



Grow

2024

WEEKLY PLANNER

FOR FAMILY MINISTRY

Grow 

2024

WEEKLY PLANNER

FOR FAMILY MINISTRY

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WEEKLY PLANNER

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

In ministry, it's easy to let the urgent keep you from the important. How many times have you started a week with intentionality, only to reach the week feeling unaccomplished and still unprepared for your week of ministry?

That's why we partner with [Church Fuel](#) to bring you this planner every year! There's one page for each week, with plenty of space to help you to focus on what matters and give you insights about what's coming up in your church. Here's a quick rundown of each section and how to use each one:

KEY TAKEAWAY: Simply reflect on the previous week and capture a lesson you learned.

THREE OUTCOMES: When you get to the end of the week, what results do you want to celebrate? Remember, these outcomes aren't tasks – they're achievements!

ACTION ITEMS: Jot down a few key tasks for the week, making sure they're clearly connected to your desired outcomes for the week.

PEOPLE: Remember, ministry is about people, so ask God to bring three people to mind you want to connect with – maybe a kid, family, volunteer, or coworker.

THINK ABOUT THIS: This short challenge is time-sensitive. It's meant to let you know what's coming up and give you something important to work on each week. Each page of this planner is similar, but in this section, you'll notice timely advice matched to the season of ministry. If other staff members at your church are using [the Grow Weekly Planners](#) in their various areas of ministry, **these challenges will align across ministries so you'll all be learning (and growing) in the same ways.**

VERSE OF THE WEEK: Think and meditate on this verse as you move throughout your week. And if you're following the scope and sequence from Grow Kids or Students Curriculum, **these verses will align with what you're teaching each week!**

What you do matters so much – so we hope this planner helps you make the most of your time. We can't wait to see what you do to make this year of ministry really matter.

The Staff You Can Use Team

P.S. In case you haven't heard, [Grow Curriculum](#) is now available for kids and students! Plus, we've got handy tools to make ministry easier, like [Grow Hubs](#), [Grow Slides](#), and [Grow Numbers](#). Let us know how we can help!



THINK
ABOUT THIS



As you turn the page on last year, it's time to revisit your calendar to make sure you're prepared for the year ahead. If you've already created an Annual Strategy Calendar for your ministry, take a look at it again. Make sure you're still on track, or make adjustments if needed.

If you haven't already planned the upcoming year, it's not too late! Just visit growcurriculum.org/meeting for a free video that will walk you through how to create your Annual Strategy Calendar by breaking your ministry activities and initiatives into six key categories:

- Discipleship
- Teaching
- Environment
- Events
- Volunteers
- Families



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FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:11

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."

WEEK OF
JANUARY 7, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
 THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
 ABOUT THIS



In ministry, just about everything you need to do can be broken down into six areas:

- Discipleship
- Teaching
- Environment
- Events
- Volunteers
- Families

So this year, what could happen if you decided to strategically pursue growth in just one of those areas? We don't just mean higher attendance numbers – we mean greater depth, health, and effectiveness.

What would you want to see grow? Your volunteer team? Your parent engagement? The effectiveness of your teaching or events? The quality of your weekly environment? Your discipleship efforts? Which area will you choose?



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 2:6

"For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."

WEEK OF
JANUARY 14, 2024

JANUARY 14 IS
INTERNATIONAL KITE DAY



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Is there an easy way to track your weekly attendance? Your attendance isn't the most important (or the most accurate) indicator of your success in ministry, but there are some numbers that do matter. This year, ask yourself which numbers you do need to track, knowing those numbers reflect real lives that are being either impacted or overlooked. You might be tracking different numbers than you tracked last year, but do you know if your ministry has grown or shrunk? Do you know by how much? Do you know how to get in touch with families you haven't seen in a while? If you need a new attendance-tracking tool, check out GrowNumbers.com.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 139:14

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."



WEEK OF
JANUARY 21, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



If you're following the Grow discipleship strategy, February marks the beginning of our focus on spending time with God. This quarter, we like to focus on going deeper in our teaching and discipleship efforts. So as you shift from January to February next week, make this shift in your focus for both you and the families you pastor. This upcoming quarter is a great opportunity to challenge, inspire, and guide your kids, students, and families into deeper relationships with Jesus.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 27:17

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."



