

*You owe it to your guests, your staff, and your constituents
to find and hire the best speakers and musicians possible.*

Pick the best.

Your job is to search out and discover the best available speakers and musicians. The best won't come to you.

1. Listen to your constituents. Who do they request, recommend and read?
2. Know the market. Check Christian radio websites for "best new artists" and "regional favorites."
3. Engage a talent buying agency. Find someone who knows the business better than you.
4. Attend music festivals and local concerts.
5. Attend youth ministry conferences, events and training. Attend men's and women's ministry conferences.
6. Keep a long list of options.

Your job is to carefully evaluate everyone you put on your platform.

Be clear about your own needs.

1. Audience. How old are they? What is their church background?
2. Goals. What do you want to accomplish? Are you looking for inspiring or challenging?
3. Culture. What is it like to speak/lead in your setting? Are you fun? Serious?
4. Budget. Include honorarium, booking fees, travel expense, gifts, entertainment...
5. History. What has worked in your context?

Be clear about who you are hiring.

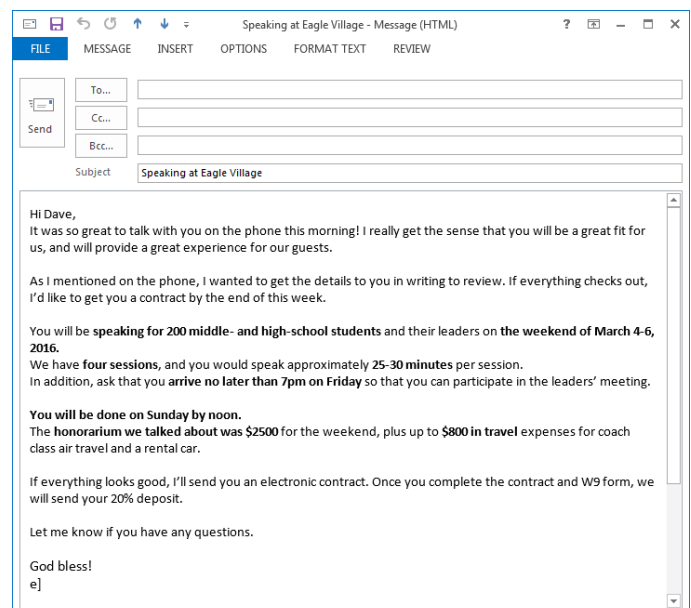
1. Style. Will they sign autographs? Are they humble? Divas? Self-deprecating?
2. Gifts. What are they best at?
3. Personality. How will they relate to leaders and guests? Will your staff like them?
4. Costs. Will they be satisfied with what you can afford?
5. Hustle. Will they work for it?

Always evaluate:

1. Video recorded live in front of similar sized audience of similar makeup. Are they good?
2. A personal phone call or meeting. Do I like them?
3. Interest in your programs.
4. References. Do others like working with them?
5. Statement of faith, blogs, and other writing.
6. Social media presence.

Your job is not done until you have it in writing.

1. Begin with a verbal invitation.
2. Follow up with a written offer.
3. Confirm with a signed contract and deposit.



You will provide the best experience for your guests, retain the best talent and get the best referrals when you treat your speakers and musicians like professionals.

Treat them like professionals.

Pay them appropriately.

1. Pay should be commensurate with the event.
How many will attend? What are attendees paying?
2. Pay should be commensurate with their experience.
How often are they speaking/playing professionally? What other opportunities do they have?
3. Pay should be commensurate with your expectations.
What expertise is required? Will they need to prepare unique material?

Sample formula for paying speakers:

$$\frac{(number\ in\ attendance + 500) \times number\ of\ sessions}{2} = base\ rate$$

For each of the following that is true, multiply the base rate by 1.1.

- They will need to travel to the venue by plane.
- They will need to prepare unique content for your event.
- Attendees will pay more than \$40/session for the event.

Communicate effectively.

1. Communicate early.
Give them opportunity to think about your theme.
Share samples, examples and other supporting content.
2. Communicate often.
Keep in touch. Be available.
Answer questions before they ask.
Confirm travel details and other logistics.
3. Communicate thoroughly.
Don't assume anything.

Serve them graciously.

1. Greet them like friends and family.
Be available to them at arrival. Show them to their housing.
Give them a tour of the venue.
Introduce them to the productions people.
2. Learn from them about life and ministry.
Show interest in what they do when they're not on your stage.
3. Care for them like guests.
Provide snacks, beverages, and internet access.
Provide private space, a green room, and comfortable housing.
Ensure they rest well and eat well.

Dear Speaker,

In one of my first years of ministry, I was challenged by my pastor to memorize all of Romans 6. It is a foundational chapter in God's Word that communicates, in no uncertain terms, the tremendous price that was paid for our freedom, and ultimately for our lives. Time and again, the words of these passages have brought me hope and healing, and helped me to encourage others who are struggling to truly live for Christ.

