



Grow *students*

2024

WEEKLY PLANNER

for youth ministry

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2024

WEEKLY PLANNER

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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 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



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: LUKE 2:40

"And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him."

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 teenagers you haven't seen in a while? If you need a new attendance-tracking tool, check out [GrowNumbers.com](https://www.grownumbers.com).

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ROMANS 12:6-7

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; "



WEEK OF
JANUARY 21, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 27:17

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

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 your students. This upcoming quarter is a great opportunity to challenge, inspire, and guide students into deeper relationships with Jesus.

Here's what's else is coming up in this quarter of Grow Students, Volume 7. . .

- Rhythm (a series on the 4 spiritual habits)
- Justified (a series on anger)
- Glow (a series on Easter)
- Enough (a series on family)
- In the Rhythm Prayer Prompts



WEEK OF
JANUARY 28, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: COLOSSIANS 1:9

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives."

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. Teenagers 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 your teenagers, 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 students 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: 1 CORINTHIANS 8:3

"But whoever loves God is known by God."





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 teenagers 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



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.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ACTS 8:36

"As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"



WEEK OF
FEBRUARY 25, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1

"If I speak in the tongues[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal."

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 teenagers – 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



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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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 teenagers memorize Scripture part of your ministry strategy?

Your teenagers are great at memorizing movie quotes, song lyrics, and TikToks, but memorizing Scripture probably doesn't come quite as naturally. That's why it's so helpful for us to give teenagers 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.
- Creating Scripture wallpaper for their phones.
- Handing out good old-fashioned flash cards and challenging teens 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.

Oh, and if you're following the Grow Annual Strategy, our suggested event this quarter is a spring retreat! The goal? To give students a chance to go deeper in their faith and in their relationships with each other.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: AMOS 5:22-23

"Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"



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 youth services or special youth events, but many encourage teenagers to spend Easter week with their families. 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 students connect with their families during Easter week?
- How will you encourage students to invite their friends to Easter services?
- How will you help students connect with God more deeply this Easter?





THINK
ABOUT THIS



Next week is Easter! Do you have a plan for connecting with the teenagers 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 teenagers.

In this final week before Easter, what could you do to be more intentional about greeting and caring for 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?

1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PHILIPPIANS 2:6-7

"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."



WEEK OF
APRIL 7, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST 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."

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 of your students 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 our students 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 your students' awareness of the many ways we can spend time with God?



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.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."



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 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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ACTION ITEMS 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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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 2:17

"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

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 students 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 your students to share who God is to them and what God is doing.

Here are our recommended teaching series and resources this quarter from Grow Students, Volume 7 . . .

- I Am (a series on Jesus)
- Worth Sharing (a series on evangelism)
- Not Okay (a series on stress & anxiety)
- Long Story Short Pop-Up (a discipleship activity for small groups or individuals)



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

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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 15:9

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love."

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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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: GALATIANS 5:25

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."



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 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

1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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



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.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: COLOSSIANS 1:9

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives."



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 kind of big event happening for students every summer. Whether it's a summer camp, mission experience, graduation party, 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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ACTION ITEMS 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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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JOHN 13:35

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

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
FROM LAST WEEK

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."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Okay, be honest. When you're preparing for a week of youth ministry, how much time do you spend on preparing your 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, your 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



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!

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

3 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: ROMANS 15:13

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."



WEEK OF
JULY 14, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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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 teens to spend time with others, because the relationships we have can have a big impact on our faith.

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

Here's what else is coming up the fall quarter of Grow Students, Volume 8 . . .

- Restart (a series on identity)
- Good Call (a series on wisdom)
- Unafraid (a series on hurt & pain)
- Small Group Party Kits (an event for students and volunteers)



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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VERSE OF THE WEEK: HEBREWS 13:18

"Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way."

WEEK OF
JULY 28, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



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 your 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 teenagers 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.

1 KEY TAKEAWAY FROM LAST WEEK

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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."



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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FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 51:1

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions."



WEEK OF
AUGUST 11, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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."

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



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 34:5

"Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame."

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



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 34:17

"The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles."

When you teach, do students seem engaged, or is it a struggle to hold their attention? On one hand, teenagers are notorious for having short attention spans. But on the other hand, as communicators, it's our responsibility to earn (and keep) our students' attention. That's why the Grow teaching strategy makes use of 12 different teaching methods (besides just talking) to help 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!

1 KEY TAKEAWAY
FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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 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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 FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 22:9

"The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor."



