

TOP O' THE MORNING



# missions, music & memory verses



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### *Missions, Music, and Memory Verses Guide*

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# Handy Helps

## Top o' the Morning to Ya!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory Verses**, where kids sing songs, learn their memory verses, or go in-depth with the Mission Moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund.

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

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

## **Our Goal**

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

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

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

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

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



# 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 [Answers-VBS.com/emeraldfaq](http://Answers-VBS.com/emeraldfaq).

## Terms to Know

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory Verses:** Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

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

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

**Toddlers:** 2–4-year-olds.

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

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

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

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

# Top o' the Morning Tunes

Each of the sections in this guide can be used as stand-alone rotations or in combination with others. For example, you may choose to have a music and memory verse rotation, a missions and memory verse rotation, or do all three. Or you may want to include a memory verse review during snack time or play songs during craft time. Please choose the format that works best in your situation.

This section is for those who want to add a music rotation to their schedule. A Music Leader Download (including both contemporary and traditional) is included with the purchase of a Super Starter Kit (1230020) and is available to purchase separately at [AnswersVBS.com](http://AnswersVBS.com). This download contains files of hand motion videos and song lyric videos as well as MP3s of the music in stereo, split, and instrumental versions. Presentation images and printable song lyrics are also included.

To help the children learn the VBS songs, choose the songs your kids will enjoy and repeat them throughout the week or use the suggestions below. We have included suggestions for both contemporary and traditional songs, but you can choose from one or the other or mix and match, depending on your preference. The theme song is fun to sing every day along with several other songs. You may also want to include the day's memory verse song.

## Contemporary Songs

Theme Song: "Emerald Crossing" (2:17)

Day 1 Song: "His Name Is Jesus" (2:59)

Day 2 Song: "The Lord Himself Will Lead Me" (2:33)

Day 3 Song: "Christ Is Here" (1:40)

Day 4 Song: "Provider" (2:08)

Day 5 Song: "Surely Goodness and Mercy" (3:02)

Any Day Song: "Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us" (2:26)

## Traditional Songs

Theme Song: "Emerald Crossing" (1:49)

Day 1 Song: "He Searched High and Low" (1:50)

Day 2 Song: "Through Every Up and Down" (1:07)

Day 3 Song: "In the Valley" (2:46)

Day 4 Song: "I'm Sittin' at a Table" (2:00)

Day 5 Song: "All the Days" (1:38)

Any Day Song: "Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us" (2:25)

## ESV Memory Verse Songs

“I Shall Dwell in the House of the Lord” (Psalm 23 / 2:32)

“The Lord Is My Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1–3 / 2:23)

“You Are with Me” (Psalm 23:4 / 2:09)

“My Cup Overflows” (Psalm 23:5 / 2:11)

“Goodness and Mercy” (Psalm 23:6 / 2:52)

## KJV Memory Verse Song

“Psalm 23” (1:45)

Each day, welcome kids to the song time. There are [trivia and joke slides](#) available ([Resources](#) → [Presentation](#) → [Jokes and Trivia](#)) to share as a fun way to begin class. As you introduce a new song, you can first explain the motions, or you can launch right into the song and the kids will pick them up as they go along. If you are leading the motions on your own, lyric videos are available to play.

## Materials

- ☐ Music Leader Download
- ☐ Music Station Poster (1230340)
- ☐ Device to play songs

## Day 1

Today, we are here at *Emerald Crossing* to learn how to cross from lost to found. We will sing our theme song and then two songs about our Good Shepherd who helps us cross from being lost in sin to being part of God’s flock, the sheep of his pasture. When we repent of our sin and believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave, we can have eternal life with him forever and abundant life with him now. [Read Psalm 23:1.](#)

Theme Song: “Emerald Crossing”

Contemporary: “His Name Is Jesus”

C: “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

Traditional: “He Searched High and Low”

T: “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

## Day 2

Today at *Emerald Crossing*, we are learning to cross from the wrong path of doing our own thing to the right path of following the Good Shepherd by reading his Word. When David faced Goliath, he already knew who God was and had already developed a trust in the one true God. By studying the Bible, we can learn who the Good Shepherd is and that he will lead us on the right path. Let’s sing some songs to remind us that the Lord is our leader and guide. [Read Psalm 23:2–3.](#)

Theme Song

C: “The Lord Himself Will Lead Me”

C: “His Name Is Jesus”

C: “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

T: “Through Every Up and Down”

T: “He Searched High and Low”

T: “Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

# Memory Verse Review

This section is for those who want to add a memory verse rotation to their schedule. Display the memory verse posters in your area. Review the memory verse by playing the appropriate song several times from the Music Leader Download. Encourage the kids to sing along. Then play a game to review the verse. You may want to combine this with the song rotation time.

The Music Leader Download, including both contemporary and traditional music, is available with the purchase of a Super Starter Kit (1230020) or separately at [AnswersVBS.com](http://AnswersVBS.com). Check with your director for the files or go to [AnswersVBS.com](http://AnswersVBS.com) to purchase the music download.

