

VBS 2023 STUDENT & ADULT VBS CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute plan is designed to train and equip leaders of teenagers and adults to conduct an Adult VBS or a VBS for 7th through 12th graders using Lifeway's Twists & Turns Student VBS & Adult VBS curriculum.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2023 Student Starter Kit* — Display the following items on focal wall:
 - Student Kit Item 2: VBS Scripture Poster
 - Student Kit Item 3: Session 1 Poster
 - Student Kit Item 5: Session 2 Poster
 - Student Kit Item 9: Session 3 Poster
 - Student Kit Item 12: Sharing the Gospel with Students Poster
 - Student Kit Item 13: Session 4 Poster
 - Student Kit Item 15: Session 5 Poster
- *VBS 2023 Adult VBS Starter Kit* — Display the following items on focal wall:
 - Adult Kit Item 2: VBS Scripture Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 5: Motto and Overview Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 6: God's Plan of Salvation Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 7: Session 1 Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 8: Session 2 Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 9: Session 3 Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 10: Session 4 Poster
 - Adult Kit Item 11: Session 5 Poster
- Printable items — Printable items are included on the CD-ROM in the leader kit, in the folders of the digital product, or for download using the redemption code in the leader kit. Print all items, place in a binder, and place on the display table.
- Item 1: "Game Instructions" — Reference during Teaching Step 1.
- Giant UNO® cards, jumbo Yahtzee® set, and giant beanbag tic-tac-toe (these games can all be purchased from Amazon)
- 6 board game boxes — Fill 3 boxes with 3 different student sessions' Leader Devotion, Worship, Motivate, Examine, and Apply from the student leader guide. Fill the other 3 boxes with 3 different adult sessions' Bible Background, Registration and Snacks, Get Acquainted, Create Interest, Bible Study, Gospel Presentation, Application, and Closure from the adult leader guide.
- *VBS 2023 Tablecloths*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2023 Decorating Made Easy*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2023 Supersized Backdrop*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2023 Whirleys*
- Projector or TV (to use with laptop)
- Bluetooth speaker

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle or seat conferees at 6 round tables. Hang the "VBS Theme Verse Poster" (Student & Adult Kit item 2), "Motto and Overview Poster" (Adult Kit item 5), "God's Plan of Salvation Poster" (Adult Kit item 6), "Sharing the Gospel with Students Poster" (Student Kit item 12) and the daily Session Posters (Adult Kit items 7–11 and Student Kit items 3, 5, 9, 13, and 15) on the focal wall in the room. Cover a table with a *VBS 2023 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum

items, binder of printables, and other conference resources. Set up the opening relay game in the front of the room. Hang the *VBS 2023 Supersized Backdrop* on other walls of the room and hang the *VBS 2023 Whirleys* from the ceiling and door jamb.

OPTIONAL: Arrange round tables at one end of the room with “Tabletop Activities” (Adult CD-ROM) and encourage conferees to engage with the activities as they arrive or during a break in the session.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome to the Game Room (10 minutes)

- Play music from the Twists & Turns Student playlist (Student CD-ROM).
- Welcome conferees to Twists & Turns Student & Adult VBS.
- Say: “Spin the spinner, beat the clock, skip ahead, play to win! Twists & Turns VBS is a fantastical celebration of games of all kinds, from classic tabletop games to strategy games to video games and more!”
- Explain that life is full of twists and turns. Ask: “Has your life ever taken an unexpected twist or turn?” (*Allow responses.*)
- Say: “This year we are going to examine the life of Peter, one of the members of Jesus’ inner circle. His life was full of twists and turns. Yet through trusting and following Jesus, he discovered that Jesus changes everything!”
- Form two teams and play the Twists & Turns Relay game according to the “Game Instructions” (Item 1).
- Call attention to the VBS Scripture Poster on the focal wall and invite conferees to read it with you.

2. Preparing Your Game (15 minutes)

- Mention that personal preparation is key to success in Adult and Student VBS. Challenge conferees to personally prepare their hearts by memorizing the theme verse and applying it to their everyday life. Encourage them to read the Bible passages for each session and ask God for new insights and application of the Bible content.
- Lead them to pray for each person that will be impacted by VBS. Pray for other leaders in VBS. Pray for the other churches in your area to have a successful VBS.
- Ask: “What are some ideas for prayer support for VBS leaders and volunteers?” Share the following suggestions if not mentioned by conferees:
 - Prayer partners.
 - Prayer walks before VBS begins.
 - Senior adult prayer warriors to pray in VBS rooms each day prior to VBS.
 - Keep a list of names in your car so you can pray as you wait on your children at practice or as you wait in a drive through line.
 - Enlist parents or other church members to pray for students by name.
- Explain that most churches are familiar with (and offer) VBS for preschoolers and children, then ask: “Why should a church offer a VBS for students or adults?” (*Allow responses.*)
- Share the following suggestions if not mentioned by conferees:
 - Discipleship of students and adults already attending church.
 - Additional opportunity for students and adults to study the Bible.
 - Evangelism and outreach opportunity for the unsaved within the church and community.

