

# Breakout Sessions

We are extremely excited about this year's sessions and speakers who are ready to pour into you. You will have the opportunity to choose between 22 different Breakout Sessions broken up into 4 basic categories; Discipleship and Spiritual Growth, Practical Ministry Strategies, Identity and Influence, Mental Health and Soul Care, and Engagement and Outreach.

**Discipleship & Spiritual Growth** - 5 breakouts that would be useful for anyone interested in growing to better understand and disciple students. These breakouts range from practical discipleship tools to understanding how to care for the students you love.

**Practical Ministry Strategies** - 7 breakouts that would be useful to leaders specifically leading groups and teaching. These breakouts offer focuses toward different ministry areas and leadership development.

**Identity & Influence** - 4 breakouts that would be useful for anyone who wants to better understand what is happening in the world around us and how it impacts youth ministry, today. These breakouts range from social media to multi-ethnic ministry to mental health.

**Mental Health & Soul Care** - 3 breakouts that would be useful for anyone serving in a student ministry position with oversight and responsibility for the ministry. These breakouts offer a variety of information for development and growth as a leader.

**Engagement & Outreach** - 3 breakouts that would be useful for anyone who is interested in reaching and serving new and underserved communities of people in effective ways.

# 9:45am SESSIONS

## **Your Role in Discipling Teen Girls**

**Amanda Mejias, Lifeway Girls Brand Specialist - High School Suite**

You have been entrusted to disciple and minister to teen girls. So how do you help girls love Jesus even after they're no longer in your ministry? Let's talk about how to not grow weary or complacent in stewarding this time with your girls.

## **Understanding and Preventing Ministry Burnout**

**Dr. Tate Cockrell, Southeastern Baptist Seminary - Middle School Suite**

Ministry is hard. The temptation to be all and do it all causes exhaustion and emotional unhealth. Burnout can wreck the lives and ministries of staff and volunteers alike. In this session we will describe ministry burnout, recognize its symptoms, and identify helpful practices to avoid burnout or recover from it.

## **Following Jesus in an Election Season**

**Kaitlyn Schiess, Holy Post Podcast - Room 157**

Your students are thinking about politics – and being spiritually formed by politics! – whether you like it or not. This session will equip leaders with a theological frame for thinking about politics, as well as practical resources for leading students through an election season. This session won't help you teach your students how to vote, but it will help you identify how politics is theologically and spiritually shaping your students – and how to faithfully respond.

## **How to Help Students Grow Spiritually**

**Doug Franklin, LeaderTreks - Worship Center**

Going to a youth group is good, but having a personal, intimate relationship with Christ is best. So, how do we help students develop a deep faith? Learn practical ways to equip students to move off the starting line of faith and move toward discipleship. In the breakout, Doug Franklin will walk us through how Bible study methods, prayer journaling, mission, and community work together to grow deep faith.

# 11:00am Breakout Sessions

## **Fear, Worry & Anxiety**

**Courtney Caroland, LPC-MHSP, Elbow Tree - Middle School Suite**

What do I do when one of my students is struggling with Anxiety? How should I respond? According to the National Institutes of Health, nearly 1 in 3 teenagers from 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder. It's certainly on the rise, especially in a post-pandemic world. It's not a matter of if you have a student with anxiety, but when you have a student with anxiety, how will you respond? You and the leaders in your ministry need practical tools, rooted in scripture, to help come alongside students and their families who are dealing with anxiety. This workshop will aim to give you an understanding of what anxiety is and will equip you with practical tools and resources for the mind, body, and heart to help those who are struggling with anxiety.

## **Worldviews in Conflict: How the Bible Defines Gender and Sexuality**

**Dr. Jonathan Six, Southeastern Baptist Seminary - High School Suite**

If the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever, how does this inform our understanding of gender and sexuality. In a sex-crazed culture it is often difficult to understand how the Christian faith informs sex, sexuality, and desire. The Christian Worldview rightly orients our life to understand that identity, joy, and worship are rooted in the gospel and not sexuality. In this session, we will explore how the Christian worldview confronts the culture and displays the hope of the gospel.

