

Hi middle school volunteers. These are the announcements for the week of Wednesday, February 12th, 2025.

Veggie Tales Night

The theme this Wednesday is VeggieTales Night. So we'll have some vegetable snacks that you can have at the beginning of the night. We might show some old school VeggieTales cartoons. And there will be a vegetable themed game in the gym as well.

Heart To Heart Series

Well, since this is the first Wednesday night in February, this is the start of our February series on love, sex, dating, and relationships called Heart to Heart. And the reason why we're talking about this topic in church is because we want students to know God's perspective on these things. God designed relationships. He designed us to be in relationships, and we want students to know and be able to think biblically about this topic.

If we do not address it with students, it sends students a message that it doesn't matter, that we're not allowed to talk about that in church, and then they go and find their answers to their questions somewhere else, and those answers are going to be untruthful or unreliable. So, parents have had a heads up. We've communicated with them so they know this series is coming.

Week 1, this Wednesday, we're going to talk about friendship.

Week 2 is going to be what is love from a biblical perspective.

Week 3 is God's design for sex.

In week 4, we will celebrate the differences in the two genders between men and women.

And in week five, which will actually move us into the first week in March, we'll talk about how students can come alongside a friend who is wrestling with their gender identity or with their sexual identity.

So we'll start nice and light and then move deeper and deeper every week throughout this series.

Leader Tip: Preparation for Heart to Heart Series

For the leader tip this week, I want to mention five things to prepare you for the week for this series of Heart to Heart in middle school because conversations are going to potentially get a little deep and potentially a little uncomfortable. So five things to remember as we head into the Heart to Heart series.

Number one, kids are probably going to act a little awkward, but they're also going to be very interested. So it's this weird mixture of discomfort and extreme intrigue into this topic.

Number two, be discerning with what you share. You can share parts from your own history, but I probably would not include all of the gory details. You can gloss over some things without being super specific. So you got to strike a balance between sharing too much, but also it's not okay to share too little because then students don't think that this is a challenge. And they might think that if they're not perfect, then they're doing something wrong. So find that balance and be discerning with how much you share with students.

Number three, if you do not know what to say, don't hesitate to deflect and point students to me or Jody. You and that student could come to me and Jodi with a question that you don't know how to answer, or you can always deflect kids to talk to their parents.

Number four, don't let your own discomfort or students' discomfort get in the way of having real, helpful, truthful conversations.

And number five, stay present if big things come up. Every once in a while, this series brings up some deep-rooted pain or trauma or abuse in students' lives. And it's a privilege for us to come alongside students in those moments. So hang in there and be present. Be ready to listen and ask lots of questions. And then pass along information to Jodi and I as needed.

So there's just some tips to prep you for the heart to heart series. Let Jodi and I know if you have any questions and thank you for checking in.

We'll see you on Wednesday night!