hard things happen in life or things bug us. But even when hard things do happen, we can still give thanks to God. Let's all say, "God is good!" and then we'll thank God for this snack.** *Do so.*

Day 5

Mini Cow Patties (per 1 or 2 children)

- 1 package premade chocolate Rice Krispies treats
- Marshmallow cream
- Chocolate icing



Shape each Rice Krispies treat into round, flat patties, about 1 inch across. Put a dollop of marshmallow cream on top of each patty. Mix the remaining marshmallow cream and chocolate icing together and swirl on top to fully cover, making it look like a cow patty. Serve 1–2 per child depending on size.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at your snack. It looks like something called a cow patty, which reminds me of a cow. What sound does a cow make? *Take responses.* **Our animal pal is a cow named Shirley. She teaches us that surely God's goodness and mercy will be with us all of our lives if we are God's children. It's for sure. God promised it, so it will happen. Let's thank God for this snack and for being a promise keeper.** *Do so.*

Jello Jigglers (1–2 footprints per child)

- Jello mix in various colors
- Boiling water
- Footprint cookie cutter

Prepare Jello Jigglers according to package directions and cut into footprints. Serve 1–2 per child depending on size.



TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at your snack. What does it look like? *Take responses.* **Yes, it looks like a foot! What's something your feet follow? Maybe your feet follow your parents when they're walking ahead of you or they follow your friends when you're running around the backyard. The Bible says that God's goodness and mercy (loving-kindness) follow us all our lives if we're his children. Let's thank God for this snack and for being a good, merciful God.** *Do so.*



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!

- Puppet Pal—Sheep Farm in Donegal
- Song 1: "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Sheep Gone"

TEACH IT!

- Part 1: The Good Shepherd
- Song 2: "Mary Had a Little Lamb"
- Part 2: Animal Pal Review

APPLY IT!

- Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse
- Part 2: Go and Do

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.
- 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 13 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

Discovery Center: Sheep Memory Game

MATERIALS

- Different Sheep Poster
- Memory Game Sheep Cards
- White card stock

PREP

Print two of each MEMORY GAME SHEEP CARD 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 DIFFERENT SHEEP POSTER. Sheep don't all look alike, do they? God could have made just one type of sheep, but look at some of these. There are white sheep, black 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 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 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 mentioned animals in the Bible. Jesus told a story about a man who had 100 sheep. When one got lost, 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! (Luke 15:4-7). 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
- 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, even a baby doll bed and baby doll

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 not to 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 often called a shepherd. What are some things a shepherd might do to take care of his sheep? [Take responses](#). In Psalm 23, God shows us he is like the shepherd and we are like the sheep. God 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!

Puppet Pal—Sheep Farm in Donegal (3–4 minutes)

Study your lessons each day and know them well, but feel free to say things in your own way and shorten or even skip things. An **EDITABLE VERSION** of each lesson is available to download.

Prep: Prepare your set backdrop and costumes. Bookmark any Bible passage referenced in today's lesson. Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Cover the Days 1–5 pictures on the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER** and hang the two posters up to make one big map.

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.

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: Hello everyone! Come on over and sit down. Do so. My name is _____. This week at VBS, we're going to pretend to take a trip to a country called Ireland. Say that name with me. Do so. Point to the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER**. We'll learn about different places in Ireland. Let's go catch our plane! Have the children stand and jog in place with you, then spread arms out to "fly." Hooray! We're here. Now let's call my friend Paddy and let him/her know we made it to Ireland. Do so.

Puppet: Come up. Wave. Top o' the mornin' (evenin') to ya. Welcome to Ireland. I heard you'd be talking a lot about sheep this week. So today, we're visiting my grandpa's sheep farm in the town of Donegal.

Teacher: Uncover the Day 1 Sheep Farm picture on the **MAP OF IRELAND**. That's right, Paddy. Thanks for showing us around.

Puppet: I'm happy to have you here. Ireland has lots of sheep and lots of green grass for them to eat. Can you hear the sheep on this farm? What sound do sheep make? Pause for "baa."

Teacher: We're learning about Psalm 23 in the Bible. Show open Bible. It has a lot to say about sheep and shepherds.

Puppet: Kids, do you know what a shepherd is? Take answers. A shepherd, like me, is someone who takes care of sheep. I've been out in the fields today trying to find a lost sheep.

Teacher: Oh no! That's not good!

Puppet: I had a whole pasture full of sheep. But 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 by the bridge munching on grass.

Teacher: That reminds me of a story in the Bible that Jesus told about a lost sheep.

Puppet: You mean the one about the man who had 100 sheep?

Teacher: Yes. One sheep got lost. So the shepherd left all his other sheep and went to find the lost one. And he found it! (Luke 15:4–7)

Puppet: I found my lost sheep too.

◆ **Map of Ireland Poster**

★ **Day 1 Puppet Script**

(2 copies)

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

◆ 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 just hold them up while teaching, then hang them up after class.

◆ If co-teaching, decide who will do what parts when.

◆ 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.)



- ★ “Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Sheep Gone” song
- ★ “Mary Had a Little Lamb” 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.

◆ Gospel Poster

- ★ Optional: Lost/Found Crossing Signs
- Blank paper or sticky notes to cover Gospel Poster

Teacher: The shepherd in the story was super happy and had a party.

Puppet: I was happy, too, when I found my sheep this morning. In fact, I did a happy dance like this . . . *Do a crazy dance.*

Teacher: Jesus told that story because *we* are like sheep who are lost because of sin. Sin is not obeying God and wandering away from him. But we can stay close to God when we follow Jesus. He’s the Good Shepherd. We follow him by believing in him and then doing what’s right.

Puppet: I’m glad Jesus is the Good Shepherd! I know a song about the sheep Jesus talked about in his story. Will you sing it with me? *Sing and dance with the music.*

Song 1: 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 your 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)*

Teacher: That was great, kids!

Puppet: Thanks for singing with me! See you tomorrow! *Exit.*

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

Teach It!

Part 1: The Good Shepherd (8–10 minutes)

Prep: Cover each section of the **GOSPEL POSTER** with paper or sticky notes. Optional: Cut out and put up the **CROSSING SIGNS** on the top two blocks of the bridge.

Teacher 1: When sheep are on a farm, we’ve learned they can sometimes wander away from the other sheep and get lost from the shepherd.

Teacher 2: *Enters.* There you are!

Teacher 1: Hello! Hey, kids, say hello to ____ *(Teacher 2)*. Where have you been?

Teacher 2: I got stuck in a sheep pen. I guess the sheep liked me. They wouldn’t let me out. Finally, a shepherd named Paddy opened the gate for me.

Teacher 1: We were just talking to Paddy. I’m glad you’re here now. We’re going to pretend to be sheep. Kids, let me hear you say “baa.” *Do so.* ____ *(Teacher 2)* will be our shepherd.