## **The Sexualization of Adolescence in Technology**

**Brian Housman, 360 Family - Room 157**

Technology has changed the way this generation views their sexual expression and expectations, gender, and sexual identity. Traditional relationship norms of teens and tweens have been turned inside out by pervasive sexting and texting, the sexual coarseness of social media, a barrage of digital porn and shifts in their gender identity. These changing values should affect how we communicate God's unchanging truth of our true identity in Him. Your effectiveness in ministry can be strengthened as we take an honest look at how you use technology to reinforce God's design for life.

## **The Art of the Awkward: The Science and Discipline of Communicating to Middle School Students**

**Zac Workun, Lifeway Students - Room 155**

This is how it goes right? You have prepared your best and most Gospel message ever...The Good News For YOU!

**Interrupting** "Mr. Jack..."

Zac: \*sigh" Yes Landon."

Landon: "will you look up the correct region for gigantamax Pokemon? Zeke says they don't exist"

Zac: "Sure bud, just give me 5 minutes"

With 19 years of youth ministry Zac is here to help you embrace the awkward, share the flashes of depth, and encourage you to find your voice amidst the challenges and sometimes overwhelming pressures of middle school audiences.

## **Reaching Students with Disabilities and Their Families**

**Natalee Barbier, TN Baptist Mission Board - Room 166**

Is your student ministry reaching people of all abilities? In this session we will discuss practical ways to include all of God's children in your student ministry and every aspect of the church. We will also explore how we can reach special needs families as a whole!

## **I Got the Job! Now What?! (\*Youth Pastor Only Session)**

**Jason Pittman, PACT Ministry - Room 167**

Entering into student ministry brings a host of responsibilities and expectations. Many youth leaders can quickly get overwhelmed with what to spend their time on to set the strongest foundation for fruitful ministry. Jason Pittman leads this breakout on prioritizing a few key things in student ministry to create a culture of health and fruitfulness in both your personal and ministry life.

## **How to Disciple Your Students Like a First-Century Rabbi**

**Heather Quiroz, First-Century Youth Ministry - Room 168**

Jesus had a distinct way of making disciples. Unique to us, but common to the Jewish world of the first century. Jesus' method of making disciples was deeply rooted in His Hebraic heritage. Therefore, understanding the Jewish roots of our faith will help us become more equipped at making disciples just like our Rabbi Jesus. In this session, you'll learn all about Jesus' first century method of discipleship, that's transferable to today's 21st century youth leader.

## **Navigating Seasons of Family Life in Ministry**

**Chris & Wendy Trent, Georgia Baptist Mission Board - Room 169**

Your family may be just you and your spouse or maybe you, your spouse and kids. Regardless, you want to have a family that loves Jesus, loves one another, and loves the church. In this breakout, we'll discuss the different stages of life and ministry and how you can best prepare for the days ahead. symptoms, and identify helpful practices to avoid burnout or recover from it.

## **5 Key Ingredients to a Great Volunteer Leader**

**Chris Hargrove, YM360 - Room 170**

Volunteers are more than just names on a spreadsheet. Volunteers are more than just people who help “pull off” student ministry events or a weekly Bible Study. Volunteers are the heartbeat of youth ministries! Volunteers are some of the key pieces to the overall success of youth ministries today. Youth groups need volunteers who know what’s expected of them and who know what being successful means as they serve and lead. In this breakout, we’ll discuss 5 key ingredients that every volunteer needs to be a great volunteer in youth ministry.

# **1:15pm Breakout Sessions**

## **Desperate for Truth: How to Effectively Teach the Bible to Students**

**Shane Pruitt, North American Mission Board - Middle School Suite**

Students are growing up in a world that is constantly trying to spin narratives, imposing cultural agendas, developing AI's, and using social media filters. In a world of fake and lies, there is a whole generation that is desperate for truth. Let's talk about how to effectively teach the Bible to students, because that is the truth they are desperate for. ingredients that every volunteer needs to be a great volunteer in youth ministry.

## **Homosexuality, Transgenderism & the Gospel - Caring Well for the Hurting**

**Dr. Tate Cockrell, Southeastern Baptist Seminary - High School Suite**

With widespread gender confusion and same-sex attraction permeating culture today, adolescents and parents are confronted with the challenges of homosexuality and transgenderism in ways like never before. In this session, we will address how to rightly orient our thinking to minister well to those who might be struggling with same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, as well as helpful tips for those who love those who struggle.

