

2021 winter retreat



Your team leaders want to get to know you ... and for you to also get to know them in a real and intimate way. They have answered three questions for you below.

- What is one thing you would love for your students to know about you?
- When did you place your faith in Jesus?
- How would you describe your relationship with God?

team leaders: cowboys

Heather Tilghman

I struggle every day and have been down many roads that do not glorify God in the past. I recommit to Him every day. I want kids to know that I am always available to talk with, pray for and listen to them. I love to laugh, learn new things, and spend time in nature.

I was saved and baptized at age 11, but I did not start to follow Christ until I was 41. I thank God that He did not give up on me, knew my testimony would help others in the future and never left me. As long as there was breath in me, there was HOPE.

It is my most important and favorite relationship. A very personal connection that fills me with everything I ever searched for in the past. He is my source of peace, strength, wisdom and love. Before I get out of bed, I go to Him in prayer and study His Word. My day does not go well when I don't and try to do life on my own. I talk with God all throughout the day; I make time to be still and quiet and ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct me. Amazing things happen when we ASK God for His help!!

John Keeler

I am a father to four daughters with three of them here at winter retreat.

I was 11 years old and began asking questions about what I heard. My parents took me to the pastor and he led me through the "Roman's Road" scriptures to ensure I knew what I was doing.

My relationship with God is like a piece of exercise equipment I got for Christmas. While it is a free gift, I have to work hard with it to fully realize its value in my life. It is easy to get distracted and not benefit from it.

Kayla Hanscom

I want my students to know that if they need someone to talk to or someone to cry to, I will be there for them ... no matter what.

I accepted Christ into my life when I was 11 years old at a church camp.

My relationship with God is a little rocky right now, but I want to fix that ... along with my prayer life.

Sebastian Castillo

I go to the University of Houston and I am super excited for this weekend!

It was one Sunday in second grade when I first heard the story of the Gospel here at The Fellowship and I have been following him ever since!

I would describe my relationship with God as awesome! It has been great developing my own deep relationship with Him while in college.

team leaders: falcons

Christina Alvarado

One thing I would love for y'all to know about me is that I have been to Winter Retreat seven years in a row! I truly LOVE coming to Winter Retreat each year because I LOVE getting to know the students, I LOVE getting to see God move in big ways, and I LOVE the fun and fellowship during the late-night games and rec time. I also think you should know that the Falcons are two-time champions!!!

I first started attending The Fellowship in 2006 when I was 22 years old, a newly wed, and a young mom. My husband and I attended a lunch that was for people new to the church. It was at that lunch when my husband and I both gave our lives to Christ. We really started to understand what it meant to have Jesus wash our sins clean and forgive us. We both felt called to allow Jesus into our lives to forever have a relationship with Him. We have been active members at The Fellowship since then and have raised both of our kids at The Fellowship.

My relationship with God is like a father-daughter relationship. I know He is my best friend and I can turn to Him when I need Him, but I also know that He is my Protector and Leader. He guides me and loves me the way a Dad guides and loves his daughter or son. I can trust Him and know that what He wants for me is good for me. I lean on Him tremendously when I'm struggling, and I turn to Him to thank and praise Him when things are going great, too.

Tristen Everett

I was raised in Germany and can speak three languages: German, French, and English.

I placed my faith in Jesus when I was 15 years old while working at a church camp.

Through various storms in my life, my focus has remained in the one who can solve them. I was called to serve God when I was sixteen and have a huge heart for spreading the Kingdom. I have been to 27 countries

and four continents. My relationship with God today is very strong, and worship is where I feel most connected to Him.

Jessica Carollo

I love serving Jesus and trying to love people well every day.

I placed my faith in Christ at a young age. However, my relationship really blossomed when my grandmother (who was lovely and precious) passed away with me by her side.

I would describe my relationship with God as one that is always evolving and growing. The closer I get to Him, the more I want to be with Him. I cannot do life without Him!

Brandon Tobar

One thing I would like my students to know about me is that I am just like them. I go through the same struggles of a growing young adult and have the same questions about faith.

I placed my faith in Christ when I was 13, but it was only the beginning of the journey

My relationship with God is very unique. I am still learning to trust Him in my path to becoming an adult and my career.

team leaders: patriots

Philip Carpenter

I love wrestling! I understand it is fake and it is planned out, but I enjoy being entertained. For a few hours, it is nice to watch something to distract me from what is really going on in our crazy world right now. I enjoy the stories they tell and how they tell a story in the ring.