Teacher 2: Okay, sheep, follow me. *Have children follow you halfway around the area, then pause.*

Teacher 1: What would happen if one of the sheep went a different way? Pretend I’m a sheep that doesn’t follow the shepherd. *Demonstrate going to a different area of the room. Wander around and say things like “Oh no, I didn’t follow my shepherd. Now I’m lost and far away!” Have Teacher 2 lead you back to the “flock.” Whew! I was lost and in danger, but you rescued me. Thank you, Shepherd.*

Teacher 2: I’m glad I found you. Did you know God says people are a lot like sheep? Sometimes we can be lost too because of sin. We’re going to learn from the Bible how we can go from being lost and far away from God to being found by our Good Shepherd, Jesus. *If using the CROSSING SIGNS on the bridge, reference them now.*

Teacher 1: Let’s hear more as ____ *(Teacher 2)* shows us some pictures.

Teacher 2: Uncover the tree on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). What does this look like? A tree.

Teacher 1: When God made the world, he made a beautiful garden full of trees and flowers. He filled it with animals and the first two people, Adam and Eve. It was a perfect place, and everything was good. God told Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit from one special tree.

Teacher 2: Uncover the snake on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). What does this look like? A snake.

Teacher 1: Soon, a sneaky snake came along, who was the devil. Let's wiggle our hands like a snake. *Do so.* This snake tricked Eve, and she ate fruit from that one special tree. Then Adam ate some too! Did they do what God said? No, God said *not* to eat that fruit, but they did anyway.

Teacher 2: That's when sin came into the world. Let's all say, "Oh no!" *Do so.* Sin is when we don't obey and do what God says. Adam and Eve sinned, and since that day, every person sins ([Romans 3:23](#)). Have you ever done something wrong, like being mean to your brother or sister or not doing what your mom or dad said to do? God says to be kind and to obey your parents, so not doing those things is sin.

Teacher 1: God still takes care of the world even though sin messed it up. But sin keeps us far away from God, like a lost sheep, because God is holy and perfect.

Teacher 2: Uncover baby Jesus on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). Do you know who this is? Jesus.

Teacher 1: God knew we were lost because of our sin. So he sent his Son, Jesus, to earth. He was born as a little baby and grew into a man. But Jesus never sinned like we do!

Teacher 2: Uncover grown-up Jesus on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). Who do you think this is? Jesus when he had grown up.

Teacher 1: Jesus was the only person who never did anything wrong. Jesus is God, so he did amazing things when he grew up, like making sick people better and making storms stop. Jesus even made some dead people come back to life. Let's say, "Wow!" *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Uncover the cross on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). What does this look like? A cross.

Teacher 1: Even though Jesus never did anything wrong, some bad people killed Jesus by putting him on a cross. The Bible says sin must be punished ([Romans 6:23](#)). When Jesus died, he took the punishment for all the bad things we've done. Now we don't have to be lost and far away from God.

Teacher 2: Uncover the tomb on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). After Jesus died, they put him in a tomb, like this one.

Teacher 1: But Jesus didn't stay dead! Jesus is God, and he came back to life! Let's shout, "Hooray!" *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Uncover the gift on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#). What does this look like? A gift.

Teacher 1: Jesus died and came back to life because he loves you. He doesn't want you to be like a lost sheep. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who wants you to be one of his children. That's the best gift you can ever receive.

Teacher 2: Uncover the Admit, Believe, Forever Receive text on the [GOSPEL POSTER](#).

Teacher 1: If you're sorry for your sins, you can admit, or tell God you're sorry for them ([Mark 1:15](#)). Then believe Jesus died to take your punishment for sin and forever receive the gift of eternal life by telling God you want to be his child ([Romans 10:9-10](#)).

Teacher 2: You'll still be your mom and dad's child. But this means you'll also have God as your Father. Remember—that's the best gift ever ([John 3:16](#))!

Teacher 1: Let's stand up and sing about what Jesus did for us.



Song 2: 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)

◆ Day 1 Animal Pal Poster

- ☐ Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



Part 2: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Take a couple minutes to summarize the lesson today, using any or all of 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.

- What kind of animal is our animal pal? A sheep.
- The sheep's name is Mia (My-a). Mia is a popular name in Ireland. It means "mine." The Bible says the Lord is *my* shepherd. Can you say that with me? Do so.

Continue reviewing with the following questions. 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 the Bible say people are like bears? No—get on all fours. The Bible says we're like sheep.
2. In Jesus' story, did the shepherd leave the other sheep to go find the one who was lost? Yes—"baa."
3. Do sheep always follow their shepherd? No—get on all fours. Sheep can wander off and get lost.
4. Are people lost because of sin? Yes—"baa."
5. When we do not obey God and do bad things, is that called sin? Yes—"baa."
6. Should we obey and follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd? Yes—"baa."

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.

◆ 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



◆ The front page of each day's student guide is an overview of today's lesson. The back page matches this section.

Apply It!

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. 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. 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

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 Toddler Student Guides. Send the student guides home each day as a fun review and also encourage the kids to do the practical ideas (the Go and Do sections) 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 to your list accordingly.

1. Take turns with someone to pretend you are a sheep following your shepherd, then switch.
2. Tell someone something you learned about sheep today.
3. Ask someone if Jesus is their Good Shepherd.
4. With someone's help, check AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids for more fun information!

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



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

TEACH IT!

- Part 1: Puppet Pal—David and Goliath
- Song 2: "Old MacDonald"
- Part 2: Animal Pal Review

APPLY IT!

- Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse
- Part 2: Go and Do

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.
- 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 13 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 various smells on each (see Prep)

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 let the children try to guess what each smell is.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Did you know God gave sheep a super good sense of smell? Their noses help them find their baby lambs, find food, and smell other animals coming. 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 or pots that are taller than the water level
- Small stones
- 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 stones in the buckets or pots to weigh them down. Add water; then stand 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. But Jesus, our Good Shepherd, helps us stay calm and not be afraid.

Dry Sensory Table: Play Paths

MATERIALS

- [Day 2 Animal Pal Poster](#)
- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic sand or play sand
- Craft sticks and small stones
- 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 children play with the items, making paths in the sand with their craft sticks and stones and having the sheep walk along the paths with the sheepdog guiding them.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Sheep need guidance so they don't go the wrong way. [Show the DAY 2 ANIMAL PAL POSTER](#). Who is our animal pal today? [Guide](#). Right! [Guide](#) is a border collie. Dogs like this help guide sheep on the right path. The Bible guides us, so we stay on the right path that pleases God.

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” and taped down (see Prep)
- Painter's tape
- Bible (that can be child-handled)

PREP

Cut the tablecloth to resemble a path and tape it securely on the ground for the kids to follow. 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 guide sheep so they stay on the right path. Did you know God leads and guides his children, like a shepherd? 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. Let's follow the sheepdog I'm holding and walk along the good path to get to the Bible.

Coloring Corner: Psalm 23:2

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

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ◆ Day 2 Animal Pal Poster
- ★ Optional: **Wrong Path/Right Path Crossing Signs**
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- ☐ Mounting putty or tape



Introduce It!

