



2023 Winter Retreat Leader Planning Guide

We are excited about WINTER RETREAT 2023, which is taking place December 28-30, at the Double Tree, 350 1st Avenue NE in Cedar Rapids, IA.

Brochures, registration forms, posters, and additional Leader's Guides for Winter Retreat 2023 can be downloaded at:

<https://openbiblecentral.org/winter-retreat>

Our desire at Winter Retreat is to help provide an opportunity and environment where our students can set aside the distractions of life for a few days and focus on their personal relationship with God. Our theme is LIGHT IT UP. We want to challenge students to Light up their world with their unique, God given design. This event will be fun, packed, missional and active. You will not want to miss bringing your group to Winter Retreat!

If you have any questions or need more information, please call 719.225.9829 or e-mail ben@openbiblecentral.org or lola@openbiblecentral.org. We would love to help you get your group to Winter Retreat!

God Bless,

Ben & Lola Carlson
Next Gen. Ministries Directors
Open Bible Central Region Churches

How to Bring a Group to Winter Retreat

Right Now:

Communicate total costs to your students.

Please include Winter Retreat cost of **\$139 per person** plus the amount you are charging for each person's transportation and/or food.

Make sure you have Winter Retreat dates, **December 28-30, 2023** on the church calendar.

Reserve the vans, buses, etc. that you will need to get your students and leaders to Winter Retreat.

Ongoing:

Hang the promotional posters and have brochures available. You may want to do a direct mailing to each family.

Regularly announce and promote Winter Retreat. Use your church bulletin, announcement times, pre-service slides, and anything else you can imagine. You would be surprised how many times you have to announce things before they sink in.

Downloadable graphics are available on the website.

Have your students and leaders fill out the online registration forms. Registration notifications will be emailed to youth leaders directly. Leaders who register will need a current background check and MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training. (no more than 2 years old)

Collect payments from students.

Prior to December 6:

Make sure ALL these items are complete:

- All student registration forms and leader applications
- Ensure leader background checks and Ministry Safe training is complete (if applicable).
- **ALL STUDENTS & LEADERS MUST be registered online by December 6 to avoid a \$30 per person late fee.**
- **FINAL REGISTRATION CLOSES ON DECEMBER 13.**
- **No subsidized leaders after December 6.**

In early December, youth leaders will be emailed a link to a Google Doc form specific to your church that will be used to indicate all rooming assignments. You will receive one room per four people of each gender. Example: If you bring 8 boys including male leaders then they will divide between two rooms. If you bring 9 boys including male leaders, they will divide between three rooms. Five to a room is permitted in a few situations. Contact us if you would like to request this accommodation. Please remember, leaders cannot sleep in the same bed with a student.

Remember to bring adequate adult supervision for your group. While we do have an event staff that directs Winter Retreat, the primary responsibility for your group belongs to you.

Important Reminders

- There will be no blocking off/saving of seats prior to service. Leaders or students will not be allowed into the meeting room prior to the doors being opened before service. Any items left on chairs before the doors are opened will be collected and placed at a table in the back of the room. Thanks for your cooperation!
- For the safety of our event, visitors are not allowed without prior approval & completion of background check.
- In the event that a registered student or leader is unable to attend Winter Retreat, their **REGISTRATION IS TRANSFERABLE** to another student or leader in your group, **but WILL NOT BE REFUNDED.**
- We need your help. We are excited about having hundreds of students at Winter Retreat, and we believe that God is going to speak to them. We also know that they are excited about being here, and excited teenagers are LOUD teenagers. Please help us by keeping them under control without quashing their excitement. Thank you!

Winter Retreat Guidelines

Listen to the leader: All students are expected to cooperate and follow the direction of their group leaders, Winter Retreat staff, and hotel personnel.

Curfew is not optional: No one is to be outside their room or in anyone else's room after curfew without a leader present. If your group returns to the hotel after curfew, please proceed quietly to your rooms. Shouting, loud talking, slamming doors, etc. should be avoided.

House rules: You need to make sure that you follow and obey all the rules and policies at the hotel. This also applies to the late-night activity locations, area restaurants and malls.