I accepted Jesus the summer before going into 6th grade. I was new to the student ministry and the youth group was doing an event at Katy Mills Mall. They used the analogy of being lost at sea and we need Jesus to throw a life saver to rescue us. I knew in that minute that I needed to be rescued. So I gave my life to Christ that night. Best thing I ever did!

I would say I have a lot of ups and downs. I wish I could say I have it all together to look good for our students in our ministry ... but I do not. I have my faults and it is messy. I am always trying to want to do better and be better in my walk. I never want to be comfortable in the same spot in my relationship. I wish I could say I am perfect, and my relationship does not need work ... but I would be lying. If I had to put it on a scale from 1-10, I would say 6 1/2. I love God in my highest and in my lowest.

Giovanna Sherwood

I love Jesus, my family, and the outdoors.

I came to Christ at the age of 20 when I was invited to church.

He is sometimes beside me, sometimes behind me, and sometimes ahead of me. But always with me.

TJ Tacas

One thing I would like the students to know about me is I am competitive, and I love art.

I placed my faith in Jesus when I was 12. It was actually here at WR back when I was bottom of the food chain.

I would say my relationship with God is imperfect. That is another thing I love about God - regardless of what you are going through or however things unfold, He is always there for me.

Lauren Parrish

I am pregnant ... so please be patient with my pregger brain. 😊

As a young child ... but after spending years being incredibly angry with God and pushing Him away, I placed my faith in Him again in my early twenties.

All trusting. If I have learned nothing else in my life, it is that I have no control. Everything - and I mean everything - is in God's hands. Trying to that control into your own hands will do nothing but make you miserable.

team leaders: texans

Chris Hartmann

I am a quiet introvert. However, I really care about people, and I want to help them - especially with their faith walk.

I put my faith in Christ in 1994 on a pipeline survey boat in the Gulf of Mexico.

My relationship with God is pretty good these days. There are so many things to pray about which probably helps.

Barbara Flores

I am super excited to be here! I have been coming to these retreats since I was in 8th grade and this has always been the place where my faith has really grown over the years. I love coming to winter retreat to feed my soul for Jesus. These yearly retreats are good for my relationship with Him. I also love being here with all of you. I love every single one of you and I love the way we can have fun but also worship Jesus together.

I remember the day so perfectly. I grew up in a dual religious household. My mother was Christian and my dad was Mormon. They wanted my brother and I to choose what felt right to us. When I was about 7 or 8, we went to a Christian church and that was the moment that finally felt right to me. I remember the pastor asking if anyone wanted to give their life to Christ to come forward. I walked to the front and accepted Christ into my heart. Ever since then, I have been living my life for Him and have never looked back.

I have been having a slight bump in the relationship with myself, which affects my relationship with God. However, I have been working hard to mend both relationships. Thanks to God's forgiveness and everlasting love for me, I can restore my heart. I always keep my faith and hope for tomorrow and I think that really helps my relationship with Him. If you want to talk to anyone about fixing not only your relationship with God, but also with yourself, feel free to find me and I would be happy to help however I can.

Drew Parrish

I really enjoy woodworking.

I became a Christian at summer camp when I was ten years old.

A roller coaster. It has had its ups and downs, but I have never gotten off the ride. Today, it is stronger than ever and I hope to share my faith with my students.

Jeniffer Pascual

I think it is important to know that even though I am an adult and a mom now, I have struggled with a lot of things everyone on this retreat can be struggling with now. External things like electronics and social media might be different like but the internal struggles as a young believer in Christ remain the same.

I was raised in a Catholic home, baptized Catholic until my grandma started bringing me and my sister to church. I was saved at the age of 12, but did not establish a real, deep, meaningful relationship with God until I was in my late 20s. Between that time of meeting God and truly knowing Him, I lived a life of sin, debauchery, and disobedience, allowing the world to navigate my life and the choices I made in it. Looking back on it, even though I never acknowledged His presence, He was always with me, saving me and protecting me from the dumb choices and foolish choices I have made. I fully placed my complete trust in God when I became pregnant and had my first child. It was in that moment I knew that I was not in control.

It is the best father-daughter, teacher-student, master-servant, BFF relationship combination if there ever was one! It is a relationship that is constantly growing and deepening, which comes with some tug of war battles (engaged by me, of course) and learning lessons the hard way ... but I am truly enjoying my walk with God each and every day.

Gavin Casey

I love football, photography, video games, and Jesus.

I became a Christian when I was 11 years old at church camp.

A constant everlasting growth that I learn from each day. A great bond of communication and faith that will forever have room for improvement.