



Information about Girls Retreat for Churches and Organizations

The mission of Girls Retreat is to provide girls age 13 and up with a safe place to step away from the normal stresses of life and discover more of who they are and who God is, while older girls encourage them to follow Jesus through small group mentoring, practical teaching, real life examples, genuine worship, individualized prayer, and team-building activities.



What Girls Retreat Is

Girls Retreat is a three to four day Christian retreat focused on older girls mentoring younger girls (age 13 and up). We mentor in a variety of ways: through teaching sessions, small group discussions, and individual conversations. We have one or two table leaders (small group leaders) with four to five girl attendees. The table leaders try to make the girls feel welcome, get to know them, and help them with application of what is taught in large group sessions. After every large group teaching, there is a breakout (small group or individual) where the goal is personal application. We want the girls to leave the retreat knowing how to apply the truth they've heard to their own lives. We also mentor by teaching and modeling daily time with God, reading the Bible, and participating in worship. One of our goals is to pray with every girl, giving her individual attention and the opportunity to talk and pray about whatever is on her mind.

We do a lot of teaching, but we also want girls to have fun. Playing and laughing together is key to building relationships and creating a safe place. We strategically integrate crazy games, like a shaving cream war, to help the girls step out of their comfort zone together, gain confidence, and bond with each other. The retreat culminates in a special themed dinner designed to help the girls feel valued and give them the chance to celebrate with their friends.

Through the years, we have seen lives changed all over the world because of the work that God does through this retreat. We give all credit, honor, and glory to Him **because it happens in ways we couldn't imagine**. We are grateful that He has allowed us to invest in girls' lives and watch Him change hearts.

History of Girls Retreat

In 2001, Christina Wine attended a girls retreat in North Carolina which inspired her to bring back the encouragement and hope she received there to the girls in her hometown in Virginia. Her vision was to continue this model of spiritual mentoring: older girls sharing with other girls what they are learning about God, life, scripture, and themselves, through the means of teaching, stories, worship, fun, games, and prayer; showing them that it's possible - and worth it - to love and follow Jesus in their teenage years and beyond. The retreat has welcomed young women from all over to take part in a dynamic time of worship and prayer, seeking the Lord for what He has for their lives and future.

The first retreat in Nottoway Virginia was held later that same year, and every year after it has drawn together more girls who are passionate for this kind of ministry. Girls and women from all over Virginia, other states, and around the world have attended this retreat and volunteered in it. Many have come to seek the Lord and find some quiet time away from the stresses of life, the pressures of school, or difficult situations.



Girls Retreat has been affiliated with New Covenant Fellowship Church in Nottoway, Virginia and developed under their direction. We've held a Girls Retreat there every summer since 2001. But since 2010, we've also been invited to bring retreats to other states and even other countries, traveling to Wisconsin, Guatemala, Swaziland and Thailand. Ultimately, we would love to see these retreats encourage girls all over the world to love and follow Jesus.

From a Parent:

“What is Girl’s Retreat from a mom’s perspective? A *support* group for girls that begins during some of the most vulnerable and difficult years a girl has to navigate. It is down time in a world that beckons everyone to be so technologically connected at a surface level, that connecting on a deeper level suffers as a priority. It is a place to relax, be silly, enjoy creativity, dance, get dressed up just to be with *girls*, discover the joys of silence, share, mentor and be mentored, learn hard truths, laugh, cry, dream, and grow ... all packed into 3 days. This is not your ordinary retreat. The relationships forged have created lasting friendships. The rewards so outweigh the investment. Caveats? A very tired girl, who might just start planning her next summer’s schedule around whatever dates are reserved for Girl’s Retreat.”

~ Andrea from Virginia

From a Pastor:

“There are few things more satisfying to a pastor’s heart than to hear that a downcast and burdened soul has been set free by the power of the living God. Thanks to the Christ-centered foundation of the retreat staff, this is the testimony of the Girl’s Retreat. With great anticipation, young ladies from near and far converge to participate in and witness a “great exchange.” As Roman’s 1 informs, we are prone to exchange the truth for a lie and suffer the consequences. By God’s grace, as young ladies are informed, equipped, challenged and sincerely cared for by retreat staff and each other, they reclaim lost ground and rebuild their lives according to God’s divine truths. Frowns are exchanged for smiles, anxiety is exchanged for peace, weakness is exchanged for strength, confusion is exchanged for clarity, darkness is exchanged for light, fear is exchanged for faith and trust, guilt is exchanged for grace and painful tears are exchanged for light hearted laughter (and light footed dancing, I am told!). By confronting the internal and cultural challenges and snares that young ladies face on a daily basis and arming the saints with gospel truths, the Girls Retreat has found its niche as a kingdom building ministry. The impact is both present and future, as efforts to turn tentative followers of Christ into passionate, capable leaders has met with success. From a pastor’s perspective, I am blessed and encouraged to watch God lavish His daughters in His redemptive love.”