WEEK OF
JANUARY 28, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 111:10

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



You're one month into the year already! Now's a great time to revisit any goals you set for this new year — especially those related to your personal growth.

How's your physical health? Your emotional health? Your relational health? What about your spiritual health?

As you focus on spending time with God this quarter, get curious about how God wants to see you grow in all of these areas this year, because they're all connected.

It's not too late for another New Year's resolution! One year from today, what will you be glad you did? How do you want to grow in the next 11 months of 2024?





THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you've been talking to God for a while, it's easy to forget how strange prayer can seem to someone who hasn't talked to God for an entire lifetime. Families need us to model conversations with God and teach them how to have conversations with God of their own, without our help. So regularly pray out loud with kids and students, teach them about prayer, and give them opportunities to talk to God alongside you and other adult leaders. You probably do this already, but this week, ask what you can do be more strategic about it. You might even give families simple strategies to pray, like these four favorite prayer prompts, inspired by Anne Lamott: Please, Thanks, Sorry, Wow.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: LUKE 7:8

"For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



This week, Lent officially begins! Whether your church uses the language of Lent or not, the 40 days leading up to Easter are opportunities for both you and families to draw closer to Jesus.

So this week, what's something you can do to help kids and families spend more time with God in the next 40 days? Is it a 40-day devotional? Daily one-minute lessons posted on your social media accounts? A daily challenge delivered through texts? If you're following along with the Grow discipleship strategy, we've already provided a handy discipleship tool for you this quarter. But whether you're using Grow's discipleship tools or not, here's the question: what will you do this Easter season?

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 CORINTHIANS 9:16

"For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!"



WEEK OF
FEBRUARY 18, 2024

FEBRUARY 18 IS THUMB
APPRECIATION DAY



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 25:4-5

"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Once or twice a month, we'll cue you to send a thank you note to a volunteer, but this is actually something that should be on your calendar every week.

When we send thank you notes (filled with specific praise) to volunteers on our team, we accomplish several important things at once.

1. We care for the hearts of our volunteers, who work so hard for our churches and the families they serve.
2. We reinforce the kind of ministry and volunteer culture we want to create, because what we celebrate is what will be repeated.
3. We grow our capacity to pay attention and feel more gratitude.



WEEK OF
FEBRUARY 25, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MATTHEW 14:27

"But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



The Grow discipleship strategy is built around four spiritual habits: spending time with God, spending time with others, using your gifts, and sharing your story. But these four spiritual habits aren't just designed for kids or students – they're the same four spiritual habits that help you grow spiritually, too.

So this year, what would it look like for you to grow in one of these four areas? Do you need to grow your intimacy with God? Do you need to grow the community of people with whom you have safe and authentic relationships? Could you grow the ways you serve God and others through your unique giftedness, or the opportunities you take to share God's story with others? Choose one.



WEEK OF
MARCH 3, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 86:6-7

"Hear my prayer, Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Is helping kids, teenagers, or families memorize Scripture part of your ministry strategy?

People are great at memorizing movie quotes and song lyrics, but memorizing Scripture probably doesn't come quite as naturally. That's why it's so helpful for us to give families simple, practical tools for memorizing Scripture, and the Easter season is a great time to do that! Maybe that means . . .

- Giving a Scripture memorization challenge through texts or social media.
- Teaching sign language or dance moves to go along with Scripture.
- Creating Scripture printables or wallpaper for their phones.
- Handing out good old-fashioned flash cards and challenging them to choose a verse that matters to them.



WEEK OF
MARCH 10, 2024

MARCH 10 IS
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
AWESOMENESS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



What are some of the most successful events you've ever done? Jot a few of them down. Then ask yourself some important questions like: What made each event so successful? What was the goal of that event? What did that event achieve for your ministry?

Once you've got that, look ahead to the events you have coming up. Can you clearly explain the goal and desired outcome for each event? Does your church or your community really need that event . . . or is it just another event that's taking up space on the calendar and using valuable resources? These can be tough questions to wrestle with, but when we make it a habit to analyze what we do, we can be a lot more intentional with our time and resources.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JOHN 3:17

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."



WEEK OF
MARCH 17, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: EPHESIANS 4:32

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



How's your Easter planning coming along? During Easter week, some churches have separate services or events for kids or students, but many encourage families to worship together during Easter week. No matter how your church approaches Easter, here are a few questions to consider this week, now that you have just three weeks to prepare!