Green Pastures and Still Waters in County Galway (2–3 minutes)

Optional Prep: Cut out and put up the **WRONG PATH/RIGHT PATH CROSSING SIGNS** on the top two blocks of the bridge and move the **LOST/FOUND CROSSING SIGNS** down.

Teacher 1: Welcome back, lads and lasses! We’ve been talking about a place called Ireland.

Show the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER** and point to Galway. Today, we’re traveling to a place called Galway. This part of Ireland has lots of green pastures and quiet waters. Uncover the Day 2 Green Pastures picture.

Teacher 2: Pastures are places with lots of grass where sheep can eat. Who helps the sheep find the best grass? A shepherd. Sheep that follow their shepherd will find good green pastures where they can eat and rest.

Teacher 1: Show the **DAY 2 ANIMAL PAL POSTER**. A shepherd and a border collie, like our animal pal Guide, can also help the sheep find good water to drink. Sheep don’t like rushing, noisy rivers; they’re dangerous. Sheep would rather drink in quiet places that aren’t so scary.

Teacher 2: We learned yesterday that people can be lost like sheep. We can start to go the wrong way when we do wrong things. Do you ever do wrong things? Take responses.

Teacher 1: Just like a shepherd leads his sheep to the best places, we need Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to lead and guide us.

Teacher 2: He does that through the Bible. The Bible is a special book. It tells us about God and helps us know the right things to do.

Teacher 1: The Bible isn’t like any other book because it was written by God!

Teacher 2: Wait. You mean God wrote the Bible? Did he use a pencil and paper to write it?

Teacher 1: No. But he chose some men and helped them know what to write. Since they are God’s words, there are no mistakes in the Bible.

Teacher 2: Wow, no mistakes. That’s amazing! Which men did God choose to write his words?

Teacher 1: Well, God chose some fishermen and some shepherds and a doctor and even some kings, like King David.

Teacher 2: Wow! Kids, I hope you grow to learn the Bible, love the Bible, and obey the Bible. It’s God’s special words that guide us and help us know right from wrong so we stay on God’s right path rather than making bad choices and living on the wrong path. If using the **CROSSING SIGNS**, reference them now. Review the gospel if led, explaining that being in God’s family is the first and most important start to being on the right path.

Teacher 1: We can trust the Bible! Let’s sing a song about it. Do so.

Teacher 2: Move behind the puppet stage during the singing.

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

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

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

◆ Gospel Opportunity

- ★ “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

Teach It!

Part 1: Puppet Pal—David and Goliath (6–7 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. Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Cue up the Irish jig to play either audio or video (e.g., on a phone, a computer, or a video player). Bookmark 1 Samuel 17.

Puppet: Turn on the Irish jig music. Make Paddy dance to the music as he/she enters.

Teacher: Hey, what are you doing?

Puppet: I'm dancing a jig. It's a dance we like to do here in Ireland.

Teacher: Fun! But why are you dancing a jig?

Puppet: Because today is my birthday! Stop music and dancing.

Teacher: It is? Kids, let's say "happy birthday" to Paddy. Do so.

Puppet: Thanks, everyone. I just got a very special gift. I was so excited, I felt like dancing.

Teacher: What was your special gift?

Puppet: I got a brand-new Bible. It's the most special book in the world.

Teacher: That's wonderful.

Puppet: Hey! Let's tell the kids about David in the Bible. He wrote Psalm 23, right?

Teacher: That's right. Before David was a king, he was a shepherd. David believed in God and loved God. He tried to obey God by doing what was right.

Puppet: Did David ever get scared?

Teacher: We all are afraid sometimes. But David knew God would take care of him. David trusted God even when he had to fight off bears and lions that tried to eat his sheep.

Puppet: David had to fight mean enemies, too, like Goliath. He was a giant who stood over 9 feet tall!

Teacher: Let's check out how tall that is on this wall. If Goliath were standing here, his face would be way up there! Point out the **GOLIATH PICTURE** on the wall. God helped David fight Goliath and win. It's right here in the Bible. Point to your open Bible. Tell us about it, Paddy.

Puppet: There were two groups of people—Goliath was with the Philistines, and David was with the Israelites. Goliath and his people didn't believe in God or obey him. But David and his people were God's special people.

Teacher: One day, they were getting ready to fight each other. The Philistines sent out Goliath to scare the Israelites. Goliath was big and strong. Kids, show us your strong muscles. Do so.

Puppet: Goliath shouted at the Israelites, (in a deep voice) "Send someone out to fight me!"

Teacher: But the Israelites were afraid of Goliath. Can you kids show us your scared face? Do so. No one wanted to fight him. They were so afraid because they forgot that God would guide them.

Puppet: But David remembered how great and mighty God is. He knew he could trust God to help him win. So he said, "I'll fight Goliath!"

Teacher: Even though David didn't have all the armor and a fancy spear like Goliath, he had something much more important—

Puppet: David had God with him!

Teacher: Right! As a shepherd, David used a sling to shoot stones at wild animals to keep his sheep safe. But on this day, David used his sling to fight Goliath. Show the **DAVID AND GOLIATH POSTER**.

Puppet: Ooh! Here comes my favorite part.

◆ David and Goliath Poster

★ Goliath Picture

★ Day 2 Puppet Script
(2 copies)

- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Measuring tape
- Irish jig music and a device to play audio or video



Teacher: David put a stone in the sling and whipped that sling around super fast. 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. All it took was one stone! It flew through the air and hit Goliath on the forehead.

Puppet: And Goliath fell down. Puppet falls down face forward, then pops back up to continue. David beat Goliath! David fought the enemy and won because he followed God.

Teacher: The Bible helps us to follow God as our Good Shepherd. When we read or listen to the Bible, we'll learn how to trust and obey God the way David did.

Puppet: I'm glad I have a Bible of my own now so I can learn to follow God every day. Oh, I hear my border collie barking. I better get back to the farm and gather the sheep. But first, will you sing a farm song with me?

Teacher: Sure! Let's stand up and sing with Paddy. Do so.

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")

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 and bark)

Everywhere a ruff, ruff

(Face the front and bark)

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 horizontally 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
(Face the center and 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)

Puppet: That was great! See you all tomorrow. Exit.

Teacher: Bye, Paddy!

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)

Part 2: 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.

- What kind of animal is a border collie? A dog.
- Dogs are fun, aren't they? A border collie is really good at leading sheep on the right path. Our animal pal's name is Guide. He reminds us that he guides sheep. What special book guides us? The Bible.

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.
2. Did Goliath beat David? No—run in place. David beat Goliath!
3. Did God help David beat Goliath? Yes—bark.
4. Are there any mistakes in the Bible? No—run in place. God helped the men know what to write.
5. Does the Bible guide us to trust and obey God? Yes—bark.

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 Toddler 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 to your 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 with the kids. The Toddler 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.

◆ Day 2 Animal Pal Poster

□ Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



◆ 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



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. Which path do you want to be on—God's path (where you follow the Bible) or the wrong path?
2. Go on a Bible hunt. Ask someone to help you find all the Bibles in your house, then count them. If there aren't any, ask if you can get one.
3. Pray and ask God to help you always love and obey the Bible.
4. With someone's help, check AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Do I like to obey God's Word?