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 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 students who don't want to play, and make your games fun to watch!

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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 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 students 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 students best!

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FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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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."



WEEK OF
SEPTEMBER 29, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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FROM LAST WEEK

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ACTION ITEMS FOR THIS WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 3:18

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

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

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 teenagers— 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 where 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.



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 6, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



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VERSE OF THE WEEK: 2 CORINTHIANS 4:7

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

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 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 teenagers they all love. And if you're using Grow, you already have everything you need to make it happen!



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 13, 2024

WRITE A VOLUNTEER A
THANK YOU NOTE



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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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."

THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



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

Sure, we all say we want visitors to show up to our programs. We all tell our 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 students 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 your students 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).



WEEK OF
OCTOBER 20, 2024

10 WEEKS UNTIL
CHRISTMAS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



Do you ever feel like you're competing for your students' time? Sometimes we make the mistake of believing our community is the only community that can help students grow spiritually. But that's not true, is it? We might be youth pastors, but we don't own the market when it comes to healthy community. In fact, if the only community our students see as "healthy" community is the community our youth ministries offer, we've done them a disservice. If we really want our 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, their neighborhoods, and their sports teams.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: JAMES 5:8

"You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near."



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 students to use their gifts.

If you're using Grow Students, we've included a discipleship activity to help you do this well. But what are some other ways you can encourage students to use their gifts to serve God and others?

Here's what's else is coming up the next quarter of Grow Students, Volume 8 . . .

- On Repeat (a series on loving others)
- Remember When (a series on Christmas)
- From Now On (a series on Jesus)
- Thriftmas Party (a just-for-fun Christmas event)





THINK
ABOUT THIS



What opportunities have you created for students to serve others? It's one thing to tell students 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 teenagers to serve. Maybe you need to move away from an adult-led worship band so more students can help lead. Maybe you even need to let go of some of your desire for "excellence" in your programming so your students can take ownership of your weekly environments. Mission trips are a great solution, but if mission trips are your only avenue for students to serve, you may want to rethink your serving strategy.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PROVERBS 18:13

"To answer before listening—that is folly and shame."





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 our students to serve God and others, but they're not the only gifts students have or that God can use.

Whether it's art, or science, or baking, or sports, your 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, students need to know their voice matters.

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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."





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: PSALM 146:7B-8

"The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous."



WEEK OF
NOVEMBER 24, 2024

NOVEMBER 29 IS
NATIONAL SARDINES DAY



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK

ABOUT THIS



There's a mistake some youth 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 teenagers. 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 teenagers 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 students, they're also seasons of difficult questions – and that's okay.

If you want teenagers 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, your 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."





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 youth pastors make when it comes to families: they expect parents to trust them, but don't actually earn their trust. In youth 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.

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: MALACHI 3:1A

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



WEEK OF
DECEMBER 15, 2024

WRITE NEXT MONTH'S
BIRTHDAY CARDS



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



1 KEY TAKEAWAY
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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."

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: 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



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.

WEEK OF
DECEMBER 29, 2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



THE WEEKLY PLANNER

THINK
ABOUT THIS



Happy New Year!

Take a minute to celebrate your year – all the laughs and every obstacle you overcame to make it the best year possible for the teenagers 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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FROM LAST WEEK

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VERSE OF THE WEEK: PSALM 148:13

"Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor is above the earth and the heavens."



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

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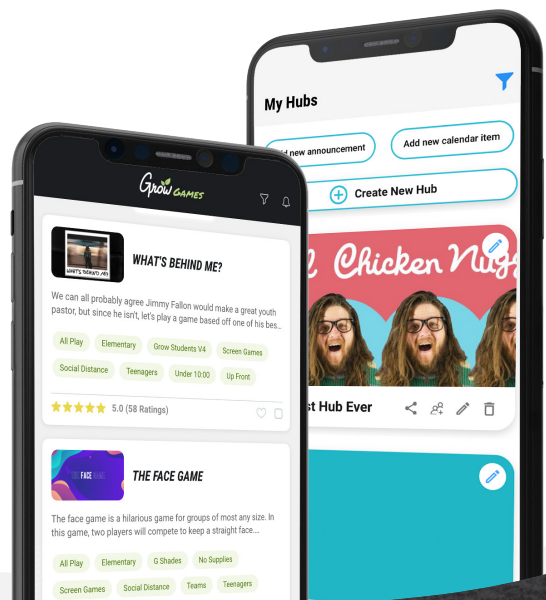
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