- What are you teaching? What activities, songs, object lessons, and other extra elements can you incorporate?
- How will you help families connect during Easter week?
- How will you encourage families to invite others to Easter services?
- How will you help families connect with God?





THINK
ABOUT THIS



Next week is Easter! Do you have a plan for connecting with the families who show up at your church for the very first time?

Hopefully, your church already has a church-wide plan in mind for welcoming or following up with new families, but those plans are often focused on parents and caregivers, rather than kids or teenagers.

In this final week before Easter, what could you do to be more intentional about greeting and caring for kids and teenagers who come to your church for the first time next week? A handwritten note? A small gift? A goodie bag? An invitation to your next event?

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 119:15-16

"I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



Happy Easter! This week, be a little selfish. Take some extra time for yourself or your family. Use that time to breathe deeply, rest, and let God fill you up.

As you rest, you might even realize you've been neglecting your own health for a little too long. If that's the case, get out your calendar and choose specific days for the rest of this year that will be your days (or half-days) of rest. You might include . . .

- An annual personal retreat.
- Quarterly days of solitude.
- Monthly days of retreat.
- Weekly days (or a couple of half-days) of rest.
- Daily reminders to stop and breathe, pray, or simply take a break.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 JOHN 1:5

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."



WEEK OF
APRIL 7, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Gary Thomas' book, Sacred Pathways, is one of many resources designed to help people identify the unique ways they are wired to connect with God. Some people will connect with God by going outside. Others will love to worship through music, or dance, or the arts. Some will love to learn, some will love to serve, and some will love to sit quietly with God in solitude. If we want to help people grow spiritually, it's so important that we give them opportunities to connect with God in many diverse ways – and not just in the ways we prefer to connect with God.

So this week, ask yourself: how can you grow people's awareness of the many ways we can spend time with God?

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3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JOHN 1:5

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."



WEEK OF
APRIL 14, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



All quarter, we've been talking about how to help students spend more time with God. But what about you? How are you doing? How could you grow in this area? What's one way you want to see God help you grow right now?

This week, make a decision. Decide to do one thing differently in order to spend better time with God. Choose one thing you're going to say no to (like Netflix, a little sleep, video games, or mindlessly scrolling Instagram) so that you can say yes to something better,

like . . .

- More time to read and meditate on Scripture.
- More silence.
- More worship.
- More gratitude.
- More prayer.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 JOHN 3:1

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him."



WEEK OF
APRIL 21, 2024

TODAY IS BIG WORD DAY



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Think back on how you engaged and partnered with families this past year. How well do you think parents felt supported? In the loop? Well-resourced? Included? It's not easy to know how best to serve the parents, guardians, or caregivers of kids and teenagers, but one of the best ways we can learn is by simply listening. In the middle and toward the end of each school year, we suggest inviting 10-15 parents to a parent discussion group — an opportunity for you to learn from them, and for parents to learn from each other. Invite parents, guardians, and caregivers from diverse circumstances, provide food and coffee, and then simply ask some discussion-provoking questions.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 JOHN 3:1

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him."



WEEK OF
APRIL 28, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 JOHN 4:16

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you're following the Grow discipleship strategy, May marks the beginning of our focus on sharing your story. Throughout May, June, and July, we'll focus on helping kids, teenagers, and families share their faith stories through their words and their actions. So as you shift from April to May this week, make this shift in your focus. This upcoming quarter is a great opportunity to challenge, inspire, and guide families to share who God is to them and what God is doing.



WEEK OF
MAY 5, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Have you thought about your volunteers' needs recently? Have you taken time to recruit? Take time this week to write down some goals for your volunteer team and recruiting efforts. Here are some questions to get you started . . .

- In a perfect world, how many volunteers would it take to do everything you want to do in your ministry?
- How many types of volunteer roles could your ministry use? What are they?
- What is the job description (and schedule or serving frequency) for each volunteer role?
- Who will be responsible for each volunteer or team?

When you know exactly what your needs are, it's so much easier to recruit volunteers effectively!

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ROMANS 13:10

"Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."



