

WW24

SMALL GROUP LEADER INFO

WINTER WEEKEND 2024



GENERAL INFO

Dates:

January 12-14, 2024

Location:

Valley Ranch Baptist Church | 1501 E Beltline Road, Coppell, Texas 75019

Leader Meeting:

Friday, January 12 | 5:00pm | Seminar Room

We will go over details for the weekend, have dinner together, and pray over our weekend. Please make plans to attend this meeting!

Important Contact Information:

Caleb Wade | Student Pastor | cwade@vrbc.net | (817) 304-4523

Kassidy Turner | Student Ministry Associate | ktturner@vrbc.net | (972) 989-5921

WHAT IS WINTER WEEKEND?

Winter Weekend is a discipleship retreat for 6th-12th grade students. Students are hosted in homes all across Coppell for a weekend focused on worship, Bible Study, and building community. We are excited to see what God has planned for Winter Weekend. You will play an important role in the weekend. You will be responsible for preparing and teaching the small group lessons for a group of teenagers for the weekend. You will stay in the home with them and guide them throughout the weekend.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

Per VRBC's Good Shepherd Policy, it is needed that each small group leader go through each step in our Good Shepherd process. Each of these items (except the two noted below) may be found in the confirmation email you receive after completing your registration. After you have finished your registration, we will be following up with you if any of these items are still missing.

- **Small Group Leader Registration**
- **2024 VRSM Adult Participation Waiver**
- **Signed Good Shepherd Policy** — As the Good Shepherd policy was recently revised in October of 2023, we ask each leader to resubmit their signature.
- **Ministry Safe Certificate** (if not completed in the last two years) — The invitation to the Ministry Safe awareness training will be sent to you through email after you complete your registration. If you have recently gone through this training for VRBC or another organization, a copy of the certificate can be emailed to ktturner@vrbc.net.
- **Approved Background Check** (if not completed in the last two years) — The invitation to begin a background check will be sent to you through email after you complete your registration. If we have a valid background check on file for you, you will not need to do another one.

WHAT TO BRING

YOU WILL BE STAYING IN THE HOST HOME WITH THE STUDENTS ALL WEEKEND

- A sense of excitement, expectancy, and flexibility. This is going to be a great weekend!
- Prepared lessons to teach during small groups.
- Your Bible and a pen.
- Wear casual, but appropriate clothes. You will be given a Winter Weekend shirt to wear for Sunday. Gloves, a set of clothes to work in, and some closed toed shoes. We will be doing some mild construction for our Mission Project.
- Basic toiletries - towel, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, brush, deodorant, etc. Please do not forget a towel – Host Families are not responsible for providing towels!
- Sleeping bag and a pillow. We have asked each Host Home to provide a bed for each leader but, just in case, bring something to sleep in.

DNOW LEADER EXPECTATIONS

We need a number of college students/young adults to help lead our small groups during Winter Weekend. We need committed Christians who are willing to prepare and invest themselves in a group of students (6th-12th grade) over the course of a weekend. The bulk of our expectation lies in your connection and investment in students for the weekend. You will also be expected to help make sure students are where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be there, that they are respectful of the Host Home, and they are making good choices during the weekend.

A Winter Weekend Leader Must:

1. BE INVESTED

A small group leader must (1) be actively pursuing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and (2) want to invest into the lives of junior high and high school students.

2. BE A LEADER

We'll be looking to you to step up, take charge and ensure that the students are able to have a fun and productive weekend. If students aren't doing what they need to be doing, don't be afraid to speak up and take charge!

3. FACILITATE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

One of your main responsibilities will be leading the small group times in your groups. We provide material to facilitate and direct your small group times, so please take the time to pray, study, and prepare for each of the three small group lessons. You don't have to stick to the material word-for-word, but we do expect you to cover what each lesson is teaching those students. We believe that these small groups will provide a major avenue for spiritual growth for students, so use this time wisely....and have some fun doing it!

4. ENGAGE WITH THE STUDENTS

Building relationships with your assigned group of students is critical. This is challenging to accomplish in a weekend, and that is why we ask you to stay with your assigned group of students as much as possible. I know you might have friends in other groups, but we need you to be responsible for your own group. This means spending time with your specific students and knowing where they are. You have a great opportunity to impact these students' lives during this short period of time. Please use it effectively.

5. SET THE EXAMPLE

Look around...guess who's looking at you? Your group of students! We expect you to set an encouraging example throughout the weekend. This means we expect you to be willing to participate in the activities, engage in worship, and follow directions. Also, we need your help encouraging positive and flexible attitudes for whatever is happening next.

WW24

SMALL GROUP SESSION OVERVIEW

TRULY FREE

VRSM
VALLEY RANCH STUDENT MINISTRIES

The lesson guides for all three small group sessions are located in the Winter Weekend Google Drive Folder. You can find the link to this on the Winter Weekend Registration webpage. You will also find Lesson Prep Videos to help as you prepare to teach each lesson.

