

Congregational Time

The purpose of congregational time is multi-faceted. It is a time to connect, plan, debrief, and join together as a group. This is really your time to do what your group needs to do.

As you plan, make congregational time an expectation and set a time. There is the suggested time on the schedule so that you can be finished by the time all need to be in their rooms. If you have leaders in the youth group who might want to help lead, this is a good time to do that and encourage them.

Ideas for Congregational time include:

Highs and Lows (what was the high of the day and the low of the day)

What are plans for the following day—set time and place to meet

Discuss any group dynamics that need to be addressed—could be put ups (encouraging words) to reward helpful behavior and discuss thing that might not be aiding the group.

Daily ideas (in addition to the above)

December 27—Theme: Be Less (Matthew 5:1-12, 14-16)

- What were your major take-aways from worship and small groups?
- What were some of your original thoughts about the theme of Be Less? How have those changed or stayed the same after hearing more about it in worship and small groups?
- What does it look like to be less in a world that always wants us to be more?
- If your group did discovery today discuss what was impactful about that.
- Don't forget to talk about tomorrow and any plans you may have to communicate for the day.

December 28—Theme: Be Hungry (Matthew 5:1-6)

- This day the groups went to service. If you did not have time to debrief the service project, tonight would be a time to do that.
- Discuss what things you are hungry for as individuals and as a group. What are some things that you are hungry for that you could focus on impacting at home?
- Ask what stood out to them in small groups that day.

- If your group did discovery today discuss what was impactful about that.
- Consider discussing which skillshops look interesting to people, the next day is skillshop day.
- Optional activity – decide as a group what you are most hungry for (what you want to take a stand against). Think of a group at your church that might also feel passionately about this and write them a letter asking them to partner with your group on a project/activity related to this idea. Either drop it in the mail while you are at the Great Lakes Gathering, or hand deliver it when you get back to church. But be sure to follow up when you get home to make this happen!

December 29—Theme: Be Persecuted (Matthew 5:7-12)

- This day has skillshops. It would be a good time to discuss what skillshops were attended and what they may have learned.
- In your community at home who gets persecuted? Why? What can you do to help? Can you help? Do you need help in order to help? What are you already doing to help?
- Is it better to do the easy thing or the right thing? Why is it important to shed the fear that keeps us from doing the right thing? Or to use our voices or take action for the sake of others (or ourselves)?
- How is being part of a group, like this youth group give you a voice?
- If your group did discovery today discuss what was impactful about that.

December 30—Theme: Be You (Matthew 5:14-16)

- This congregational time is likely to be done mostly on the trip home. If stopping somewhere for lunch it is a good time to debrief the event and what you will do as a group when you get home share the word in your community.