- Ask: “What should (could) Student or Adult VBS look like?” (*Allow responses.*) Share the following suggestions if not listed by conferees:
 - Traditional week: Offer Student or Adult VBS the same week as your traditional VBS for kids.
 - Student D-NOW: Use the curriculum as the theme and small group study for a Discipleship Now weekend.
 - Mid-week Bible study: Teach the lessons during your regular mid-week Bible study time in the weeks leading up to your church’s VBS.
- Encourage conferees to develop a timeframe for their VBS.
- Show the Adult VBS Leader Guide and explain that Adult VBS is designed for five two-hour sessions, as indicated by the schedule on page 4. There is also the option to add crafts and recreation to Adult VBS. Those resources are found on the CD-ROM or in the digital downloads.
- Show the Student VBS Leader Guide and explain that the student schedule is determined by what you wish to include in addition to Bible study, such as missions, crafts, recreation, snacks, and so forth. Sample schedules are found on page 4 of the leader guide.
- Offer the following tips:
 - Know approximately how many students or adults to prepare for.
 - Make sure you to enlist enough help for all of the small groups and rotations.
 - Study each daily session in depth. Comment: “Planning is key! If you forget to have the craft assembled until the last minute, that’s one thing. But if you don’t KNOW the biblical content each day and how it applies to the lives of your students or adults then you will not be successful.”

3. **Gather the Game Pieces** (10 minutes)

- Ask: “Have you ever opened a board game or puzzle and realized you don’t have all of the pieces? I mean is Monopoly worth playing without the dog? For your VBS to be successful, you must gather all of the game pieces.”
- Walk through the following essential “game pieces,” displaying each resource as you go:
 - Bible — Comment: “While many people use devices instead of traditional Bibles, it’s important for learners to see the leader using an actual Bible. It drives home the fact that God’s Word is our authority not Google.”
- Leader Guide — Explain that each leader needs his/her own leader guide.
 - Point out that margins contain helpful information for planning each session.
 - Point out the preparation, planning, scheduling, promotion and decoration tips at the beginning of the guide.
- Learner Guide — Explain that each participant needs his/her own leader guide.
 - Mention that the learner guides keep participants engaged in each session.
- Posters — Posters in the kit are referenced in the *VBS 2023 Student Leader Guide* and *VBS 2023 Adult Leader Guide* by item number as needed for sessions. See margin notes in the leader guide for usage details.
- CD-ROM:
 - Contents for Student VBS is found on page 47 of the student leader guide.
 - Contents for Adult VBS is found on page 48 of the adult leader guide.

- Digital Resources — Mention: “Everything on the CD-ROM can also be downloaded from www.my.lifeway.com/redeem. There is a unique code at the front of each leader guide. You can use that code to download the content on 3 of your devices.”
- Miscellaneous supplies (for crafts, recreation, missions, snacks, etc.) will also be required, based on what additional rotation activities you choose to include.
- Mention that the person who is properly prepared can relax and enjoy VBS as an opportunity to build relationships and impact the lives of students and adults.

4. **Playing the Game** (15 minutes)

- Say: “Once you have a plan and have gathered your pieces, you can start playing.”
- Form six groups (3 adult groups and 3 student groups).
- Give each student group a board game box filled with the session elements from a Student VBS session (see supplies listed under “Needed Resources” at the beginning of this conference plan). Give each adult group a board game box filled with session elements from Adult VBS sessions (see list at the beginning of this plan).
- Allow groups 10 minutes to examine the contents of the board game box and determine how each piece fits together in a daily session.
- Ask one person from each group to explain what their session is about and how all of the pieces fit together in that session.
- After each group presents, say: “All of these pieces work together to allow you to create a great and informative Student or Adult VBS.”