Reminder: These lessons are not meant to be scripts, but guides. Please do not just recite them word for word. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you as you prepare and lead.

THEME VERSE

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. [32] Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - John 8:31-32

DESCRIPTION

Life is full of ups and downs. Good days and bad days. Fun times and not so fun times. It's part of what it means to be a human being. Like all people, our students love the moments when things are going their way. But what about when things don't go their way? What about the times when they feel overwhelmed by the pressures of the world around them? What about the times when they are exhausted and overwhelmed by stress? What about those moments when they just can't seem to overcome the sin that drags them down?

For many students, the stress, pressure, and brokenness of their lives is at times, too much to bear. But the excellent news is that there is tremendous hope in the Gospel.

When students feel trapped by their sin, the Gospel says, "**You're a slave no longer.**" When students feel like they don't match up, the Gospel says, "**You have immense value to God.**" When students feel overwhelmed by the stress of their lives, the Gospel says, "**There is rest in Jesus.**" And when students don't feel like their lives matter, the Gospel says, "**Your life is meant for more than this.**" In a word, the Gospel sets students free. Truly free.

SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

Session 1: Set Free from Sin

Main Scripture: Romans 6:15-23

What We Want Students to Learn: Students will understand that God calls them to a faith that is always growing, and to accept the challenge to take greater ownership of their faith.

Session Snapshot: Many things burden students. But the most burdensome thing they face is sin. Apart from Christ, we are enslaved to sin. And this sin separates us from God, permanently. How awesome it is, then, that when we come to saving faith in Christ, we are set free from the chains of sin that bind us. This session will help your students understand the life-changing, soul-transforming freedom that is available to them through a saving relationship with Jesus.

Session 2: Set Free from Measuring Up

Main Scripture: Romans 8:31-39

What We Want Students to Learn: For students to learn that in Christ they have been set free from the pressure to "measure up." In Christ, they have value.

Session Snapshot: Teenagers receive so many messages from culture about their value. They constantly compare themselves to the standards set by others. And overwhelmingly, they don't feel like they add up. They don't feel as pretty or as put-together as the people they follow in Instagram and Snapchat. They don't feel as athletic as the other guys or girls on the team. They don't feel as smart as their friends. Or as funny. Or as popular. Or as accepted. Overwhelmingly, many of our students don't feel like they add up, and they doubt their self-worth. Into this environment of doubt, the Gospel speaks life and light. In Christ, God sees teenagers as invaluable. There is no condemnation, no judgment, no comparison-making for God's children. They are eternally valuable and immeasurably worthy because the Father has welcomed them in the name of the Son. When students truly internalize this, it changes everything about how they see themselves.

Session 3: Set Free for a Purpose

Main Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-10; Matthew 5:16

What We Want Students to Learn: In Christ, they have been set free from the world's definition of success. In Christ, they have a purpose.

Session Snapshot: Up to this point, you have made a case for your students that the Gospel sets them free from the bondage of sin, from the weight of expectations, and from the stress that weighs them down. In this session, you'll help students see that more than just setting them free FROM these things, God has set them free FOR a purpose. When students come to saving faith in Christ, God frees them from pursuing unfulfilled or misguided purposes. Paul shows us that God called us so that we might fill the world around us with goodness. And Jesus says in Matthew that this goodness is designed to point people to God. We were freed for a purpose. Our students' lives are rich with meaning. This session will challenge them to embrace the purpose God has for each of them.

Thank all of you for the commitment and investment you are making by being a part of this weekend. You are so vitally important in the lives of these students! We are praying for each of you as you prepare your hearts and minds for Winter Weekend.

WW24

SCHEDULE

WINTER WEEKEND 2024



FRIDAY, JANUARY 12TH

5:00 PM	Small Group Leader Meeting + Dinner
6:30 PM	Check-in – <i>Church Lobby</i>
7:00 PM	Worship Session 1
8:30 PM	Late Night at VRBC
10:00 PM	Head to Host Homes
10:30 PM	Small Group 1 in Homes
12:00 AM	Lights Out

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13TH

8:00 AM	Breakfast / Time Alone with God Small Group Session 2
10:15 AM	Arrive at VRBC
10:30 AM	Worship Session 2 at VRBC
11:45 PM	Lunch
12:45 PM	Mission Projects
3:00 PM	Free Time
5:45 PM	Head to VRBC
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Worship Session 3
8:15 PM	Small Group Session 3 at VRBC
9:30 PM	Late Night Worship
10:30 PM	Everyone but Seniors Head Home Senior Communion + Prayer
11:00 PM	Seniors Head Home
12:00 AM	Lights Out

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14TH

8:30 AM	Breakfast at VRBC
9:00 AM	Group Pictures
9:15 AM	Head to Worship Center
9:30 AM	Worship Worship Center
10:45 AM	Winter Weekend Wrap-Up
12:00 PM	Students and Leaders Dismissed