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 dealing with anxiety and fear.

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
Song 1: "Cheer Up Ye Saints o' God"
- Teach it!
Part 1: Puppet Pal—The Rod and Staff
Song 2: "Shepherd in the Dell"
Part 2: Animal Pal Review
- Apply it!
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse
Part 2: Go and Do

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.
- 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 13 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

Discovery Center: Ewe-nique Eyesight

MATERIALS

- ❑ [Hidden Sheep Pictures](#)

PREP

Print one copy of each HIDDEN SHEEP PICTURE.

DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then show the pictures one at a time, allowing the children to find the hidden mini sheep/lambs.

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 other animals can't easily sneak up on them. When an animal gets close, the sheep scurry away. Let's look at some pictures and use our eyesight to find the hidden sheep.

Wet Sensory Table: Take Away the Shadows

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

MATERIALS

- ❑ Sensory table with a 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 fresh, 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 is like those 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 shadows. Let's pretend the ice cubes are shadows and take them away.

Dry Sensory Table: Highs and Lows

MATERIALS

- ❑ Sensory table with a tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- ❑ Kinetic sand 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 is 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 scary time—we don't have to be afraid because God is with us. 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
- ❑ Plastic shepherds' staffs (item 1230580—is adjustable)
- ❑ Stuffed sheep or rubber sheep

PREP

Add in the staffs. Check the Resource Catalog for inexpensive plastic ones or use a cane or pool noodle cut in half. Provide plenty of sheep.

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 a 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 gently 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](#).

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ◆ David and Saul Poster
- ★ Optional: Fearful/Peaceful Crossing Signs
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes
- Mounting putty or tape
- Pool noodle
- Optional: action figures and box
- Blank paper to cover David and Saul Poster

Introduce It!

Black Valley in County Kerry (3–5 minutes)

Prep: Cover the two sections of the **DAVID AND SAUL POSTER** so you can take off one at a time. Bookmark 1 Samuel 19, 23. Optional: Cut out and put up the **FEARFUL/PEACEFUL CROSSING SIGNS** on the top two blocks of the bridge and move the other **CROSSING SIGNS** down.

Teacher 1: Welcome back to Ireland, lads and lasses! What animal have we been learning about on our trip to Ireland? *Sheep*. Did you know that sheep can get scared? If they hear a loud noise, one sheep might start to run away, and then all the others will run too!

Teacher 2: Let's act that out. I'm going to start running like a sheep, and you all get up and follow me. *Do so, "baaing" as you go, then stand still*. Now, I'll be your shepherd. Follow me back to your seats and sit down. A good shepherd can help the sheep calm down.

Teacher 1: Remember because there is sin in the world, bad things happen that make us sad or afraid or worried. Today, we're going to talk about how we can move from being scared, or fearful, to feeling calm, or peaceful. We can be peaceful when we trust in Jesus, our Good Shepherd. *If using the CROSSING SIGNS, reference them now*.

Teacher 2: So let's pretend we're going to a place in Ireland called the Black Valley. *Show the MAP OF IRELAND POSTER and uncover the Day 3 Black Valley picture*. A valley is a place with mountains all around. Sometimes a shepherd might move his sheep through a valley. Valleys can be dark and have shadows, which can seem scary.

Teacher 1: David probably had to lead his sheep through dark valleys when he was a shepherd. He wrote about a valley and a shadow in Psalm 23. David also knew what it felt like to be afraid. There was a time when he was scared and had to run away.

Teacher 2: The Bible tells us what happened. *Point to your open Bible*. When David was a shepherd, he played beautiful music for the king. But this king, named Saul, didn't love God and didn't like David. Saul started chasing David, trying to hurt him.

Teacher 1: *Uncover the first picture on the DAVID AND SAUL POSTER*. One day, David and King Saul were sitting together while David was playing quiet music.

Teacher 2: Saul was holding a spear in his hand. Let's pretend this pool noodle is Saul's spear. All of a sudden, Saul went kind of crazy and threw the spear at David like this. *Throw the pool noodle at the wall or at Teacher 1, who dodges it*. Do you think the spear hit David? *Take answers*. No. David escaped and ran away, but Saul chased after him.

Teacher 1: Another time, Saul chased David around a mountain! *Uncover the second picture on the DAVID AND SAUL POSTER*. Saul was on one side of the mountain, trying to catch David. And David was hurrying around on the other side, trying to get away from Saul. *Optional: Act this out with action figures and a box for the mountain or have the two teachers act it out*.

Teacher 2: Saul almost caught David. But God kept David safe!

Teacher 1: Saul chased David many times. That was probably kind of scary for David! That may be why he wrote Psalm 23 about walking through the valley of the shadow of death. But David trusted God to take care of him. So he also wrote, "I will fear no evil, for you [God] are with me."

Teacher 2: Hey, isn't there a song from Ireland about not being afraid or worried?

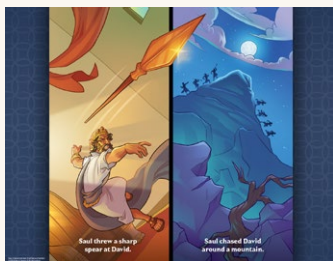
Teacher 1: Yes, I know that song. Sing it with me, kids. *Do so*.

Teacher 2: *Move behind the puppet stage during the singing*.

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" song
- ★ "Shepherd in the Dell" song
- Stream the songs or use the Simple Songs for Kids CD (1231410)
- Device to play songs



VERSE 1

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

Teach It!

Part 1: Puppet Pal—The Rod and Staff (5–7 minutes)

Prep: Tape one PUPPET SCRIPT inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Attach a mini shepherd's rod (coffee stirring stick or craft stick) and staff (bent pipe cleaner) to the puppet's hands.

Puppet: Come out with mini rod and staff in hands. Top o' the mornin' (evenin')! I heard you were talking about how sheep might be afraid. I want to show you my shepherd's rod and staff.

Teacher: David wrote about a shepherd's rod and staff. He said they were comforting.

Puppet: A rod and staff helped shepherds keep their sheep safe, so the sheep would feel comforted and not be afraid.

Teacher: I also have a (picture/examples) of what a rod and staff look like. Show the ROD AND STAFF PICTURE or your examples.

Puppet: The rod was used to protect the sheep. When a wolf came around looking for a sheep dinner, the shepherd could throw the rod at the wolf or swat it to scare it away.

Teacher: Like this? Place the stuffed animal wolf near the wall, then swat it with the rod.

Puppet: Yep, just like that. You can also count sheep with the rod to make sure they're all there and none is lost.

Teacher: Let's count. Kids, you can be my sheep. Use the rod to gently tap each child's shoulder and count together.

Puppet: A shepherd would use a staff to guide a sheep that was going off the path and use the hook to bring it away from danger.

Teacher: Show how a staff would be used to gently guide a sheep (an adult volunteer) by tapping on his side as you walk by and then using the hook to gently pull him back.

Puppet: When a shepherd used the rod and staff, his sheep didn't need to be scared.