-Pastor Paul



What Girls Retreat is Not

Sometimes it's helpful to explain what Girls Retreat is not. There are many kinds of retreats in the world and we want to be clear which kind this is, so that churches, parents, and volunteers can decide if it's what they're looking for.

This is not a denominational retreat.

This ministry developed under the authority of a church that teaches reformed doctrine. The leaders are disciplined in their own churches. They are from different denominations but they adhere to the core beliefs statement. We don't promote any side issues apart from Scripture. We do not push any denomination, or system of education, politics, dating, etc.

This is not a retreat taught by professionals.

This is a lay ministry. There are many retreats taught by professional, highly educated women, who do excellent work. We love attending those events. This event, however, focuses on older girls discipling and mentoring younger girls, teaching from what they've learned in Scripture and what they've experienced in their lives. The goal is to accomplish discipleship during a weekend retreat and encourage discipleship relationships in churches.

This is not a published curriculum.

The curriculum is developed every year by the core leadership team, who pray and discuss what issues are most pressing for girls at that time. Once topics are chosen, we pray and consider who should teach about each topic. Sometimes speakers with expertise in a certain area are invited to teach a session. To develop content, the speaker studies what Scripture says about this topic and considers their personal experiences with it. The goal is to create teaching that is practical for girls. In our teaching, we share what we've learned from our parents, churches, and education. We always share stories from our lives.

Sessions are either taught by members of the core leadership team or by others whose content has been reviewed by the core leadership team. If it happens that something is taught which is unclear or untrue, the core leadership team has the responsibility and freedom to clarify or correct it in the large group setting. While this method of developing each year's curriculum may have drawbacks as opposed to using or making a set curriculum; it is this process that allows it to be a real-life mentoring retreat.

This is not a retreat for moms and daughters.

There are adults, including one or two moms, involved in everything that happens. However, this retreat is not designed for mothers or for promoting that specific relationship. The focus is on older girls mentoring younger girls.



This is not an evangelism retreat.

Girls Retreat is primarily designed to disciple girls who are believers and have an existing relationship with God. That being said, every year, we have girls come who are not believers, both from church and unchurched homes. Every year we teach the gospel, because there are always unbelievers with us and because it is basic and essential to all the other teaching we do. Girls Retreat is certainly a place where unbelievers can come to learn about God and be loved in a safe environment. However, the bulk of the teaching is designed for girls who are believers.

This is not a purity retreat.

While we teach about sexuality and relationships from a biblical perspective, we believe that sexuality is not identity and we do not encourage girls to take their identity from any sexual experience, inexperience, or issues they have. We only encourage girls to find their identity in Christ. We address much more than sexual purity in this retreat. This retreat focuses primarily on learning about who God is and who we are in light of that. You may refer to the *Core Beliefs* document to learn more.



Statement of Faith

We share the statement of faith of New Covenant Fellowship
<http://newcovfellowship.com/statement-of-faith.php>

- We believe in the verbal and plenary (complete) inspiration of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit, which are inerrant and infallible and are the supreme authority for Christian thought and life.
- We believe in the eternal, sovereign triune God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three distinct persons, one deity.
- We believe that man (humanity) is created in the image of God, but fallen and depraved, therefore needing salvation that comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, God the Son, the world's only Savior; in His incarnation and virgin birth, sinless life, vicarious death, burial and bodily resurrection, ascension to the right hand of the Father, and personal, visible return to claim His own people.
- We believe in God, the Holy Spirit, who convicts the world of sin, regenerates, indwells, gifts and empowers the believer.
- We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the believer to life everlasting, and the unbeliever to eternal condemnation.
- We believe that the presence of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit in the believer will result in a life of personal holiness and a walk of obedience to the will of God.



Core Beliefs

We have additionally outlined the following specific beliefs that are core to what we teach at Girls Retreat:

- We believe that God can be trusted
- We believe we should be encouraging each other, teaching others what we've been taught from God's word, and publicly saying who God has been to us, just like His word tell us.
- We believe in living a life of purity; that is, our behavior and relationships should fit with Jesus and His purity, because we live in Him.
- We believe in dressing and acting in a way that is respectful to ourselves and respectful to other people, as well as God.
- We believe it is important to live in community with others, in families, in local churches, with other believers, and in relationships with unbelievers.
- We believe it is important to work against cliques and favoritism so we can love equally and freely like God loves us.
- We believe that the truth sets people free, so we believe in creating safe, appropriate places where people can speak the truth and bring secret things to the light for help and healing.
- We believe that prayer and the presence of God with us enable us to love and help each other.