No trespassing: You are not to be in anyone else's room without their permission. Make sure that you close and lock your room whenever you are not present.

The boy/girl thing: Guys are not allowed in girl's rooms, girls are not allowed in guy's rooms - PERIOD. The only exception to this is if a group leader wants to gather students for pizza, etc. in a room. There must be adequate leadership supervision. **No adult leader is to be alone in a room with a student at ANY time.**

Find your floor: Do not use the elevators just for fun. Use them to get to your floor and then exit the elevator. There are stairways, please use them.

No smoking, alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco: These things are not permitted at Winter Retreat. Students have the opportunity to turn those things in right away to their group leaders and work things out with them. If students are caught with these items, they will be dismissed from Winter Retreat and will need to be picked up immediately by a parent or guardian at their own expense, without refund of registration.

You break it, you buy it: Damage to the hotel and its property, Winter Retreat equipment, band equipment, or property of Central Region Open Bible is not allowed and is the responsibility of those who cause the damage. Individuals/groups will be held responsible for the cost of repair or replacement of damaged items.

Leaders - We ask that you not rent pay-per-view movies in your rooms following late night activities. Our curfew is late and if you rent a movie, you end up staying up until 3:00am or so watching it. This really inhibits students' ability to get anything out of the services the next day.

Group Registration Instructions

Regular Student Registration (Prior to December 6): \$139

This includes hotel, services, late night activities, and all materials.

Subsidized Leader (Prior to December 6): \$109

Only available to Open Bible Churches.

Late Registration: Add \$30 late registration fee for each registration received at Central Region after December 6. **After December 6th deadline, leader registrations will be unsubsidized and incur the late fee.**

Registration closes: December 13, 2023 at midnight

The subsidized leader rate is as follows:

1-19 students:	3 subsidized leader registrations
20-29 students:	4 subsidized leader registrations
30-39 students:	5 subsidized leader registrations
40-49 students:	6 subsidized leader registrations
50-59 students:	And, it just keeps going...

Bring a check with full payment to Winter Retreat. An invoice will be emailed to you by December 18.

An online registration form needs to be completed for ALL students & leaders.

Age requirement

- Student must be in middle school or high school

Student registration

- All registration occurs online at: <https://openbiblecentral.org/winter-retreat/>
- When a parent registers their students and submits the form, three emails are immediately sent out. Parents will receive a confirmation email, youth leaders will receive an email with full registration information, and Central Region office will receive an email.
- **NO PAYMENT WILL BE RECEIVED BY CENTRAL REGION when online form is submitted.**
- Youth leaders along with the Central Region office can keep track of their registered students, room assignments, and t-shirt sizes using the Google Doc form. A link will be emailed to youth leaders in early December.

Leader registration process

- Each leader will fill out an online form at: <https://openbiblecentral.org/winter-retreat/> to apply to come to Winter Retreat with their church.
- Each leader that registers must be willing to complete or verify that they have completed (within the last 2 years), a background check and MinistrySafe sexual abuse awareness training course.
- If Central Region does not have the training certificate on file and up to date (within the last 2 years), we will supply a link for the leader to take the training at no cost to them.
- If the church that the leader is from does not supply a current background check (within the last 2 years), Central Region will supply a link to the leader to complete a background check and the church will be billed.

Schedule: (subject to change)

Thursday, December 28

3:00pm Registration Begins
6:00pm Pre-Service Prayer
6:45pm Doors open for Service
7:00pm Service
10:30pm-12:30am Late-Night Activity (12am Curfew: Return to your rooms)

Friday, December 29

9:00am Doors open for Service
9:15am Service
10:45am Break
11:00am Breakout
11:30am Lunch/Free Time
6:00pm Pre-Service Prayer
6:45pm Doors open for Service
7:00pm Service
10:30pm-12:00pm Late-Night Activity (12am Curfew: Return to your rooms)

Saturday, December 30

9:00am Doors open for Service
9:15am Service
10:30am Winter Retreat PICTURE
11:00am Dismissal