

## VBS 2026 STUDENT & ADULT VBS EXTRAS CONFERENCE PLAN (45 MINUTES)

### Purpose Statement

This 45-minute plan is designed to prepare, train, and equip church leaders to implement and tailor the craft, mission, snack, and recreation rotations in Lifeway's 2026 Student VBS materials for middle and high school students and Adult VBS materials for adults of all ages.

### Needed Resources

- *VBS Student Starter Kit* (005853487) — Display Student Kit Items 1–3, 9, 11, 13, and 15 and the Session 4 printable “Sharing the Gospel with Students” on the focal wall.
- *VBS Adult Starter Kit* (005853498) — Pull Adult Kit Items 2–9.
- VBS 2026 Printable Items — Printable items are included for download using the redemption codes in both the Student and Adult Starter Kits. Print all items, place in a binder, and display.
  - Prepare a sample craft from each day in the Student Leader Guide and Adult Printables.
- *VBS 2026 Decorating Made Easy* (005853432)
- (2) *VBS 2026 Tablecloths* (005853575)
- *VBS 2026 Recreation Rotation Leader Cards* (005853426) — Pull Rec Cards 7 and 22.
- *VBS 2026 Snack Rotation Recipe Cards* (005853427) — Optional: Prepare 2–3 snacks for display.
- *VBS 2026 Rotation Signs* (005853618)
- *VBS 2026 Visual Pack* (005853615)
- *VBS 2026 Music for Kids CD* (005853488) or digital album (005853746)
- *VBS 2026 Gospel Guide* (005853630)
- *VBS 2026 Gospel Wristbands* (005853582)
- *VBS 2026 Glitter Beach Balls* (005853774) — Pass around the room to conferees who answer questions (like a “talking stick”).
- *VBS 2026 Supersized Backdrop* (005853613) or *VBS 2026 Super Duper Sized Backdrop* (005853614) (depending on room size)
- *VBS 2026 String Flags* (005853579)
- *VBS 2026 Whirleys* (005853580)
- *VBS 2026 Wall Art* (005853616)
- *VBS 2026 Rotation Signs* (005853618)
- *CSB Apologetics Study Bible for Students* (005787293)
- *CSB Apologetics Study Bible, Revised and Updated* (005854698)
- *CSB Connecting Scripture New Testament* (005851822)
- 30–50 ball pit balls
- 2 sack race bags or oversized pair of pants
- 16 plastic cups
- 8 glow sticks
- TV or projector for slides
- CD Player or Bluetooth speaker

### Room Setup

Arrange the chairs in a semicircle, leaving plenty of space between the seating and tables for movement and games. Hang the posters and kit items on a designated focal wall. Decorate the room with VBS 2026 decorations. Center a TV or projector screen on the focal wall. Cover two

tables with *VBS 2026 Tablecloths* and position them on either side of the screen. On one table, arrange both Starter Kits, the snack rotation recipe cards, and the recreation rotation leader cards on the display table alongside the Bibles and other VBS 2026 decorations. On the second table, set out snack and craft samples. Hang the whirleys and string flags from the ceiling along with other elements from the *VBS 2026 Decorating Made Easy* book to help create the atmosphere for Illumination Station.

## Teaching Steps

- **Kick It Off (6 minutes)**
  - Play Illumination Station music as conferees as they arrive.
  - Introduce yourself and welcome conferees. Ask: “Who’s ready to make this VBS be the brightest LIGHT for Jesus?” Encourage conferees to cheer loudly!
  - Say: “Let’s learn something about each other. If you suddenly started glowing whenever you were excited, what moment this week would have made you shine the brightest?” Allow as many people to answer as time allows. Don’t forget to answer the question too!
  - Continue: “Awesome! Now let’s learn your favorite part of a VBS!” Give conferees the option of missions, recreation, crafts, or snacks. Give a 3, 2, 1 countdown and let them yell their answers at the same time.
  - Say: “It can be so hard to choose. There are so many fantastic parts to VBS, and each one matters—no matter what age you are teaching.”
  - Remind conferees that VBS is for all ages. That’s what makes VBS so special. Say: “We can truly make a special experience for all ages and stages! This VBS can be one more opportunity to share that Jesus is the Light of the world and can be your Savior!”
  - Remind conferees that no matter the rotation or which day of VBS, the gospel should be center stage in the spotlight.
  - Hold up the rotation signs for missions, recreation, crafts, and snacks. Explain that you will show how each of these areas can impact VBS for both students and adults.
  - Hold up the Neon Snacks rotation sign and say, “First, let’s kick it off with snack time.”
- 2. **Neon Snacks (7 minutes)**
  - Lead conferees in a call back: “When I say, ‘Illuminate,’ you say, ‘Snacks—I can’t wait!’” Repeat once or twice.
  - Say: “There’s nothing quite like food to bring people together! Adults and students alike—especially those hungry teenagers—will appreciate a snack break. And what better way to keep the learning glowing than by using snack time as another chance to highlight the daily theme? It’s a simple moment that can shine with purpose.”
  - Hold up the *VBS 2026 Snack Rotation Recipe Cards* and share what a great resource these can be to help you create themed snacks that are fun for teens and adults.
  - Explain that five of the cards contain daily biblical content. The front summarizes the session’s story. The back of the card contains a conversation starter called “Kid Connection” that you can use or reword for students or adults. It also has a Bible-related snack.
  - Inform conferees that no matter the age, we can all still enjoy a fun, themed snack. However, a store-bought snack works just as well or even a simple, homemade savory or sweet treat can be a great addition.
  - Ask conferees to share additional snack ideas they think would work well for both students and adults. Allow a few brief responses before moving on.
  - Inform conferees of these helpful tips for a snack time that GLOWS:

- Have a Plan for Allergies — Teens and adults have food allergies too! Make sure to collect allergy information at registration and keep a written list handy of those with allergies. Provide an alternative option for those impacted by allergies and remember not to cross contaminate as you prepare and serve.
- Time of Day Matters — If your VBS meets early, late, or during lunchtime, you may need to offer a larger meal instead of just a light snack. The snack cards also include a card with a list of “Dinner Options.”
- Get Creative — Don’t be afraid to get creative with snacks. Turning snacks into a hands-on activity can feel like a mini craft and gives students or adults another opportunity to learn a biblical truth in a fun way.
- Say: “Now that our bellies are full, let’s move on to craft time!” Hold up the Kaleidoscope Crafts rotation sign.

### 3. Kaleidoscope Crafts (7 minutes)

- Lead conferees in a call back: “When I say, ‘Shine,’ you say, ‘My craft looks divine!’” Repeat one or two times.
- Mention that crafts are for all ages and stages! They’re a fun way to sneak in learning—especially for teens and adults—while giving opportunities to spark moments of truth that *keep glowing* long after VBS ends.
- Refer to the displayed craft samples. Highlight each premade craft and explain how it connects to the day’s theme it was designed for. Mention that student crafts are found in the Student Leader Guide and adult crafts are found in the downloadable files.
- Suggest conferees reference the *VBS 2026 Crafts Rotation* and the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* for inspiration and additional craft options.
- Remind conferees that crafts can help engage the creative learner. Offer the following helpful tips to make crafts more engaging for students and adults:
  - Make It a Game — Competition can be a great incentive for crafts, especially for teenagers. If certain individuals are not as interested, have them race during the assembly portion of the craft.
  - Have a Conversation — Ask engaging questions along the way to help stimulate the learning process.
  - Team Build — Turn the craft into a team building project by forming groups. Show a completed sample of the craft and guide them to work without any instructions or read each instruction only once. Any kind of challenge can add extra fun!
- Say: “It’s time to do a bit of moving! Who’s ready for rec time?” Hold up the Suncatcher Recreation rotation sign. Encourage conferees to cheer loudly!

### 4. Suncatcher Recreation (12 minutes)

- Lead conferees in a call back: “When I say, ‘Sun ray,’ you say, ‘It’s time to play!’” Repeat a few times.
- Say: “It’s time to play some games! I know students have energy, but adults? Can they play games too? Of course they can!”
- Ask conferees why recreation time is so important. Wait for responses. Include the following if not mentioned:
  - Stronger Community — Team building and healthy competition can lead to strong bonds and break down social barriers. This can create a greater sense of community better than any lecture could.
  - More Memorable — Active learning engages both the body and mind and can create opportunities to live and act out the session theme in a hands-on way.