5. **Biblical Overview** (30 minutes)

- Say: “The most important part of any VBS is the biblical content. Let’s look at this year’s biblical content.”
- **Session 1: Jesus Is Holy**
 - **Bible Story:** Peter Followed Jesus (Matthew 4:18-20; Luke 5:1-11)
 - **Today’s Point:** Jesus is holy and that changes everything!
 - **Bonus Verse:** **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2:21**
 - Summarize the Bible story: Jesus sat in the boat of a fisherman named Peter to teach God’s Word to the crowd. Jesus told Peter to take his boat into the deep water to catch fish. Peter said they had tried all night to catch fish, but he and the other fishermen obeyed Jesus. They caught so many fish their nets began to tear and break and their boats began to sink. When Peter saw this miracle he fell down at Jesus’ feet. “Go away from me,” Peter told Jesus, “because I am a sinful man, Lord!” Peter knew how sinful he was in comparison to Jesus’ holiness. “Don’t be afraid,” Jesus told Peter. “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Peter and the other fishermen left everything and followed Jesus.”
 - Remind conferees that when Peter recognized Jesus for who He was, he fell to his knees and worshipped. Ask: “Have you ever had that moment when you discovered who Jesus is? What did that cause you to do?”
 - Explain that recognizing who we are (sinners in need of a Savior) in light of who Jesus is (holy, righteous Son of God) is the first step toward salvation. This is the perfect place to start Day 1 of VBS as it allows us to build on this foundation every subsequent day of VBS.

- **Session 2: Jesus Is Trustworthy**

- **Bible Story:** Peter Walked to Jesus on the Water (Matthew 14:22-33)
- **Today's Point:** Jesus is trustworthy even when I doubt.
- **Bonus Verse:** *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isaiah 41:10*
- Summarize the Bible story: Jesus told His disciples to go ahead of Him in a boat. The disciples' boat was far from shore. The wind and water grew rough. The disciples saw Jesus walking on top of the water toward them. Peter asked to walk to Jesus on the water, and Jesus said, "Come." Peter stepped out and noticed how strong the wind was and got scared. He began to sink and cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus saved him. Jesus asked Peter, "Why did you doubt Me? Is your faith really so small?" As soon as Jesus and Peter got back into the boat, the wind stopped! The disciples worshiped Jesus and said, "It's true. You really are the Son of God!"
- Ask: "What does it take to earn someone's trust?" Explain: "That question is asked in the Bible Background section of lesson 2 in the adult leader guide. The answer can be consistency. When we find that someone is consistent, we can trust him—an old friend who's always been there; a boss who has consistently supported you. We trust our parents because they have consistently been there and provided for us."
- Continue: "If consistency is a key to trustworthiness, then we can certainly trust Jesus. He is the model for consistency. Many times in the Bible we find that Jesus spent time with His father. He was trustworthy in this."
- Lead the group to talk about difficult times in life when they have seen God come through.
- Remind conferees that they will also find Jesus trustworthy when they face storms and challenges. Remind them of what it says in Hebrews 13:5 that He will never leave us or forsake us.

- **Session 3: Jesus Is Forgiving**

- **Bible Story:** Peter Denied Jesus and Was Restored (Luke 22:31-34,54-62; John 18:15-18; 21:1-19)
- **Today's Point:** Jesus is forgiving even when I sin.
- **Bonus Verse:** In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins *Colossians 1:14*
- Summarize the Bible story: Jesus told Peter that before the day was over Peter would deny he knew Jesus three different times. That night, soldiers arrested Jesus and Peter followed afar off. He warmed himself by a fire with others and was confronted about being with Jesus three different times. Each time Peter denied knowing Jesus. After the third time Jesus turned and looked at Peter. Peter went out and wept bitterly. Jesus was then crucified. His body was buried. On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead! Some time after arriving in Galilee Peter and a few disciples decided to go fishing. They caught nothing. A man on the shore suggested they put the net on the right side of the boat. They did and caught a multitude of fish! They realized the man was Jesus! Jesus shared bread and fish with them on the shore. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love Me?"

three different times. Peter replied, “Yes, Lord, You know I love You.” Jesus told Peter to take care of the other followers of Jesus.