Teacher: Sometimes we can be like sheep and get scared too. But our Good Shepherd, Jesus, can help us.

Puppet: That's good to know because I still get scared sometimes. Like one time a huge spider ran up my leg.

Teacher: Yikes! That's scary. What did you do?

Puppet: I jumped around and screamed a lot, like this: Demonstrate crazy jumping and silly screaming.

Teacher: Oh! I see. Kids, are any of you afraid of spiders? Let's do a silly scream like Paddy. Do so.

Puppet: I also get scared of the dark and monsters under the bed and loud thunderstorms! Make thunder noises, "Boom-kaboom!"

Teacher: We all feel scared, or fearful, sometimes just like David did when Saul was chasing him. But did you know God tells us in the Bible what to do when we're afraid?

Puppet: It does?

Teacher: Yep! Show your open Bible. The Bible says not be anxious, which means scared or worried. Instead you should talk to God and tell him why you're scared.

★ Rod and Staff Picture

★ Day 3 Puppet Script
(2 copies)

- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Mini rod and staff and tape (see Prep)
- Shepherd's rod (can use a walking stick)
- Shepherd's staff (can use a cane)
- Stuffed animal wolf or a picture of a wolf

◆ Gospel Opportunity: Remind them Jesus becomes their Good Shepherd when they admit, believe, and forever receive him.

Puppet: So when I feel worried or scared, I should pray to God?

Teacher: Right! Don't worry . . . just pray. God can help us go from being fearful to feeling quiet, calm, and peaceful.

Puppet: What else does it say in the Bible?

Teacher: The Bible says we should think about things that are true.

Puppet: It's true that God loves you.

Teacher: Yes! We should also think about things that are lovely and good.

Puppet: Like flowers and birds and the good things God gives you?

Teacher: Right. Think about those good things and how good God is instead of scary stuff.

Puppet: Wow! Tonight, I'm *not* going to think about monsters under my bed. They're just pretend. Instead, I'm going to think about how good and kind and loving God is.

Teacher: We can also talk to God and tell him some good things we're thankful for.

Puppet: Hmm, today I had pizza—yum! And I had fun playing with my dog. Oh! I got a super big hug from my mom too.

Teacher: Terrific! Think about those good things and tell God thank you for them. Think about Jesus, the Good Shepherd. He's right there with you wherever you are.

Puppet: This reminds me of an old song my grandpa used to sing out in the fields with the sheep.

Teacher: Let's sing it together.

Song 2: Shepherd in the Dell

Explain that a dell is a small valley. Shepherds may lead their sheep through a valley. They use their rod and their staff to guide their sheep.

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 on both hands)

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)

Teacher: Great singing! Let's say bye to Paddy. Do so while Puppet exits.

Part 2: 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. His name is Shadow.

- What kind of animal is he? A bird.
- What color is Shadow? Black.
- One place he lives in Ireland is called the Black Valley. Do you remember what a valley is? Explain. Sometimes there are dark shadows in valleys. Shadow reminds us that even when we go through scary times, we don't need to be afraid.
- Who is the Good Shepherd who is right there with you? Jesus.

◆ Day 3 Animal Pal Poster

- Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



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

1. Do sheep get scared sometimes? Yes—flap your wings.
2. Do people get scared sometimes too? Yes—flap your wings.
3. Should we keep thinking about scary things? No—“caw.”
4. 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.
5. Should we thank God and think about good things? 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 Toddler 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 to your 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 Toddler 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. Draw a picture of your face looking scared, then draw a picture of your face looking happy and peaceful. Which one do you like better?
2. 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.
3. When you are worried or afraid, pray and tell God why you’re afraid. Thank him for being with you.
4. Check AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids for more fun information!

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

- ◆ Day 3 Memory Verse Poster
- ◆ Optional: Day 4 Memory Verse Poster
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player
- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Memory verse music and player





DAY 4

Grumbling to Grateful

BIBLE PASSAGES

Psalm 23:5
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: New Pastures
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!
Puppet Pal—Enemy Area in Dublin
Song 1: “Give Me Oil in My Lamp”
- Teach it!
Part 1: Overflowing Gifts
Song 2: “God Is So Good”
Part 2: Animal Pal Review
- Apply it!
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse
Part 2: Go and Do

Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Psalm 23. Recite it.
- Read 1 Samuel 16:1–13 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information, see 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 13 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

Discovery Center: New Pastures

MATERIALS

- Colored cotton balls, purchased or homemade
- Colored paper in same colors as cotton balls

PREP

To color cotton balls, spray them with water colored with food coloring and allow them to dry. Lay out the colored paper in a circle. Pour the colored cotton balls in the middle.

DIRECTIONS

After sharing the teaching tie-in, have the children match the colors of their cotton ball “sheep” to the paper “pastures.”

TEACHING TIE-IN

One way good shepherds take care of their sheep is by moving them to different pastures. If sheep stay in one place too long, all the good grass gets eaten and may not grow back very well. Also, tiny creatures called parasites can start making the sheep sick if they stay too long. Let’s be good shepherds and move our sheep to new pastures.

Wet Sensory Table: Filled to Overflowing

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

Dry Sensory Table: Bugs, Bugs, Bugs

MATERIALS

- Sensory table with tarp/plastic tablecloth underneath
- Kinetic sand 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 have the children 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, huh? Sheep have bug enemies that bother them too. There are some bugs called nose bot flies. They pester sheep and get on their faces. They even crawl in their noses! Eww! That would feel terrible. A good shepherd may put oil mixed with other ingredients on the sheep’s heads to keep the bugs away.

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 kids can play with the fake bugs, snakes, and mice that are at Fitzpatrick’s Farm.

TEACHING TIE-IN

[Show the play animals.](#) 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!

Puppet Pal—Enemy Area in Dublin (3–5 minutes)

Prep: Cut apart the **ANIMAL ENEMIES PICTURES**. Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Attach a mini shepherd's staff (bent pipe cleaner) to the puppet's hand. Optional: Cut out and put up the **GRUMBLING/GRATEFUL CROSSING SIGNS** on the top two blocks of the bridge and move the other **CROSSING SIGNS** down.

Teacher: Nice to see you again, lads and lasses. Are you enjoying our pretend trip around Ireland? Show the **MAP OF IRELAND POSTER**. Today, we're visiting a city called Dublin. Our friend Paddy is here to tell us about it.

Puppet: Top o' the mornin' (evenin'), kids! Did you know that the city of Dublin was attacked by an enemy? A long time ago, some people called the Vikings came to Ireland.

Teacher: Uncover the Day 4 Enemy Territory picture on the map. Kids, have you ever heard of the Vikings? Show the **VIKING PICTURES**.

Puppet: Well, the Vikings were enemies of Ireland. And the Irish people couldn't fight them. So the Vikings took over some of the land, like the city of Dublin.

Teacher: This reminds me of another thing about sheep. Sheep can't fight their enemies very well, can they?

Puppet: Well, if an enemy comes, sheep may kick at it to keep it away. They might huddle close together (puppet hugs himself) or run around scared, like this (runs back and forth).

