

ALLEY Rundown – March 28th- 29th, 2026

Bible Story: Easter (Crucified and Risen) • *John 18–20:23*

Bottom Line: You can have joy because Jesus is alive.

Conversation Starter: How do you celebrate Easter?

Monthly Memory Verse: *Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!* • Philippians 4:4 NIV

SLIDE: Theme

What's up, everybody! Welcome to The Alley and Happy Easter next week! Today we're kicking off a brand-new theme called 'Block Party: Celebrating Jesus and Joy That Never Ends.' And honestly, Easter is the perfect way to start a block party because today is all about joy, real joy—the kind that doesn't run out because Jesus is alive!

Now listen ... You can't have a block party without games right? I have a screen game for us that is about one of my favorite things we eat at Easter...CANDY! We're going to play a game called Name That Candy! Let's check it out.

VIDEO: Name That Candy

Candy is a fun way to celebrate Easter, but it's not why we celebrate Easter. We celebrate because Jesus is alive! This whole month is about JOY. A joy that comes from knowing Jesus is alive today and that He is your friend forever.

Here's something super important we're going to remember all month long. It's our Memory Verse, and it reminds us that joy isn't something we make up, it comes from knowing Jesus. This month's Memory Verse is Philippians 4:4!

SLIDE: Memory Verse

Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful! —Philippians 4:4 (NIV)."

You know, Easter has a pretty dramatic before and after story ... so I thought we'd kick things off with some before and after transformations. And maybe, just maybe ... you might relate to some of these.

SLIDE: Teaching 1 (Messy room—before)

Let's go big with this one. This room looks like someone opened their closet, sneezed, and everything they've ever owned exploded across the floor. Anyone willing to admit their room has looked a little like this before? (Pause for responses.) Uh-huh, I see you.

SLIDE: Teaching 2 (Clean room—after)

And then, BOOM. Look at this transformation. Everything is in its right place. So tidy! This is the kind of clean your parents brag about to their best friends.

SLIDE: Teaching 3 (*Cracked phone—before*)

Oof. This one hurts to look at. This person has probably tried to survive with their phone looking like this for way too long—the whole ‘I can still use it, I just have to squint right at a specific angle’ situation.

SLIDE: Teaching 4 (*Fixed phone—after*)

But then, look at that shine! This is the kind of AFTER that makes you promise, ‘I’ll never drop my phone again’... even though you absolutely will.

SLIDE: Teaching 5 (*Undecorated cupcake—before*)

Okay, last one, and it’s a classic. This cupcake has nothing going for it. Zero frosting. Zero sprinkles. It’s just a muffin ... a sad little muffin.

SLIDE: Teaching 6 (*Decorated cupcake—after*)

And THEN, this masterpiece! Frosting, sprinkles, a full glow-up. This cupcake went from ‘Don’t pick me’ to ‘I’m the star of the dessert table.’ Before ... and AFTER.

You know what I love about all these? Something looked one way ... and then suddenly, everything changed. And honestly? That’s exactly what Easter is about. It’s the biggest BEFORE and AFTER in history.

And that’s why today is the perfect day to launch our Block Party theme. Easter is the ultimate celebration. Jesus is alive! Jesus gave His life to pay for our sin so we could be His friends. Then He rose from the dead! He defeated death! Now we’ll be His friends forever! And because of that, joy isn’t something we pretend to have. It’s real, and it lasts. It’s worth celebrating.

But before we get into our true Bible story, let me tell you about something incredible we’re doing this year! We’re going to read the key stories of the Bible from cover to cover!

Why are we going through the Bible? Is it because we really want to learn more about the Bible? Well, not exactly. Part of the reason God gave us the Bible is so we can learn about Him. He could have kept who He is a secret from us, a big mystery of the universe. But He didn’t! He wants us to know Him, so He gave us the Bible. So as we go through the Bible this year, our hope is that we’ll learn about Him”

We’re going to go through God’s Big Story in the Bible together so we can learn about God! (*Gesture to slide.*)

SLIDE: God’s Big Story

We are at the part of the Bible where Jesus was on Earth. While Jesus was on Earth, He showed us who God is because HE is God!

Jesus lived a perfect life, and we will see today the most amazing thing He did with that perfect life! God has loved us for a long, long time.

And that's where we are in God's Big Story! Let's check it out.

VIDEO: *The So and So Show (9:03)*

So let's talk about what this means for you, not just for people who lived two thousand years ago.

Some of you know what darkness feels like. You know what fear feels like. You've had moments when things felt hopeless or broken. And maybe you've wondered, 'Is joy even possible for me?'

The Easter story says yes. Absolutely yes. Because Jesus is alive, you're never stuck in your BEFORE. Darkness doesn't get the last word. Fear doesn't get the last word. Hopelessness doesn't get the last word. Jesus does.

And this is where joy comes from. Real joy. Not just happiness. Not pretending everything is fine. TRUE joy that comes from knowing that Jesus loves you so much, He paid for your sin so you can be His friend forever! Then He defeated death! The One who defeated death is with you and for you.

So as we wrap up today, remember this: You can have joy because Jesus is alive. Not the kind of joy that comes and goes or depends on everything being perfect ... but real joy. Joy that lasts. Joy that isn't shaken by hard days or tough moments. When Jesus rose from the dead, after paying for our sin so we could be His friends forever, He gave us a whole new AFTER picture, one where joy is possible no matter what we face.

So here's the question I want you to think about, not just right now, but all week:

SLIDE: *Conversation Starter*

How do you celebrate Easter?

Maybe celebrating Easter looks like remembering Jesus already paid for sin, and you don't have to carry guilt or fear. Maybe it looks like remembering there is freedom because of what Jesus did for you. Maybe it looks like choosing joy even when things feel tough. Maybe it's noticing the good God is doing around you. Maybe it's choosing to trust Him with something that feels heavy.

But here's the thing, when you remember Jesus is alive, it changes how you see everything. It changes how you celebrate. It changes what matters most. That's what I want you to talk about later in your small groups."

Happy Easter, everyone!

Let's talk to the God who worked for the most beautiful after that will last forever!

Jesus, thank You. Thank You for giving Your life to pay for our sin so we could be close to You and thank You for rising again! When life feels heavy or confusing, help us remember that You're alive, You're with us, and You love us more than we can imagine. Help us live our lives every day in the joy of Your love! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

OFFERING

In Parkview Kids, we want to have fun but also be the hands and feet of Jesus by helping others who are in need. This year we are collecting our offering money to help kids all the way on the other side of the world in a country in Africa called Malawi. Did you know that in this area many communities don't have access to clean water?

Slides: 1-4

We are helping a ministry called E3 which helps put in freshwater wells. Having a well with clean water right in their village means women and children don't have to travel far away to other villages to get clean water, and they don't have to walk with heavy containers of water.

Help us raise money to provide wells in the communities in Malawi. We want you to go home and ask what YOU can do to raise money for these families in Africa!