WEEK OF
MAY 12, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JOHN 17:10

"All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Do you have the rest of 2024 planned out yet? If not, what are you waiting for?! Visit growcurriculum.org/meeting for a free video that will walk you through how to create an Annual Strategy Calendar by breaking your ministry into six key categories:

- Discipleship
- Teaching
- Environment
- Events
- Volunteers
- Families

If you're following along with the Grow scope and sequence, this video will show you what's coming up in the next year of Grow Curriculum and Strategy so you can plug everything into your calendar. And if you're not following along with Grow, that's okay! Use our ideas as inspiration.



WEEK OF
MAY 19, 2024

MAY 19 IS NATIONAL
PIZZA PARTY DAY



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



So have you tried recruiting any new volunteers recently? If not, it's time to get started! Here's one simple (but so powerful) idea to help make your recruiting efforts more effective this year: ask big.

When we're desperate for more volunteers, we tend to ask for less. We need warm bodies, so we talk about volunteering as if it's easy, simple, or low-commitment. But you don't need just anyone to serve. You need people who want to make a difference. People who want to make a difference don't want to do what's easy or simple. They want to do something that matters.

So when you recruit volunteers, don't tell them their job will be easy. Tell them their job will matter.

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3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: COLOSSIANS 1:16

"For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him."



WEEK OF
MAY 26, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



You were made for this. No, really – the people you serve, the community you are in, God had all of it in mind when you were created. In other words, what you're doing now is part of your purpose.

We see you, and you're not alone. When the days are long, and you're feeling overwhelmed, know no one can do this like you. Your interests and experiences speak to your kids uniquely. Thanks for being you and showing up the way you do.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ISAIAH 6:8

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"



WEEK OF
JUNE 2, 2024

CELEBRATE THE END
OF THE SCHOOL YEAR
WITH YOUR TEAM



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Do you have an attendance-tracking system or strategy in place? Do you know how you'll take attendance each week? Register new families? Identify and follow up with the kids and students who've been missing for a few weeks? Remember upcoming birthdays?

Attendance isn't the most important (or even the most accurate) indicator of our success in ministry, but it can be one of many indicators. Numbers reflect real lives being impacted by our church communities, so get serious about tracking not just the numbers, but the people those numbers represent. And if you need a new attendance-tracking tool, check out GrowNumbers.com

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 66:16

"Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me."



WEEK OF
JUNE 9, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MARK 3:35

"Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



In ministry, it's not our job to do everything. It's our job to give ministry away to volunteers. We should be giving away so much ministry to our teams that it strains our egos. Why? Because (spoiler alert) someday, you're going to move on, or get fired, or . . . uh, die. And when you do, what will happen to your ministry?

If you want our ministry to outlive you, it can't depend on you. You have a limited capacity, but you can multiply your influence by empowering and releasing volunteers. Don't perpetuate the idea that ministry is best left with the professionals. Give away big, meaningful ministry to your volunteers, because the Church is bigger than us, and our ministries need to outlive us.



WEEK OF
JUNE 16, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



If you're like most churches, you probably have some big events happening for kids and students every summer. Whether it's a VBS, kids camp, summer camp, mission experience, or all of the above, keep in mind that parents are trusting you in a big way! If you want to keep (or earn) their trust, it's so important to keep parents in the loop.

This week, make a list of all trips or big events you're planning. Then make a list of every question a parent might ask (or has already asked). Finally, make a plan for how you'll communicate the answers to those questions clearly and well in advance.

Oh, and one more thing – actually do it!

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JOHN 20:21

"Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."



WEEK OF
JUNE 23, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 SAMUEL 3:10B

"Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Do you hold parent meetings? If you do, you know that parent meetings can sometimes be a challenge. It can be difficult to get parents to attend and, when they do, it can be difficult to make those meetings worth everyone's time. So here are a few quick tips for improving your parent meetings:

- Only hold meetings for topics parents want and need to discuss in person. If it can be clearly communicated in an email or on a flyer, don't hold a meeting!
- When sharing information, leave plenty of time for questions.
- When teaching or training, leave plenty of time for conversation.
- Always ask for feedback about your parent meetings.



WEEK OF
JUNE 30, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 2 CORINTHIANS 6:3-4

"We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses."