- o Comment: “Peter went from denying and disappointing Jesus to dining with Jesus! That’s only possible if Jesus forgave him.”
- o Ask: “What does it mean to be forgiven?” (*Allow responses.*)
- o Remind conferees that we were all born sinners (according to Romans 3:23) and because of that we have a debt to pay. Romans 6:23 says, “**For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**” But Jesus paid our debt! Romans 5:8 says that because Jesus did this because of His great love for us. All we have to do is believe on Him, trust His finished work, and ask Him into our heart (Romans 10:9-10).
- o Say: “We are just as guilty as Peter was and Jesus forgives us just the same.”
- **Session 4: Jesus Is Worth Following**
 - o **Bible Story:** Peter Spoke Boldly about Jesus (Acts 3:1–4:24)
 - o **Today’s Point:** Jesus is worth following even when it gets tough.
 - o **Bonus Verse:** **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12**
 - o Summarize the Bible story: As Peter and John were going to the temple, they saw a man who couldn’t walk. Peter healed the man through Jesus’ power. People who knew the man were amazed, and Peter taught them the good news about how Jesus died and rose again to save people from their sins. The religious leaders were annoyed that Peter and John were preaching about Jesus. They arrested the two disciples. The next day, Peter and John stood before the religious leaders and spoke boldly about Jesus. The leaders knew these uneducated men could speak this way because they had been with Jesus. The leaders commanded the disciples not to teach about Jesus anymore. Peter and John said, “We can’t stop.” They knew they had to tell people about Jesus no matter what happened.
 - o Say: “Peter had a genuine experience with Jesus. He had been through the good times and the bad. He had dropped his nets and followed Him. He watched Him do miracles after miracles. He stepped out of the boat to go to Him. He defended Him in the garden and denied Him by the fire. Peter’s experience with Jesus was filled with twists and turns, but in the end, Peter found Him worth following even when he was told he couldn’t. But instead of stopping, Peter began sharing with the crowd that Jesus was Holy and Just—the Messiah that God had sent and raised from the dead. Instead of cowering in the face of adversity, Peter preached like never before! Remember this is the same man who cowered by the fire. But now he’s standing boldly.”
 - o Ask: “Have you ever cowered and failed to speak up for Christ? At work or school? Maybe at an event?” (*Allow responses.*) “Has Jesus proven Himself worthy to be followed in your life?”
- **Session 5: Jesus Is for Everyone**
 - o **Bible Story:** Peter Told Cornelius about Jesus (Acts 10)
 - o **Today’s Point:** Jesus is for everyone, including me.
 - o **Bonus Verse:** **To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts 10:43**

- o Summarize the Bible story: Cornelius was a Roman officer who worshiped God. One afternoon an angel of God appeared in a vision and told Cornelius to send men to Joppa and find a man named Peter. Cornelius obeyed. Meanwhile, Peter had a vision. The vision was about unclean animals. A voice told Peter not to call something unclean if God had made it clean. Peter was trying to understand the vision when the men looking for him arrived. The Holy Spirit told Peter to go with the men. Cornelius, his family, and friends were waiting to hear Peter's message. Peter said, "God has shown me that He does not show favoritism. Every person can be right or acceptable to God through faith in Him." Peter taught that everyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven. Everyone who heard the message became believers.
- o Ask: "How do you react when you meet people who are different than you? A different race or culture? A different nationality? A different socioeconomic status? Sometimes it's easy to close off to people who are not like us, but Jesus is for everyone."
- o Share a personal story if you have one about how someone made you feel "less." Remind conferees of the truth that Jesus came and died for everyone. He wants to welcome all into His forever family.

6. Continuing the Game (5 minutes)

- Say: "Perhaps the greatest part of VBS is the relationships we make. It's through those relationships that many will come to faith in Christ."
- Remind conferees of the importance of building on the relationships begun during VBS. Every leader and volunteer should be part of the follow-up strategy.
- Stress the need for complete contact information at registration to ensure your church can continue to build relationships.
- Keep the connection alive by looking for ways to stay connected with the students and adults you taught.
- Encourage students and adults to stay connected with the church through their official social media accounts.
- Ask conferees what other methods they have used to follow up after Student & Adult VBS.

7. Pray (5 minutes)

- Ask conferees for specific prayer needs for their VBS.
- Pray for leaders, students and adults, parents, pastors, volunteers, directors, and so forth. Pray for the gospel to be the center of VBS.

TWISTS AND TURNS RELAY GAME

Teams: 2 teams of up to 4 players each

Supplies: Giant UNO® cards, jumbo Yahtzee® set, and giant beanbag tic-tac-toe

Object: Be the first team to have all members complete the relay.

Setup: Arrange the three games on the floor in the following order: UNO, Yahtzee, and tic-tac-toe. UNO will be in a single deck of cards. Yahtzee will be five dice and one cup. Tic-tac-toe can be made by using masking tape on the floor. Place a throwing line with masking tape at least four feet from the board.

Order of Play: Each team should roll a die once. The player who rolls the highest number goes first.

Game Play: The first player draws a card from the UNO deck. The object is to draw a predetermined card. It can be a Wild, Draw Four, etc. Once the first player has drawn the first card, the second player will draw. Continue back and forth until they have drawn the predetermined card. Once a player has drawn the predetermined card, that player will advance to the Yahtzee game. At the Yahtzee game he will roll all five dice until a double is rolled in a single roll. The first player to the Yahtzee game will continue playing until he have rolled a double or the other player gets there. Once the other player arrives, players must take turns alternating rolls. After rolling a double, the player advances to tic-tac-toe. At tic-tac-toe, the player will throw one bean bag (X or O) on the board. Once the player has landed the bag successfully in an open spot on the board he will run back to the start and allow the second player from his team to go. Each team member must move through the course, completing each step along the way before advancing to the next.

Winning the Game: The relay continues until one team makes three-in-a-row on the tic-tac-toe board. (This could be in as little as three turns.) If it ends in a tie, the board is cleared and the game continues.