## Materials

- ☐ Music Leader Download or stream
- ☐ Device to play songs
- ☐ Memory Verse Sign (1230350)
- ☐ Memory Verse Posters

## Day 1

### All Ages

To review the memory verse, read the verse together from the poster (including its reference). Divide the class into two groups. Recite a word or phrase from the verse while doing an action (e.g., squat, spin around, touch your toes) or changing your voice (e.g., whisper, shout, squeak). The first group will copy what you say and do, then the second group will copy them. Try going faster or slower. Continue until you complete the verse. Repeat as time allows.

### Theme Verse / Day 1

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

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

## Day 2

### Juniors and Primaries

To review today's verse, read it together from the poster. Have the kids sit in a circle. Choose a student to say the first word in the memory verse. The next student must repeat the previous word and add on the next word. Continue moving around the circle, repeating and adding one word at a time to complete the verse. For example, the first person says, "He," then the second student must say, "He makes (maketh)," and so on until the entire verse has been recited. Repeat as time allows.



# Mission Moment

The mission emphasis to your VBS program provides an amazing opportunity for children to participate in giving to ministries that share the gospel. **Check with your director to see when the Mission Moment is featured—either during the assembly time or during one of the rotations.**

Every year, we partner with Children's Hunger Fund to provide food and the hope of the gospel to children facing food insecurity in the US and around the globe. Guided by Grace is a fun and meaningful addition to your VBS program, teaching kids about poverty around the world and empowering them to make a difference.

The Children's Hunger Fund scripts are also provided in the *Assembly Guide* for those who would like to offer a mission time then. Coordinate with your director and assembly leader on who is doing what concerning the mission time.

## Guided by Grace



Guided by Grace is a powerful addition to your VBS program. Your kids will explore five different countries and learn how they can make a difference for children living in poverty around the world.

As your students explore Ethiopia, Romania, the Philippines, El Salvador, and the US, they'll hear the stories of boys and girls whose lives have been impacted by poverty. These children have no guarantee of meals, shelter, or education. They need help. And they need the hope that only comes from salvation in Jesus Christ.

The good news is you and your kids have the power to make a difference!

The Bible says that giving generously to the poor is really giving generously to God himself (Proverbs 19:17). Teach your VBS class the great joy that comes from sacrificing for the sake of Jesus and his gospel.

During the Mission Moment, your group will meet Quinn, an enthusiastic shepherdess-in-training. Quinn is preparing to join her cousins on their sheep farm in Ireland and has been busy learning everything there is to know about raising sheep. Join her as she attempts to train her dog, Penny, to be a sheepdog. Throughout the week, she'll also be sharing stories about children around the world.

Your mission is to collect coins and help provide meals for children in need, just like the ones Quinn will introduce to you throughout the week.

When your VBS children earn coins for their Coin Paks, they make it possible for Children's Hunger Fund to fill Food Paks. A Children's Hunger Fund Food Pak is a box of nutritious food that can provide meals for a family in need. In a Food Pak, just 25 cents can provide one meal!

The Food Paks are provided to partner churches in the US and around the world who deliver them to homes of families in need. Along with food delivery, relationships are built and the gospel is shared.

The following items are available with the [Resource Download](#) that comes with your Starter Kit (**Resources → Missions**).

- [Daily videos](#)
- [Daily scripts and activities](#)
- [Child profile slides](#): Daily profiles of the children your VBS students will meet
- [Printable Prayer Journals](#), featuring informative prayer briefings that will help your kids connect with the real needs of suffering children
- [Printable Map of the World activity sheet](#), featuring locations of the children from the daily videos
- [Printable banner artwork](#)
- [PowerPoint images](#) to help your kids track their fundraising progress
- Printable [Coin Pak bank](#) for collecting coins
- [Donation Submission Form](#) to accompany your donation to CHF at the end of your VBS program

## Coin Paks Available to Order

Included in your [Starter Kit](#) is a sample of the sturdy pop-up [Coin Pak bank](#) for your kids to use as they collect quarters for meals. Check with your director for this sample. After VBS, these will be fun souvenirs that can be kept as reminders to always care for the needs of others. Coin Paks are available from Children's Hunger Fund. To order, please visit [ChildrensHungerFund.org/answersvbs](http://ChildrensHungerFund.org/answersvbs) or call 1 (800) 708-7589. Orders must be received 14 days prior to your VBS date. Available while supplies last.

For questions regarding your Mission Moment resources, please call 1 (800) 708-7589 or email [info@childrenshungerfund.org](mailto:info@childrenshungerfund.org).

## Collecting Donations

Give children their own Coin Pak banks for collecting donations. Encourage your kids in the weeks leading up to VBS to save their money and then begin collecting the first day. Or plan on passing out the Coin Paks on Day 1 and begin collecting on Day 2. Work with your director to set up a fun area for kids to deposit their money each day as they begin VBS.

Once you've totaled the coins, you can submit your donation online at [ChildrensHungerFund.org/answersvbs](http://ChildrensHungerFund.org/answersvbs). If you wish to mail your donation, please write a check to Children's Hunger Fund, indicating "Guided by Grace" in the memo area, then fill out the [Donation Submission Form](#).

