

Virtual Ice Breakers and Games

Familiarize Yourself with Your Platform

Activities –

Rev. Rob Shrader – Beargrass Christian Church, Louisville, KY.

Scripture Share – Challenged the group to come ready with a scripture or Bible story they found inspiring, helpful, hopeful, or instructive. Take turns sharing these scriptures with one another. As a youth shared the scripture, I asked follow up questions like – “why did you choose this passage?” or “how does this passage make you feel?” etc. *Option: Write down responses and share (with permission).*

Scavenger Hunt – We called a game night and had a scavenger hunt in 2 rounds. Everyone who can produce the item and show it on screen gets a point. The person who shows the item first (fastest) gets two points. Score is kept and the winner gets a bag of candy that I will deliver to their front porch. 😊

Round 1 – Household items. When everyone is ready read give them the item they need to find. Some items also came with the rule that they had to leave the room they were in to get it so it’s not too easy. Here’s the list we used: toilet paper, pen or pencil, cookie (snack time, just like youth group), a leaf, wooden spoon. The last item listed was a Bible, but we didn’t score that item. The reason for gathering Bibles is for use in round 2.

Round 2 – Scripture Search – Students were given a scripture to look up in their own Bibles. Once they find and read the scripture, they have to decide what item is indicated in the verse that they could produce on screen. Once they decide what they’re searching for they go get it and the same rules apply. Here’s the list we used and the items we accepted:

Psalm 109:105 – lamp, light, flashlight

Matt 26:26 – bread

Matt 17:27 – coin, fish

James 3:7 – animal

(some showed their pets which was fun, others stuffed animals)

Joshua 4:20 – stone (just one stone needed to score, not all 12)

The students were highly engaged, and I could even see us repeating this game with different items and scriptures. The kinesthetic aspect of the game was terrific. They seemed to enjoy getting up and running around. Lots of laughter and fun interpretation of the scriptures just made it even more fun.

Headbands – (Untested) Leader has a list of people or things like in the game headbands. One student is selected and instructed to close his or her eyes. The leader then shows on screen a paper or card with the item listed. Once all players (other than

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the student with eyes closed) sees and understands the item the selected student is invited to open his or her eyes. That student then asks a series of questions to try to determine who or what they are.

This could be done 20 questions style where the number of allowed questions is limited. Or it could be timed. Or just let it roll and see what happens.

If a small group where people will get multiple turns then a score could be kept. However, with a large group it might just be for the fun of the game.

Pictionary – (Untested) Using the share screen feature students could attempt Pictionary. This could be done in groups similar to charades or just for fun to the whole group. The artist is given something to draw via individual chat message and then shares his or her screen with the group and starts drawing. Technology needs to be tested for viability.

Trivia – (Untested) Trivial Pursuit or some variation thereof could also work. Divide students into groups and let them compete in a trivia contest.

Gather a list of trivia questions.

Divide the students into groups. Instruct them to form chat groups with only their group so they can “discuss” their answers without the other group hearing (they’ll need to be on laptops rather than phones). Give them 90 seconds per question and designate a group member to be the reporter who is tasked with submitting the group answer to the leader or a designated adult sponsor who will receive answers and tally the score.

Camp Energizers – (Untested) Get them up and moving by blasting camp energizer music and inviting them to dance along. Bonus points if a student will be the leader.

Carpool Karaoke – (Untested) Let students take turns picking the song and challenging a friend to sing along. Everyone starts muted and is just singing along on their own while the music plays. Then (and they know this is coming) selectively unmute random players thus sharing their “performance” with the whole group. Not in an embarrassing way but in a fun filled way. Start with yourself as a leader to model vulnerability. Invite them to laugh at you, each other, and ultimately to learn to laugh at themselves. Nobody sounds great singing the itsy-bitsy spider over Zoom.

Crowd Charades – Found this one on Downloadable Youth Ministry. It was a free game. But it’s just a powerpoint presentation which I used with the share screen feature on zoom. The game could be played low tech with a pencil and paper. Create a list of easy to act out actions – throwing a football, flying a kite, riding a bike, making a pizza, eating ice cream, etc. Select one youth to be the guesser. That student must either turn away from the screen or turn their computer away so he or she cannot see the screen. The host shows the rest of the group one of the actions. When everybody’s ready the

host instructs the guesser to turn back around and then says “go.” The rest of the group starts acting out the indicated action while the guesser tries to figure out what everyone is doing.

After everyone had tried, I started pitting 2 against each other. I selected 2 students and had them both turn away while I showed the rest of the group the action. Then turned the guessers back around and started the group acting. The first one to correctly guess the action gets a point. The game was hilarious and is one we will easily repeat.

Emoji Hunt – On the DYM (downloadyouthministry.com) website there is a download called “Sidekick” it is an app that lets you run a bunch of different stuff in the background or on a screen. There’s currently a free download on DYM called “Sidekick 45 File Starter Pack” in that there’s a game called “Emoji Hunt.”

The game generates a series of 4 emojis on the screen (share screen feature) as well as your phone number. The kids have to find those emojis on their own phones in that order. The first one to text those emojis to you in the right order gets a point. Kids loved it and laughed a lot.

Side bonus – this enabled me to collect a few more cell phone numbers I didn’t previously have.

From the Southwest Region Gathering

How’s Yours? -- One person on the phone call mutes their computer. The other people on the call cover their mouths with their hand. They then discuss, behind their hand, and pick something for the muted person to guess. (Examples: dog, bed, shirt... etc.) The person unmutes the phone. That person then goes around and asks, “How’s yours?”. They try to figure out what object was selected by the group. They have three guesses.

Picture Show and Tell -- The host shares their screen with two to 4 different images on a PDF. They then asks each person to quietly choose when image they like best. People begin to share their answers and why. You can move on to different types of images. Use: Wikimedia for copyright free images.

Prince of Paris -- The leader writes down each person on the call and gives them a number (1....2...). They use their screen or the chat box to share which person has which number.

Leader: "The Prince of Paris has lost his hat and number '___' knows where it is at?"

Number '___': Who sir, me sir?

Leader: Yes sir, you sir,

Number '___': No sir, not me sir.

Leader: Then who sir?

Number '____': Number (New Number _____)

Repeat.

If the new number called does not respond. That person has their name moved to the bottom of the number list, and all the people move up to a new number.

Virtual Ice-Breaker Ideas (Best Ones Listed)

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/virtual-ice-breakers.htm>

<https://www.projectmanager.com/blog/20-icebreakers-make-next-meeting-fun>

<https://cityhunt.com/18-easy-virtual-group-building-activities-for-remote-groups/>

Take a Picture of Your Shoes -- Ask group members to take a picture of their shoes and upload it ahead of the meeting. Ask each participant to discuss his choice of shoe, and any "story" behind it. For example, one person might be wearing running shoes – and this might lead to a discussion about his hobbies – or sandals, flip-flops or sneakers.

One Word -- What's the one word you'd use to describe yourself? Everyone picks one and then they're referred to by that name throughout the meeting. It's more than a silly way to start the meeting; it helps everyone get to know one another a bit better.

No Smiling -- Tell everyone in a very serious tone that you will not tolerate any smiling. Then tell a joke. See if people can keep a straight face. You might not be a comedian, but it's harder than you think not to laugh. Chances are that within five minutes everyone will be laughing their faces off. That's a good way to start a meeting, and you'll find it a more effective one because of it.

Last Meal (Updated)-- Draw picture of your perfect meal using the white board. See if the group can guess what the person drawing would want.