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Okay, be honest. When your youth and kids ministries are preparing for a new week, how much time gets spent preparing discussion questions? Do you throw a few questions together at the last minute or are your questions carefully and strategically crafted? Do you have them at all? The truth is, you can't afford to miss out on creating quality weekly discussion times. No matter how great your messages are, kids and students will never learn what you want them to learn without a time of discussion. They need time to process, debate, ask questions, wrestle with the ideas, and be challenged to think for themselves. So this week, do one thing to make your weekly discussions more effective. (Or add a discussion time for the very first time!)



WEEK OF
JULY 7, 2024

JULY 7 IS
CHOCOLATE DAY



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FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you're following the Grow volunteer strategy, you know there are 7 ways we suggest investing in volunteers. Which do you need to be more strategic about?

- **EVENTS:** Once a year, cast vision for your team at a volunteer kick-off.
- **MEETINGS:** Train your team regularly (3-6 times per year).
- **DISCUSSION GROUPS:** Give them time to brainstorm and problem solve together.
- **CONVERSATIONS:** Weekly or monthly, invest in each volunteer and invite their feedback, one-on-one.
- **TOOLS:** Give them resources to make their jobs easier.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Keep them in the loop every week.
- **CELEBRATION:** Honor them and their ministry wins!



WEEK OF
JULY 14, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 91:1-2

"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



How often did parents hear from you last school year? Was it infrequently? Or was it so often they began to tune you out? It can be difficult to find the right rhythm for communicating with parents, so keep tweaking your parent communication strategy and listen for parents' feedback. Here's our recommendation to at least get you started:

- ANNUALLY: Give parents a survey to discover how they'd like to hear from you and what they need.
- MONTHLY: Send an email to parents with all of the information they'll need for the entire month. Include a feedback question to see who's reading until the end!
- WEEKLY: Schedule a week of posts on social media, provide handouts and take-homes about what their kids are learning, and use your favorite communication platforms to stay in touch!

And, hey! If you're looking for a better way to communicate with families each week, check out Hubs at hubs.stuffyoucanuse.org!



WEEK OF
JULY 21, 2024

MAKE A LIST OF YOUR
VOLUNTEERS' BIRTHDAYS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you're following the Grow Annual Planning strategy, you know a new discipleship focus is coming up! In this next quarter, we will be encouraging families to spend time with others, because the relationships we have can have a big impact on our faith.

If you're using Grow Curriculum, we've included a discipleship activity to help your church do this well. But what are some other ways you can encourage people to spend time with others in meaningful ways?

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 23:4

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."



WEEK OF
JULY 28, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PHILIPPIANS 4:7

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Stories matter because stories can communicate truth in ways that principles never could. The stories recorded in Scripture matter, but so do your stories and the stories of kids and students.

When you teach, be intentional about sharing stories from our own life and faith. In fact, you probably want to tell one personal story in every message you teach. When you share your stories, and how God used those stories to help you grow, you give people a model for how to find God in their stories. And when you share your stories of failure, disappointment, or mistakes, you let them know that God can work even in the toughest situations – and that they're not alone.



WEEK OF
AUGUST 4, 2024

AUGUST IS NATIONAL
FAMILY FUN MONTH



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Happy August! By now, hopefully you've created an Annual Strategy Calendar for the year — one that helps you keep track of what you're doing in six key areas:

- Discipleship
- Teaching
- Environment
- Events
- Volunteers
- Parents

Once you've created your Annual Strategy Calendar, take a picture and post it in our Facebook group (stuffyoucanuse.org/community). There are thousands of churches adapting the Grow strategy for their church contexts, so go share your unique take with the rest of the Grow family — and check out a few others' boards too. Because swapping ideas is fun, and it makes us better!

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 33:22

"May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you."



WEEK OF
AUGUST 11, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 4:8

"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



There are a lot of parents, caregivers, and guardians in your church! What have you done this year to celebrate them? Here are a few ideas:

- Tell them how awesome they are! Make sure your communication with parents isn't filled with only announcements or reminders. Fill it with encouragement for them too.
- Host events for kids and their parents. This phase of parenting can feel overwhelming at times, so try offering experiences that help families connect in a way that takes the burden off the shoulders of parents for a night.
- Remember not all "parents" are parents. Many kids are not being cared for by their biological parents, but by caregivers, guardians, grandparents, and more. Be careful with your language and assumptions!