Send your check with the form to:

Children's Hunger Fund  
Attn: Guided by Grace  
P.O. Box 104556  
Pasadena, CA 91189-4556

Learn more about the gospel-centered mercy ministry of Children's Hunger Fund at [ChildrensHungerFund.org](http://ChildrensHungerFund.org).

## Tracking Your Progress

To help your kids maintain their excitement, announce how many meals they provided each day. Check with your director to find out when to do this, either during a special mission rotation or during the opening or closing assembly.

Here are some fun ways to help your kids see their progress as they raise funds:

1. Show your progress with Guided by Grace [Daily Count PowerPoint slides](#). Update the slides with the total number of meals that can be provided each day.
2. Make your own goal tracker and update it throughout the week. Create or print a large shepherd's hook and put equally spaced marks on it, going up. Each day, you can color in spaces as you fill in the hook. Color to the mark representing the kids' offering and write the total number of meals that can be provided so far on the corresponding line.
3. Consider having a contest between boys and girls or between teams to see which group can bring in the most money. (Printable [Teams artwork](#) is in the [Resource Download](#).)

**NOTE ON COUNTING COINS:** It may be helpful to recruit two or three adult volunteers to count and/or roll the coins at the end of each day. Some banks provide a coin counting service, but they may require several days to do so. Check ahead with your local bank or see if anyone has a coin counting machine you can borrow.

## Class Time

During your Mission Moment class, you'll introduce one child each day who is experiencing poverty. After you play the video, there is opportunity to discuss the child's situation in more detail with an activity. These activities will help your students understand more about global poverty and how they can make a difference. The materials needed for the class are listed below.

## Materials Needed

### EVERY DAY

- ☐ Glue
- ☐ Child safety scissors
- ☐ Extra **Coin Paks** (printed or ordered ahead) for new students each day
- ☐ Extra **Map of the World** activity sheets for new students each day

### DOWNLOADS

- ☐ **Slides** for Children's Hunger Fund for each day
- ☐ **Videos** for Children's Hunger Fund for each day
- ☐ **Map of the World** activity sheet, 1 per student
- ☐ **Child Prayer Journals** for each day, 1 per student

### DAY 1

- ☐ **Food printouts** (only post food items)
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Whiteboard or a wall to tape food printouts

### DAY 2

- ☐ Tables, chairs, couches, and other "obstacles" that can be moved around the room.
- ☐ 2 blindfolds

### DAY 3

- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Play dough
- ☐ 1 sheet of paper for each group of 4–5 students
- ☐ 1 ruler per group

### DAY 4

- ☐ Paper, pencil, and eraser, 1 each per student

### DAY 5

- ☐ Something small like a slip of paper, crayon, or LEGO, that can easily be hidden in a student's person (not just held in their hand where it would be obvious). You should NOT be able to see the object.

# Daily Scripts

## Day 1: Hani (Ethiopia)

SHOW: Guided by Grace slide

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

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

SHOW: Guided by Grace—Hani slide

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

SHOW: Video 1—Hani

Country: Ethiopia

Problem: Extreme Hunger

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

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

SHOW: Daily Count Day 1 slide

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



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

### **DO MISSION ACTIVITY: WHAT CAN \$2 BUY?**

1. Explain that many families living in poverty—like Hani's—have very little money and must survive on around \$2 per person per day.
2. Point to the food items on the board.
3. In the United States, each of these items can be purchased for around a dollar. Look through these options and decide which two items you would get.
4. Ask if anyone wants to share which two items they chose.
5. Ask them why they chose those items. (Commend them if they decide based on nutrition or because they provide multiple meals.)
6. Ask if anyone else who chose something different wants to share.
7. Ask them why they chose their items. (Commend them if they decide based on nutrition or because they provide multiple meals.)
8. Ask if anyone chose chips, ice cream, cookies, or candy. Why did they choose them? (No judgments; those options still provide calories, even if they have fewer nutrients.)

### **TALKING POINTS**

- What if I told you that this was all you had to eat for the entire day?
- Many families living in extreme poverty do not have a school education, which limits the types of jobs they can find. Most of these families rely on day labor, meaning any money they earn that day is all they have; they cannot save.
- If they cannot find work, they may have to make do with less or go without any food.
- What if you only had one dollar? Would that change what you choose?
- What happens if someone in the family gets hurt and needs a bandage or ointment? Place first aid kit and ointment images on the board.
- Would you give up food for a day to treat an injury?
- What if someone in your family had the chance to go to school so they could one day have the education to get a good job and have a better life?
- Place school supply images on the board. Would you give up food for a day to send someone to school?
- These difficult decisions are what families like Hani's have to face everyday. What can you do to help families like Hani's?

Pass out the [Map of the World](#) activity sheets. Have kids put their names at the top then cut out and glue the item for today on the map. Collect the maps when you're finished with the activity.

Send each child home with a [Hani Prayer Journal](#).