Teacher: Here are pictures of some enemies that bother sheep. Show **ANIMAL ENEMIES PICTURES** as mentioned.

Puppet: Foxes and wolves try to eat sheep. But a good shepherd chases them away, using his rod or staff.

Teacher: Remember, the Bible says we are like sheep. Who is our Good Shepherd? Take responses. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who takes care of us.

Puppet: Another enemy that makes life hard for the sheep is a bug called a nose bot fly. These flies buzz around the sheep and even crawl up their nose! Do an exaggerated sneeze. So a good shepherd might rub oil mixed with other ingredients all over a sheep's head and nose so the flies won't bother it.

Teacher: Show the **SHEPHERD PROVIDES POSTER**. Psalm 23 says God anoints our head with oil. That's kind of like what a good shepherd does for his sheep.

Puppet: A shepherd also makes sure there's good food and lots of fresh water for the sheep. He may fill a large bucket from a well to overflowing so the sheep have all the water they need.

Teacher: God gives us good things too. He cares for us not just a little but a lot—to overflowing! Sometimes we grumble and whine about stuff, don't we? But we should instead be thanking God for his goodness to us! If using the **CROSSING SIGNS**, reference them now.

Puppet: Talking about food and water and oil reminds me of a song my grandpa sang whenever he would light up his old oil lamp at night. Let's sing it together!

Song 1: Give Me Oil in My Lamp

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)

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ◆ Shepherd Provides Poster
- ★ Viking Pictures
- ★ Animal Enemies Pictures
- ★ Day 4 Puppet Script (2 copies)
- ★ Optional: Grumbling/Grateful Crossing Signs
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape
- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Mini shepherd's staff (pipe cleaner) and tape



- ★ "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

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

Puppet: Great singing! I'll see you tomorrow. *Exit.*

Teacher: Bye, Paddy!

Teach It!

Part 1: Overflowing Gifts (4–6 minutes)

Prep: On a table, place the large cup inside the glass bowl. Place a bag/box of mini crackers (e.g., Teddy Grahams or Goldfish) beside the cup/bowl. Give the regular-size cup and empty popcorn bag to Teacher 2. Make sure the bag/box of mini crackers will fill the large cup that's in the bowl to overflowing.

Teacher 1: That was a fun song. Jesus is the King of kings, and he's also our Good Shepherd. Jesus is God, and he takes care of his children. The Bible says that every good gift comes from God (James 1:17).

Teacher 2: Come in with an empty cup and an empty popcorn bag. Be mumbling and grumbling about the popcorn all falling out.

Teacher 1: What's going on? Why are you grumbling?

Teacher 2: Show frustration in your body language. Well, I wanted some popcorn. I wanted *a lot* of popcorn. So I filled my cup to overflowing.

Teacher 1: Overflowing? How high did you pile your popcorn? Like this? Indicate an inch or two. This? Keep getting higher.

Teacher 2: Nope. I wanted *lots* of popcorn, so I overflowed it like this (exaggerate a large amount of popcorn above your cup), and it all spilled onto the floor. What "bad luck."

Teacher 1: Luck?! Don't you know there's no such thing as luck? Spilling your popcorn was an accident. You just filled it too high.

Teacher 2: Really? What about "good luck"? Doesn't that make good things happen?

Teacher 1: No, not at all. Good things happen because we have a good God who gives good gifts. Hey, that reminds me of Psalm 23 where it talks about our cup overflowing.

Teacher 2: Why would it say that? Is it talking about popcorn?

Teacher 1: No. It's talking about how God gives good gifts to us—but not just a little, he gives us *overflowing* goodness.

Teacher 2: But don't people sometimes have hard times when it doesn't feel so good?

Teacher 1: Everyone goes through hard times. We may get upset or sad or have enemies that make life hard. But God is always good. And if we're his children, we have Jesus as our Good Shepherd.

Teacher 2: Being a child of God is the best gift ever!

Teacher 1: That's right. But we have to remember that grumbling about hard times never helps. We should be grateful and tell God thank you for everything.

Teacher 2: Yeah, I'm sorry I grumbled about my spilled popcorn. Maybe I should think about good things instead.

Teacher 1: That's what the Bible says we should do. We can trust God to help us through hard times. It also says to think about whatever is lovely and good and beautiful and true, not about stuff that makes us mad or sad or frustrated.

Teacher 2: But I'm still a little sad since I didn't get to eat my popcorn. My tummy is making growly noises—grrrrrr.

- Large bag/box of mini crackers
- One large cup
- One glass bowl
- One regular-size cup
- Empty popcorn bag
- Table

Teacher 1: Would you like some crackers?

Teacher 2: Ooh! Yes, please. *Open the package of crackers and pop one in your mouth. Mmm, these are good. Thank you, God, for good food.*

Teacher 1: Kids, let's think of some other good things God gives us. Did you sleep in a bed last night? That's a good gift. Pretend you're sleeping like this: *Lay head on hands. Make snoring sounds for fun.*

Teacher 2: Hey! Let's pretend these crackers are good gifts from God, like beds, food, and places to live. *For every good thing mentioned, pour some crackers into the cup inside the bowl.*

Teacher 1: Did anyone smile at you or laugh with you this week? Everybody laugh with me. *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Laughter and joy are good gifts from God. *Pour more crackers.*

Teacher 1: Do you have clothes on? Stand up and turn around. *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Having clothes to cover you is also a good gift. *Pour more crackers.*

Teacher 1: Can you think of somebody who loves you? Pat your friend beside you on the back. *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Love is also a good gift from God. *Pour more crackers.*

Teacher 1: And the best good gift of all is Jesus. He came to save us from our sins so we can be part of his family when we trust in him.

Teacher 2: The Bible says God is good, and he gives good gifts. *Finish pouring crackers to overflow the cup into the bowl beneath it. Not just a little but overflowing!* Share the crackers with the kids now or after the song. Make sure there are no allergies.

Teacher 1: We should always tell God thank you for all the good gifts he gives us. Let's sing a song about our good God.

Song 2: God Is So Good

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 as if 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

Part 2: 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 because she's a pesky little enemy to plants. She loves to eat plants. But we learned about another bug today that is an enemy to sheep. Do you remember how those bugs bother the sheep? *Take responses and help them remember bugs can get in sheep's noses and drive them crazy. Bugs can be like a sheep's enemy.*
- Sometimes we might have hard times, or something may bother us and make us upset or sad. But does God want us to grumble about it? *No. He wants us to remember his goodness and be grateful by thanking him for all the good gifts he gives.*

◆ Gospel Opportunity

◆ Day 4 Animal Pal Poster

□ Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person



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. Do sheep like flies going up their noses? No—buzz.
2. Do shepherds put oil on their sheep's heads? Yes—fly around.
3. God is so good. Is it like a cup that's overflowing? Yes—fly around.
4. Should we grumble about things that make us mad or sad? No—buzz.
5. Should we be grateful and tell God thank you? Yes—fly around.