WEEK OF
AUGUST 18, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 39:14

"Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Once or twice a month, we cue you to send a thank you note to at least one volunteer, but this is actually something that should be on your calendar every week.

When we send thank you notes (filled with specific praise) to volunteers on our team, we accomplish several important things at once.

1. We care for the hearts of our volunteers, who work so hard for our churches and the families they serve.
2. We reinforce the kind of ministry and volunteer culture we want to create, because what we celebrate is what will be repeated.
3. We grow our capacity to pay attention and feel more gratitude.



WEEK OF
AUGUST 25, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 34:18

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



On a typical week of teaching, do kids and students seem engaged, or is it a struggle to hold their attention? On one hand, kids and teenagers are notorious for having short attention spans. But on the other hand, as communicators, it's our responsibility to earn (and keep) their attention. That's why the Grow teaching strategy makes use of 12 different teaching methods (besides just talking) to help kids and students learn. Choose one you don't typically use and try it out this week!

- Story
- Image
- Video
- Question
- Prop
- Activity
- Discussion
- Prayer
- Reflection
- Response
- Music
- Poll



WEEK OF
SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

SEPTEMBER IS
MILKSHAKE MONTH



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



You've probably noticed a weird holiday in each month of this planner. If you're using the Grow volunteer strategy, you've probably seen them in your downloads too. That's because we're big fans of celebrations, and there is always a reason to celebrate – especially when it comes to your volunteers. Each month, you can leverage a holiday (weird or not-so-weird) to celebrate and honor your volunteers. You might celebrate by creating a fun experience that you share together (like a joke competition), or by treating them to some fun themed snacks, or by expressing your appreciation in a more tangible and direct way. Whatever you choose, just remember to celebrate your team regularly!

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 1:22

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



When you teach, it's so important to ask questions! In a discussion, you probably already ask questions that are designed to help kids and teenagers learn. But that's not the kind of questions we're talking about. When you teach, have you made it a habit to ask questions that help you learn? Mental health professionals call these "orienting questions." They're questions that help you learn something about the people you're speaking to, and we recommend asking these types of questions every time you teach. It might be a silly question, like, "Tell me about a time you had to ask for forgiveness," or a poll asking their opinion, or an open-ended question about the topic at hand. This week, ask more questions!

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 22:2

"Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all."



WEEK OF
SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

SEPTEMBER 15
IS NATIONAL
THANK YOU DAY!



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



There are two types of games that you might want to try including in your weekly program this year.

The first type of game is a just-for-fun game. These games can be literally anything that sounds fun to your group, and they don't need to have any purpose other than to have fun. These games break down walls and help kids and teenagers connect at the very beginning of your program. But you can also play games with a purpose to introduce the message or the idea you want to discuss that week.

With both types of games, keep this in mind: it's important to create games that everyone can play, but that not everyone has to play. Be sensitive to kids who don't want to play, and make your games fun to watch!

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 1:33

"But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you want to have an effective teaching strategy for kids and teenagers, you need a scope and sequence – a plan for what you’ll teach and when. Sure, you could try and wing it each week, but that’s risky. By not planning ahead, you’ll be in danger of drifting toward putting too much emphasis on the topics you like to teach about, rather than giving people a truly holistic view of Scripture. When you plan ahead, you can get strategic about the subjects you want to cover and when, the Scripture you want to cover and when, and the frequency with which you want to teach those things. Grow offers a done-for-you scope and sequence, but we hope you customize what we offer for your church’s calendar and needs. You know your families best!

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 3:13

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



Time for a personal check-in! You already know the Grow discipleship strategy is built around four spiritual habits: spending time with God, spending time with others, using your gifts, and sharing your story. But these four spiritual habits aren't just designed for kids or students – they're the same four spiritual habits that help you grow spiritually too.

So how are you doing in each of these four areas? Do you need to grow your intimacy with God? Do you need to grow the community of people with whom you have safe and authentic relationships? Could you grow the ways you serve God and others through your unique giftedness, or the opportunities you take to share God's story with others?

Choose one to focus on for the rest of the year.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 3:18

"Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness."



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 6, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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VERSE OF THE WEEK: HEBREWS 2:6B

"What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him?"