- Schedule Breaks — This can create pauses in the flow of the day/evening to help clear everyone’s mind. Just like coffee needs time to steep, you need to create moments for all that is being learned to set in. This can also allow people to get up and move.
- Say: “Speaking of that, I think we have been sitting too long and it’s time to play a game! I need two volunteers.”
- Play the game, “Collect the Leftovers” according to the instructions on Rec Card 7, adapting as needed based on your space.
- Once finished, lead everyone to return to their seats. Say: “That game was a blast! Along with the fun, this game has a teaching element included.”
- Share with the group that this game coincides with Day 3: Jesus Is the Powerful Son of God. Ask the group how this game parallels with the corresponding lesson. Wait for responses.
- Inform conferees that when Jesus blessed the bread and fishes, it multiplied amongst the people. Can you imagine how amazed the disciples were as they collected the leftover pieces? From tiny pieces to seven baskets of leftovers after feeding more than 4,000 people, that shows how powerful our God is!
- Say: “There are plenty of big movement game choices to choose from! Did you know there are other types of games that are included too? There are water games for those hot days to get outside and make a mess (make sure to give a heads up if you are scheduling this game so people can dress appropriately) and tabletop games which are great for smaller spaces and for people who cannot play the big movement style games. Let’s play one of those!”
- Hold up “Glow Stick Carry” (Rec Card 22). Invite up two volunteers to play the game according to the instructions on the card.
- Say: “That was so fun! For more tabletop options, make sure to check out the printable contents found in the Adult Leader Guide.”
- Remind the conferees to adapt games for anyone with special needs or for those who cannot play the game for any reason. Be flexible and adapt any activity to include everyone. Jesus came for all, so let’s remember to include everyone so they can have every chance to hear the good news of the gospel of Jesus.
- Mention that the games played today were adapted from the Kids Recreation Rotation Leader Cards, but Bible-related recreation options are provided in both the Student Leader Guide and the Adult redemption files.
- Say: “Friends, we are almost there! There is one more thing to learn about! Can you guess what it is?” Hold up the Glow-in-the-dark Missions rotation sign.

#### 5. **Glow-in-the-Dark Missions** (7 minutes)

- Lead conferees in a call back: “When I say, ‘Mission,’ you say, ‘Let’s get goin’!” Repeat.
- Explain that the missions component gives you plenty of flexibility for both students and adults. These age groups are unique since students and adults can more easily go out and shine in the community, serving in ways that extend the light of Christ beyond your church walls. Students and adults can also experience a more interactive, on-campus missions time where they can reflect God’s love together as they learn and serve side by side.
- Point out that the mission rotation plans are available in the printables section of the digital downloads.
- Say: “Keep in mind that your Student VBS and Adult VBS may be literal mission fields.”
- Hold up both leader guides and let the group know that page 2 features “The Good News” in the Student Leader Guide and “God’s Plan of Salvation” in the Adult Leader

Guide. Briefly review each section and included Bible verses. Encourage conferees to train their leaders to know this well.

- Encourage the group by pointing out the practical tools available to help them share the gospel with confidence. Take a moment to show the *Gospel Guide* and *Gospel Wristbands*, explaining how these simple resources can spark meaningful conversations. Let conferees know these tools make it easy to share the Good News with the people in their everyday lives—friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers alike.
- Point out that one of the greatest mistakes we can make is assuming every VBS attendee is already a believer. Just like with children, some students or adults may have been invited by a friend, and others may think they're Christians without truly understanding the gospel.
- Encourage conferees not to rush through the gospel. This may be someone's moment to respond. Our role is to be faithful messengers: present it clearly, present it well, and trust the Holy Spirit to do the work.
- Ask conferees to share any story of how the gospel impacted someone in their church or community. Wait for responses.
- Say: "For every Christian in this room, your testimony is a great vehicle to share the gospel. Not everyone needs a story that could become a great movie script to be life-changing. For all believers, you were dead in sin but because of Jesus' death, God's power, and His amazing grace, you have been made alive. That is a story worth telling! Use that to glorify God in telling of His salvation."
- Let conferees know that if they need ideas or inspiration for creating community service opportunities, they can find helpful suggestions in the back of the missions rotation plans (in both Students and Adults).

#### 6. **Bonus Tips** (2 minutes)

- Lead conferees in a call back: "When I say, 'Bonus,' you say, 'Show us!'" Repeat.
- Hold up both leader guides and remind conferees that, as previously mentioned, there are printable downloads available. Each guide has a redemption code that you can use at [my.lifeway.com](http://my.lifeway.com). Do not ignore these!
- Inform the group that they can find premade slideshows, general helps such as a registration form, scheduling helps, and additional teaching material in the redemption files.
- Highlight that in the Adult Leader Guide, there is also a resource for leading a Parenting Seminar. Conferees will want to use this in their churches, so encourage them to take a look at it and talk to their VBS Director, Kids Minister, or NextGen Pastor about how it would work in their setting.
- Remind conferees to be flexible in the scheduling and to be faithful to God in the work. Say: "You don't have to force anything to fit. Just remember to keep God as the main thing at VBS!"

#### 7. **Closing** (4 minutes)

- Invite volunteers to share one thing they learned in this breakout.
- Thank everyone for attending and express your appreciation for the time and attention they invested.
- Invite the group to spend one minute in silent prayer for their upcoming VBS—lifting up the people they hope will attend, their volunteers, and any worries or concerns on their hearts.
- Close the session by praying over them.