

ALLEY Rundown – March 23-24, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Alive (Easter) • Luke 24:1-12, 36-49

Today's Key Question: Why does Easter matter?

Today's Bottom Line: Jesus is alive.

Monthly Memory Verse: *God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.* John 3:16 (NIV)

LG Supplies: 2 Easter baskets, 2 pairs of safety goggles, 2 baskets full of plastic eggs

SLIDE: Theme

Happy Easter next week, everyone! What an incredible day to be together! Jesus is alive! Today should feel like a celebration—because it *is* a celebration—and I know our game will get us started off right. I need four volunteers!

Choose four volunteers and have them join you at the front.

Four people. Two teams of two. One challenge. We call it, “The Easter Basket Challenge!”

SLIDE: “The Easter Basket Challenge”

I'm going to need one person from each team to put on a pair of safety goggles. And grab an easter basket.

Hand them goggles. After they put on the goggles, hand them an empty easter basket.

And now... Hold this easter basket on top of your head.

Hand team player #2 the basket filled with easter eggs.

Team player # 2 – Here's a basket of easter eggs...

I know what you're thinking. You're thinking I'm about to have your partner chuck eggs at you to see how many they can land on your head.

Okay, so, that's exactly what we're doing. You'll be fine. You're tough. AND they're only plastic eggs! It's fine. You're fine.

Position the goggled kids on the opposite side of the room from their teammates.

When I say go, Team player 2 will underhand throw as many plastic eggs from your basket to the basket on top of your partner's head. No fair using your hands to guide them! It has to be in the throw! Got it? This will be amazing! What could possibly go wrong?! Ready . . . set . . . GO!

Play the game for 60 seconds, or until all eggs are out of the baskets and thrown. When finished, count the number of caught eggs and declare a winning team.

Play a few time if time allows and applaud all volunteers when finished.

I'm so glad we get to celebrate Easter together in the Alley!

I have somewhat of a random question. We celebrate Easter usually in March or April. Does anyone know how the date of Easter is actually determined? Why does it jump around?

Allow for responses.

Hmm. Good guesses, but in actuality it's the first Sunday after the full Moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox. If the full moon falls on a Sunday, then Easter is the next Sunday. Bet you didn't know that! What about July 20th? Anyone know what holiday that is?

Allow for responses.

Yeah, this one is a little tough. It is National Moon Day. Any guesses on what that might be?

Allow for more responses.

National Moon Day is a celebration of the first moon landing by Neil Armstrong and company. It celebrates the first Americans to ever walk on the moon. How about President's Day in February. Anybody know which presidents that originally celebrated specifically?

Allow for responses.

Lincoln and Washington! Both had some pretty major accomplishments as founding fathers of the country, so every February we celebrate President's Day. What about MLK Day in January? Who is that for?

Allow for responses.

Right! Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Day. That is a day to celebrate and remember all Dr. King did for civil rights in America—something he literally gave his life for.

Okay, I have one more. What about St. Patrick's Day? What do we celebrate?

Allow for responses.

The color green! Corned beef and cabbage! Don't knock it until you try it; it's amazing. On this day we are celebrating the man who is credited with bringing the message of Jesus to Ireland.

Lots of holidays, lots of times to celebrate. I'm guessing there are some holidays that you don't even think about *why* we celebrate. Memorial Day. Labor Day. Veteran's Day. Those are just times when you get to sleep in because there's no school, right?

Do we ever celebrate those without *really* considering why they matter? Like maybe even today with Easter? Is it possible to hunt for eggs and miss the point? That's a tough question. I'm sure lots of people know why we celebrate Easter—but often the reason is pushed to the side, like your aunt's green bean casserole.

Thankfully, today we can know exactly why we celebrate Easter and why it's so important! And we can find out in this book right here—the Bible. In the New Testament of the Bible, real people who saw Jesus ALIVE after He was dead wrote down their experiences so we can KNOW that Jesus is alive. I can't wait—let's dive in!

VIDEO: The So and So Show (10:50)

SLIDE: Theme background

As we come together today to celebrate Easter, we're not just meeting to remember the life of a person who

did a bunch of good stuff while He was here but now is long gone. We have lots of holidays like that. The point of Easter is that Jesus is NOT dead . . . He is risen! The stone is rolled away! The tomb is empty! The strips of linen are left behind!

And now, just like the disciples, we can now tell others about this incredible news.

That's the thing about Easter. It is not just a once-a-year celebration or a Sunday following a full moon after the spring equinox. Easter is a lifestyle we can celebrate all the time because this is a big deal. Jesus is alive. He's alive, and because of that, we have hope for every single day.

That is why Easter matters today, and tomorrow, and every single day. Jesus is risen. He is risen indeed!

If you have offering for Morningstar mission you can put it in the container. And today as you go to groups, think about this:

SLIDE: Key Question

“Why does Easter matter? How does knowing Jesus is alive change the way we celebrate Easter? You'll have a chance to talk all about what it means to celebrate Easter and how it can personally impact your life today! Before you head out, let's pray and thank God for the hope we have in Jesus! Let's pray!"

Leader leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

SLIDE: Theme