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 Toddler 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 to your 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 Toddler verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, try saying the verse 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. Pick three of your favorite things around the house and tell God thank you for each of them.
2. Ask someone to help you make a snack, tell God thank you, then share it and enjoy it together.
3. Make up a song about some good things God has given to you and your family.
4. Check AnswersVBS.com/emeraldkids for more fun information!

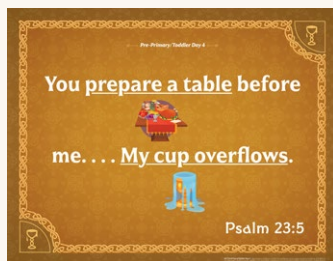
Ask yourself this question: Am I thanking God each day?

- ◆ Day 4 Memory Verse Poster
- ◆ Optional: Day 5 Memory Verse Poster

★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player

☐ Optional: Student Guides and supplies

☐ Optional: Memory verse music and player





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: Now You See It
Wet Sensory Table: Rainbow Colors
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
Song 1: "Peace like a River"
- Teach It!
Part 1: Puppet Pal—Promise Keeper
Song 2: "I've Been Redeemed"
Part 2: Animal Pal Review
- Apply It!
Part 1: Good as Gold Memory Verse
Part 2: Go and Do

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.
- 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 13 for setup and decorating instructions for each station, as well as ideas for additional stations.

Discovery Center: Now You See It

MATERIALS

- ❑ Large tray with objects representing items from sheep: ice cream scoop, stick of butter, cheese, wool scarf, wool socks, adhesive tape, carton of milk, yogurt container

PREP

Place the objects on the large tray.

DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in. Place the tray on a table where the children can see all the objects. Point to each object and explain what it represents. Tell everyone to close their eyes. Choose a volunteer to open their eyes and remove one object to hide in their lap or give to you. When you say to open their eyes, ask the children if they can tell what item is missing from the tray.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Did you know sheep aren't just cute creatures but are really useful to us? God thought of everything when he made sheep! We get things like milk and cheese and butter, but we also get things like clothes and tape from sheep. Let's take a look at some of these things.

Wet Sensory Table: Rainbow Colors

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
- ❑ 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 each paper towel, 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 colored 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 they see lots of rainbows. When I think of rainbows, I think of God, who gave us rainbows as a sign that he keeps his promises. In Psalm 23, God promises his children that goodness and mercy will follow us all our lives, and we'll live in the house of the Lord forever. What a wonderful promise!

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 children 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'll live with God in heaven if we're part of his family.

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 you held back.

DIRECTIONS

Share the teaching tie-in, then have the kids dress up and pretend to be shepherds on a 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](#).

- ◆ Map of Ireland Poster
- ◆ Goodness and Mercy Posters
- ★ St. Patrick Picture
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes
- Mounting putty or tape

Introduce It!

Higher Lands in County Antrim (4–6 minutes)

Prep: Cut apart the **GOODNESS AND MERCY POSTERS**.

Teacher 1: Well, here we are, lads and lasses, at our last spot—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** 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 a famous shepherd in Ireland lived. Have you heard of St. Patrick? [Share this brief account](#).

- St. Patrick lived in a country called Britain and started out with the name Maewyn.
- When he was 16, he was captured by pirates and taken by ship to Ireland.
- For the next six years, he was a shepherd to his master’s sheep. He was all alone, so he started to pray to God.
- He said he was told in a dream that a ship was ready to take him back home to Britain, so he walked a long way, boarded a ship, and got back home.
- But after he was home for a while, he said he had another dream in which he heard the people of Ireland asking him to come back.
- So he studied about God, changed his name to Patrick, and went back to Ireland to tell them about God. [Show the ST. PATRICK PICTURE](#).
- He used the shamrock to explain about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- Many, many, many, many people came to know about God through St. Patrick (120,000)! And so many churches were started by him (300)!

Teacher 1: Now, just like David who wrote Psalm 23, Patrick would have known a lot about sheep too. We’ve learned some things about sheep this week. Let’s see . . . sheep on a farm can wander off or get lost, and they can get scared.

Teacher 2: They can’t fight enemies very well. But someone can help the sheep. Do you remember who that is? [Take responses](#). The shepherd helps his sheep.

Teacher 1: Did you know that sheep know their own shepherd’s voice and only follow him?

Teacher 2: What if there are different shepherds around? Will they follow one of them instead?

Teacher 1: Nope. Sheep only follow *their* shepherd because he takes care of them.

Teacher 2: That’s like us. We should follow our Good Shepherd, Jesus, because he loves and cares for us.

Teacher 1: Did you know that when we love and obey Jesus, he makes goodness and mercy follow us? That’s what Psalm 23 says.

Teacher 2: [Show the GOODNESS POSTER](#). We talked about goodness yesterday. God is good. He gives us good things, like food, clothes, water, hugs, and so much more—his goodness is overflowing!

Teacher 1: [Show the MERCY POSTER](#). Mercy is when God is being kind to us and *not* giving us what we deserve. You see, we don’t deserve to go to heaven because we all sin. But God shows us mercy and gives us the gift of eternal life when we believe in Jesus and trust in him.

Teacher 2: Our memory verse says goodness and mercy will follow us all our life. Let’s make our goodness and mercy posters follow us as we walk around the room. ____ (Teacher 1) will be our shepherd, so let’s all follow him/her. [Walk around the room with Teacher 2 holding the GOODNESS AND MERCY POSTERS](#) behind the line of kids. Stop a couple of times and have everyone check if they are still there. Come back and sit down.



◆ Gospel Opportunity

Teacher 1: That was fun. You know, goodness and mercy are gifts from God just like peace, love, and joy. Let's sing a song about God's good gifts. *Do so.*

Teacher 2: Move behind the puppet stage during the singing.

Song 1: Peace like a River

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)

Teach It!

Part 1: Puppet Pal—Promise Keeper (6–7 minutes)

Prep: Tape a block to the puppet's hand. Cover the two pictures on the **LORD'S HOUSE POSTER** with sheets of paper. Optional: Cut out and put up the **SHAKY/SURE CROSSING SIGNS** on the top two blocks of the bridge and move the other **CROSSING SIGNS** down.

Teacher: I wonder what Paddy's up to today. Kids, help me call Paddy. *Do so.*

Puppet: Come up with a block taped to its hand. Top o' the mornin' (evenin')!

Teacher: Hi! It looks like you've got a building block there.

Puppet: Yeah, I was just counting my blocks to see how many I have to build a house. Sometimes it's a little shaky and falls down if I don't have enough blocks on the bottom.

Teacher: The strong part on the bottom is called the foundation. Did you know Jesus said we should use God's Word, the Bible, as the foundation for our life? If we don't do what God's Word says, our life can feel shaky, and we won't know what we should do. But if we follow what God says in the Bible, we can be sure that Jesus will guide us and help us do what's right.

Puppet: So if you follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd, your life will go from shaky to sure?

Teacher: If using the **CROSSING SIGNS**, reference them now. Yes. And we can be sure that God always keeps his promises, including the promise in Psalm 23 about the house of the Lord.