## **Leading Up: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge**

**Jon Messara, SWAT Ministries - Room 157**

Have you ever had an idea for the youth ministry but not quite sure how to present it to your youth pastor? Maybe you see a better way to lead, accomplish an event or see a needed strategic change in the youth ministry but not sure how to go about that? Lets talk about Leading Up, what that means and how you do it!

## **Moving Students from Participants to Leaders**

**Doug Franklin, LeaderTreks - Room 155**

Join Doug Franklin as he shares a simple, practical, and straightforward approach to developing student leaders. This method will help you train and equip student leaders, guiding them from being participants to becoming leaders. You will learn about the five steps of the Leadership Pathway: Invite, Discover, Equip, Risk, and Sharpen. The Leadership Pathway serves as a tool to assist you in answering the question, "How can I develop leaders in my youth ministry?"

## **Campus Impact: Engaging Our Local Schools**

**Jay Fowler & Terry Knecht, FCA Chattanooga - Room 166**

In today's rapidly changing cultural landscape, school campuses are challenging mission fields ripe with opportunities to make a lasting impact. In this session, you'll discover how to effectively partner with Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) to build bridges between your ministry and the campus, empowering students and leaders alike. This session will equip youth ministry leaders with practical strategies to engage their local schools, regardless of their current access to FCA and its resources. We'll explore innovative ways to connect with students, faculty, and staff, fostering an environment where the love of Christ can thrive. Whether you're familiar with FCA or just looking for ways to engage the campus, you'll learn how to utilize tools and programs to create a collaborative, kingdom-minded approach to ministry on campus.

## **Created to Influence: Made in God's Image**

**Andrew Slay, Westwood Baptist Church - Room 167**

We live in a culture infected with identity amnesia. We have forgotten who we are and our purpose of existence. Yet, if we go back to creation, we will discover the core truth that defines our identity and our purpose: being made in God's image. This breakout will demonstrate that we were all created to influence others for Jesus because we have all been made in God's image. The session will not only benefit you as youth leaders personally but also help you teach your students to understand their purpose and identity in being made in God's image. Understanding our essence as human beings made in God's image is essential to living out the ethics God created us to exhibit and teach to others. To fulfill the Missio Dei and influence others to follow Jesus, we must first understand the Imago Dei.

## **How Gaming is the Greatest Tool for Expanding the Gospel with Your Students**

**Joshua Reaves, Fortnite Streamer & Creator - Room 168**

Gaming holds immense potential for spreading the Gospel, continuously reigniting passion for Jesus in your students' hearts. Unlike the fleeting excitement from camps or mission trips, gaming keeps the Gospel alive in their daily lives, transforming screen time into a powerful ministry tool. Gaming is a regular social setting for all students, not just for nerds. We are going to uncover gaming's untapped potential, listen to compelling stories of transformation, and receive practical insights on leveraging gaming to engage, disciple, and empower your students. Discover how the world of gaming can become your ministry's greatest ally in expanding God's Kingdom.collaborative, kingdom-minded approach to ministry on campus.

## **Prayer Infused Disciple-Making**

**Chad Poe, Throughline Cohort - Room 169**

How does your personal prayer life affect the people you lead? In this session, we will uncover the ways prayer can infuse every aspect of your ministry, creating a culture of spiritual depth and see how scripture-guided prayers not only affect the people we lead but affect us as we do.

## **Ministry to Parents: 3 Unique Roles Youth Pastors Can Embrace to Prevent “Ostrich Parents” (\*Youth Pastor Only Session)**

**Kerry Ray, YM360 - Room 170**

Parenting a teenager is many things, but easy isn't one of them. Stress, anxiety, busyness, confusion, fear of failure, and the emotional exhaustion that comes with raising a teenager are just a few of the things creating growing numbers of “ostrich parents”—those who disengage and bury their heads in the sand; waiting for the storm of adolescence to pass. As a youth ministry leader, you know your ministry will never reach its true potential while focusing solely on the students. You also know that part of your role includes “partnering” with the parents, but what does that even mean? How are you supposed to encourage or equip parents on top of all the other spinning plates of ministry? How are you supposed to be a legitimate voice when you don't have any kids of your own? Instead of living in frustration or throwing in the towel, let's discuss three unique roles you can embrace that will help you engage, encourage, educate, and equip parents to understand their teenagers better and participate in their spiritual growth.Discover, Equip, Risk, and Sharpen. The Leadership Pathway serves as a tool to assist you in answering the question, “How can I develop leaders in my youth ministry?”