

Hello middle school volunteers, it's the most wonderful time of the year! We are officially in the Christmas season and we can all listen to Christmas music without people getting upset that we're listening to it too early. So it's great.

Hey, we've got middle school programming this Wednesday, December 4.

The theme is bingo night, so we're going to have one massive game of bingo. We're going to have some fun prizes. We're going to have big prizes for bingo at bingo night.

And we're going to have a lesson. It's unique for the Christmas season. We're going to talk about, there's one passage in the Bible where we get a glimpse into Jesus' life as a 12-year-old. We all know the Christmas story pretty well, and there's tons of information about Jesus' life as an adult. But in between his birth and his adulthood, we get one story in all of the Gospels. And it's when Jesus was 12 years old, when he was a middle schooler. So we're going to have some teaching about that this Wednesday night, Luke chapter 2.

And then we're going to have extended small group time like we've been experimenting with for the last few weeks. We will reevaluate at the end of this fall semester how we want to structure small groups in the springtime starting in January.

We are going to release information about our spring calendar dates soon. So we'll let you know when that happens and we'll put everything up on the middle school events page.

Wednesday, December 11 is our ugly sweater party. So if you want to wear an ugly sweater or just dress in something fun and festive, you can do it on that night.

On Wednesday, December 18 we're going to have a talent show that'll be in the chapel at the church building. That'll be Wednesday, December 18.

We're off on December 25th, because that's Christmas. We will also be off on Wednesday, January 1st, because that is New Year's Day.

We have volunteer kickoff on Wednesday, January 8 at the community center, just for you volunteers only.

And we will have our winter kickoff with students on Wednesday, January 15.

So that's what the next six weeks look like.

If you haven't done so, please mark your calendar: Winter Blast is January 24-26.

In closing, I want to encourage you leaders by sharing some impact questions with you. These are questions that we use as staff members at Valley Church, and they are good ones for you to use as well. You can use these to gauge how you and how the students in your small group are doing in deeply loving Christ and neighbor.

And there's seven different questions that you can ask yourself or that you can ask of other students to see how are you doing or how are the kids in your small group doing in growing in their relationship with Jesus.

We'll talk more about these as we enter the spring semester.

First, under loving Christ, number one, how is my relationship with Christ deepening daily?

Number two, how are my key relationships healthy and honoring to God?

Number three, how is God compelling me toward boundless generosity in attitude, serving, and giving?

Under the loving neighbor category, number one, how am I having a spiritual influence on those who aren't yet followers of Christ?

Number two, how am I caring for others in my neighborhood, workplace, school, and community?

Number three, how am I involved and engaging others in our church's community bridges?

Number four, how am I connecting on a deeper level with my small group?

Those are just good questions to help you gauge how you're doing in your own faith and how middle schoolers are doing in their faith.

That's all I've got for this week. Thanks for checking in. We'll see you on Wednesday for Bingo Night.

Bye!