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



What are you doing to connect parents with the adult volunteers in your ministry? If you don't have a clear answer to that question, it's time to try something new, because parents and volunteers need each other. Your volunteers and parents have the same mission: to care for the kids and teenagers in your ministry. So doesn't it make sense to help those people find each other and learn how to work together effectively?

One of the best ways we know to do this is through a Parent and Leader Breakfast – an opportunity for those adults to meet each other, have some fun, and strategize together how to guide the kids they all love. And if you're using Grow, you already have everything you need to make it happen!





THINK
ABOUT THIS



Be honest. Is your weekly kids or youth ministry environment visitor-friendly?

Sure, we all say we want visitors to show up to our programs. We all tell kids and students to bring their friends to church. But if we're not working behind the scenes to create environments that are welcoming to, and mindful of, first-time guests . . . well, we can't really expect people to make the invitation, or those guests to show up, or those guests to come back.

If you're not sure if your environments are visitor-friendly, ask families this question: "What is it about our church that makes you not want to invite your friends?" Then take their responses seriously (and not personally).

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ROMANS 8:28

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 20, 2024

10 WEEKS UNTIL
CHRISTMAS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Do you ever feel like you're competing for families' time? Sometimes we make the mistake of believing our community is the only community that can help people grow spiritually. But that's not true, is it? We might be pastors, but we don't own the market when it comes to healthy community. In fact, if the only community our families see as "healthy" community is the community our kids or youth ministries offer, we've done them a disservice. If we really want kids and students to grow spiritually, we should probably think of creative ways to help them build relationships (with both Christians and non-Christians) in places outside our church – like their schools, neighborhoods, and sports teams.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MATTHEW 6:26

"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 27, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 91:15

"He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



If you're following the Grow Annual Planning strategy, you know a new discipleship focus is coming up! In this next quarter, we will be encouraging kids and students to use their gifts.

If you're using Grow Curriculum, we've already included discipleship activities to help you do this well. But what are some other ways you can encourage kids and teens use their gifts to serve God and others?





THINK
ABOUT THIS



What opportunities have you created for kids and students to serve others? It's one thing to tell them to use their gifts to serve. It's another thing entirely to create opportunities where they can actually do that. Maybe you need to restructure some things in your church so that it's easier for kids and teenagers to serve. Maybe you need to move away from an adult-led worship band so more young people can help lead. Maybe you even need to let go of some of your desire for "excellence" in your programming so they can take ownership of your weekly environments. Fundraisers and mission trips are a great solution, but if they're your only avenue for kids to serve, rethink your serving strategy.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MARK 12:29-30

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"



WEEK OF
NOVEMBER 10, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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VERSE OF THE WEEK: COLOSSIANS 3:12

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



In ministry, we often accidentally communicate that the only ways to serve God in ministry is from a platform. Speaking and leading worship are great ways we can mobilize kids and students to serve God and others, but they're not the only gifts kids and students have or that God can use. Whether it's art, or science, or baking, or sports, kids and students are overflowing with talents. They may just need your help to discover how those talents can be used to love others in new and creative ways. And whether they're extroverted or introverted, great in front of a crowd or more comfortable behind the scenes, fun and spontaneous or quiet and contemplative, they need to know their voice matters.





THINK
ABOUT THIS



The holidays are almost here, which might mean you're seeing some drops in attendance. Sound familiar? If that's you, here's a tip: don't freak out!

Fluctuations in your attendance patterns are completely normal. Instead, pay attention to those patterns and try to figure out when, and why, they happen. Because if you can predict it, you won't be so surprised or discouraged when it happens next time – plus, you'll be able to defend your numbers if anyone asks. So expect fluctuations, and prepare for them too. And remember, where attendance is concerned, you're probably not as awesome as your best attendance day and you're definitely not as bad as your worst attendance day.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: HEBREWS 10:23

"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."



WEEK OF
NOVEMBER 24, 2024

NOVEMBER 29 IS
NATIONAL SARDINES DAY



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



There's a mistake some family pastors make: they see discipleship as a program, rather than a process. When you look at the way Jesus disciplined his followers, you don't see them going through workbooks, or attending a class, or completing a How to Be a Disciple course – but sometimes, that's exactly our approach when it comes to discipling families. But discipleship isn't a nice, neat program. It's a journey that's going to take forever – or, at least, our whole lives. When we choose to look at discipleship as a lifelong process that's never really finished, that's pretty imperfect, and that doesn't always move in a straight line, we give families a healthier (and more realistic) perspective of what it means to follow Jesus.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: HEBREWS 10:24

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."