Puppet: Pause and think. Oh yeah, after the goodness and mercy part, Psalm 23 says, "I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

Teacher: Right! King David's son King Solomon built a house of the Lord here on earth. Show the first half of the **LORD'S HOUSE POSTER**. It was called a temple—kind of like a

- ★ "Peace like a River" song
- ★ "I've Been Redeemed" song

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

- ◆ Lord's House Poster

- ★ Day 5 Puppet Script (2 copies)

- ★ Optional: Shaky/Sure Crossing Signs

- Boy or girl puppet
- Clipboard
- Building block and tape
- Blank paper to cover Lord's House Poster



church. But something that's even more exciting is . . . there's *another* house of the Lord! Show the second half of the [LORD'S HOUSE POSTER](#).

Puppet: I think I know where that is. Kids, do you think the house of the Lord is here or in heaven? Take responses.

Teacher: It's in heaven! When Psalm 23 talks about living in the house of the Lord forever, it means all of God's children—or people who trust in Jesus—will live there in heaven someday.

Puppet: Wow! Is that for sure?

Teacher: God said it, so we can know for sure because God is a promise keeper. The Bible tells about another promise God made a long, long time ago. God had to flood the whole world with water to punish sin. But he kept Noah and many animals safe on a huge ship called an ark.

Puppet: But after the flood was over, God promised he would never flood the world like that again. And he has kept his promise ever since then.

Teacher: That's right. God put a big rainbow in the sky to remind Noah and all of us that God always keeps his promises!

Puppet: So that's what a rainbow means!

Teacher: Yep. Rainbows remind us that God keeps every promise.

Puppet: Here in Ireland, people like to pretend that there's a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

Teacher: Oh, that would be fun to find a pot of gold. But we all know that's not true.

Puppet: Yeah, it's just for fun.

Teacher: Having fun with rainbows is great—they're beautiful. But sometimes people use rainbows for things that are wrong.

Puppet: Well, I'm glad the ones I see in the sky are God's real rainbows! They are so beautiful. Kids, when you see a rainbow in the sky, remember that God is a promise keeper, and you really *will* live with him in heaven some day if you are his child!

Teacher: Admit that you've done wrong things and tell God you're sorry. Believe in Jesus and receive him. Jesus will take away your sins, and you'll be God's child forever in heaven.

Puppet: Hey, that reminds me of a song about the only way to get to heaven. Sing it with me!

Song 2: 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 a child of God. The only way to be a child of God is 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 rocking back
 and forth)
 Cuz' you'll rock and rock, but you won't get
 there (Sing together while rocking, then
 shrug shoulders)
 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 pretending to
 turn a steering wheel)
 Cuz' an old, old car won't go that far
 (Sing together and steer, then shrug)
 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 shoot-
 ing hand up)
 Cuz' a rocket ship won't make that trip
 (Sing together and shoot hand up, then down
 and shrug)
 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

Teacher: Thank you, Paddy. You helped us learn a lot this week about sheep and about the Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Puppet: I've sure enjoyed meeting all of you and telling you about my home here in Ireland. Thanks so much! Goodbye! Exit.

Part 2: 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.

- The words "higher lands" sound kind of like "highlands." What do higher lands reminds us of today? Heaven.
- Our Highland cow is named Shirley. Her name reminds us that if something is for sure, it will really happen. What two things will surely follow us all the days of our lives? One starts with a "G." Take responses—goodness.
- And one starts with an "M." Take responses—mercy. So God promises his children goodness and mercy (loving-kindness) and a home in heaven forever. God keeps his promises—and that's for sure!

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

1. Should we build our life on God's Word, the Bible? Yes—moo.
2. Will God's children for sure live in heaven someday? Yes—moo.
3. Does God ever break his promises? No—chew their cud.
4. Does God always keep his promises? Yes—moo.
5. Do rainbows remind us that God is a promise keeper? Yes—moo.

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 Toddler 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 to your list accordingly.

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

◆ Day 5 Animal Pal Poster

- Optional: Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per child



- ◆ Day 5 Memory Verse Poster
- ★ Psalm 23 Hand Motions and video player
- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Memory verse music and player
- Optional: Bookmarks, 1 per child



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 Toddler verse is a shortened version of what is on the video. If time, try saying the verse again while moving around like a cow.

Part 2: Go and Do

1. Use some 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 have someone read it to you 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?

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
- Optional: Daily Crossing Signs
- Psalm 23 Hand Motions
- Puppet Scripts, 2 copies daily
- Bible
- Modern-day farmer/shepherd costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape for posters
- Blank paper to cover photos on map
- Boy or girl puppet and puppet stage
- Clipboard
- Emerald Crossing Maps, 1 per person
- Optional: Memory verse music and device to play it on

- Optional: Player for verse hand motions
- Streaming device or Simple Songs for Kids CD

Day 1

- Gospel Poster
- Blank paper or sticky notes to cover Gospel Poster

Day 2

- David and Goliath Poster
- Goliath Picture
- Measuring tape
- Irish jig music and device to play audio or video

Day 3

- David and Saul Poster

- Rod and Staff Picture
- Pool noodle
- Optional: Action figures and box
- Blank paper to cover David and Saul Poster
- Mini rod and staff and tape
- Shepherd's rod (can use a walking stick)
- Shepherd's staff (can use a cane)
- Stuffed animal wolf or picture of a wolf

Day 4

- Shepherd Provides Poster
- Viking Pictures
- Animal Enemies Pictures
- Mini shepherd's staff (pipe cleaner) and tape

- Large bag/box of mini crackers
- One large cup
- One glass bowl
- One regular-size cup
- Empty popcorn bag
- Table

Day 5

- Goodness and Mercy Posters
- Lord's House Poster
- St. Patrick Picture
- Building block and tape
- Blank paper to cover Lord's House Poster

Student Extras

- Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- Optional: Bookmarks

Exploration Stations

Discovery Center

DAY 1: SHEEP MEMORY GAME

- Different Sheep Poster
- 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 various smells on each

DAY 3: EWE-NIQUE EYESIGHT

- Hidden Sheep Pictures

DAY 4: NEW PASTURES

- Colored cotton balls, purchased or homemade
- Colored paper in same colors as cotton balls

DAY 5: NOW YOU SEE IT

- Large tray with objects representing items from sheep: Ice cream scoop, stick of butter, cheese, wool scarf, wool socks, adhesive tape, 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 or pots that are taller than the water level
- Small stones
- 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: RAINBOW COLORS

- 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 to represent sheep, laminated sheep pictures, or

- rubber toy sheep (all the same except one a different color)
- Tongs, spoons, sand toys for digging

DAY 2: PLAY PATHS

- Craft sticks and small stones
- 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

- 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

- Plastic shepherds' staffs
- Stuffed sheep or rubber sheep

DAY 4

- Fake bugs, snakes, mice

DAY 5

- Any items you want to add in

Coloring Corner

- 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 decorative, textured materials to add to the sheets

*Available in the Teacher Resource Kit

*Download from AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources

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