THINK
ABOUT THIS



A virgin birth? Angels? A mysterious star? Centuries-old prophecies coming true? Advent and Christmas are seasons of so much wonder, but for some kids or teenagers, they're also seasons of difficult questions – and that's okay.

If you want kids to get comfortable having conversations about their faith, it is essential that you help them have healthy conversations about their doubts, fears, and questions. The truth is, kids and students have doubts, even if they're not expressing them. So if you want them to have a healthy faith, give them the opportunity to talk about their questions and doubts openly.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: LUKE 1:46

"And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord."



WEEK OF
DECEMBER 8, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MALACHI 3:1A

"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



The holidays are a time for family, so let's take a second to think about how well we're serving and supporting the families in our ministries. There's a big mistake a lot of family pastors make when it comes to families: they expect parents to trust them, but don't actually earn their trust. In family ministry, we can get pretty frustrated when parents don't engage, support, or stay in the know with what we're up to. But instead of expecting parents to know, or care, or support what we're doing, what if we tried harder to earn their attention, care, and support? This might be a big shift in your mentality, but it's so important! Because when we believe parents owe us something, we'll struggle to earn their trust.



WEEK OF
DECEMBER 15, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Do you know what your personal values are? What about your church's and ministry's values? If you're not sure, it's time to get to work. As you close out this calendar year, write down your values, define them, and talk about them with key voices who can help you refine them into a list of around 5 core values. Do you value community? Authenticity? Safety? Service? Generosity? Fun? Inclusion? Diversity? Family?

Identify your values, but don't stop there. As a new year begins, commit to evaluating your ministry in light of your core values. Do your programs, events, strategies, and systems align with those values? Why or why not? And how can you bring things into greater alignment?

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ZEPHANIAH 3:17B

"He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."



WEEK OF
DECEMBER 22, 2024

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Merry Christmas!

But wait – why are you looking at your planner? The only things you should be worrying about this week are presents, food, and cheesy Christmas movies. Put this away. Now. Come back next week.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MICAH 5:4A

"He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God."





THINK

ABOUT THIS



Take a minute to celebrate your year – all the laughs and every obstacle you overcame to make it the best year possible for the families in your ministry.

Now it's time to look to 2025. What do you have planned for all that's ahead?

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 148:3

"Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars."



LOOKING FOR MORE TOOLS AND RESOURCES FROM YOUR PALS AT STUFF YOU CAN USE?

Grow Curriculum and Annual Strategy is now available for **kids ministry** and **youth ministry**! It's everything you need for an entire year of ministry: discipleship, teaching, programming, events, families, and volunteers. For a free one-month trial or to talk to a Grow Strategist, head to growcurriculum.org



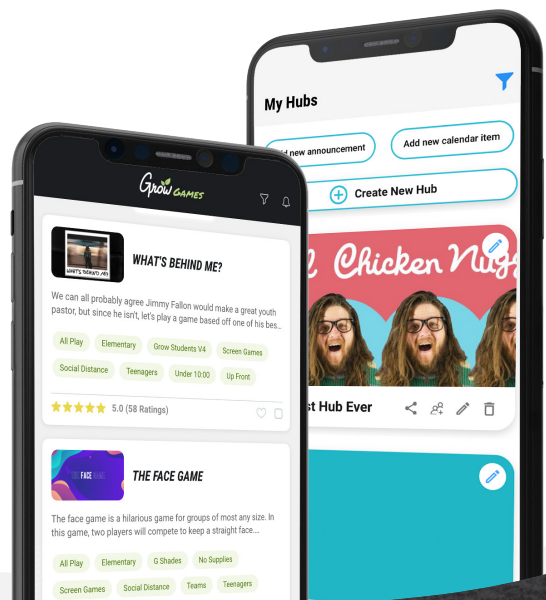
Plus, we've got a whole suite of digital tools to help make ministry easier, like a **live presentation software**, **600+ free games** for ministry, and a tool to help you better **communicate with parents, volunteers, and more**. Check it out at stuffyoucanuse.org



Grow Slides



Grow Hubs



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