- ✦ Verse 2 calls us to live a different life.
- ✦ Verse 4 gives us hope for a new life.
- ✦ Verse 5 gives us a sense of certainty about eternal life in Christ.
- ✦ Verse 7 introduces the possibility of a life of freedom.
- ✦ Verse 10 describes the once-for-all price Jesus paid for our lives.
- ✦ Verse 13 presents a challenge to make our lives an offering to God, and instrument of righteousness.

And on and on it goes, full of life-altering truth. That's why I'm so excited about ALIVE: Winter Teen Retreats 2015. The experience we'll create together will provide space for pastors and leaders—just like mine—to be a part of that same kind of alteration in the lives of the students they love and serve.

And, while they're at SpringHill, that's their entire job: to invest in their students, helping them to apply the truth of God's living Word to their lives. I know you share the burden of that responsibility with me. It's why we've invited you to be a part of the team of speakers, musicians and staff that will help to present this season of retreats to almost 9000 students and leaders.

Our hope is that those leaders will go home transformed too, and with stronger and deeper relationships with their students, and looking for more opportunities to invite others to be made ALIVE in Christ and to truly LIVE for Him!

Winter Teen Retreats are designed to give students an opportunity to encounter the Gospel at whatever point they are along their spiritual journeys. They come from diverse social and economic backgrounds. Because we are passionate about presenting the Gospel in relevant ways for each of them, we strive to integrate the theme across session content and worship times, teachings, small groups, and in the Prayer Labyrinth. The time you spend developing messages that capture the essence of the theme will pay off in the life-transforming experience for students.



In addition to your messages, we ask that you provide a series of questions which youth leaders can use during small group times to facilitate deeper sharing and life application. Small groups will meet after three of the main sessions: on Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning. Please email these questions, along with any materials you would like to show on-screen during your messages, at least 10 days prior to your retreat to ehildebrand@springhillcamps.com.

Enclosed in this packet, you will find a number of resources that will help you as you prepare for your part:

- ✦ An outline with scriptures and ideas for applying the theme, ALIVE, in your messages;
- ✦ Scripts for the short videos that will precede each message;
- ✦ A tentative schedule for your upcoming weekend at SpringHill, as well as a full guest schedule;
- ✦ An introduction to SpringHill Camps, including our mission, vision and core values;
- ✦ Copies of our merchandising and sponsorship policies, and our Leader Information Packet.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email or call me directly at 231-836-1076. I look forward to how God will work in the lives of young people and commit to being in prayer with you as you prepare.

Sincerely,


Eric Woods
Retreats Director

*You've worked too hard on this event
to let your band or speaker under-deliver.*

Set them up for success.

Communicate.

1. You know what to expect, they don't.
2. Clear information ahead of time will help calm nerves.
3. Be available before and during the experience. Assign a speaker/band host.
4. Provide coaching and real-time feedback.

Six weeks or more before your event, provide an information packet with details about:

1. Theme and supporting content
2. What works at your camp and what is off limits at your camp
3. Event schedule and sample session flows
4. Other programmatic elements
5. How to help you promote the event
6. What information you will need from them prior to the event.

Four weeks before your event, make contact to confirm the following:

1. Dates and times of your event
2. Flight and travel information, including driving directions
3. Housing information, special dietary requests, etc.

One to two weeks before your event, request the following from speakers:

1. Small group questions
2. Outlines or notes sheets
3. On-screen graphics, slides or other media

One to two weeks before your event, request the following from bands:

1. Set lists and lyric sheets
2. Stage plot
3. Input list



Application: *being alive in Christ will transform your everyday living*

Students may believe in Jesus, but long to know what real difference it will make in their lives and in the lives of those they care about the most. The truth found in Romans 6 tells us that if we are united with Christ, we *can* live a new life, totally transformed by His work within us.

What God did. From the very beginning, God went all out—or *all in*—to demonstrate His love for His people, created in His own image. He created us. He pursued us. He sent His own Son to redeem us. He gave us new life. And He's still at work to do something amazing in and through each of us.

What God wants to do in you. God wants to do something in our lives today. The opportunity of today is to experience a new life, available only to us when we put our faith in Christ and identify with Him. It is through that relationship with Christ that God will bring us from death to life.

What God wants to do through you. God doesn't just want to save us from death. He wants to work through us to bring others into that same life-saving relationship that transformed each of us. That's why He calls us, not just to life, but to truly live for Him.



Sessions: *LIVE! gatherings including worship, teaching and fun*

Students will experience four LIVE sessions in our main auditorium. These sessions include hilarious fun, intentional video and skit content to reinforce the theme, powerful times of worship with our regional touring worship bands, and biblical teaching from a talented team of communicators.

Romans 6:8-16

⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

Friday PM: **ALL-IN:** God went all in, will you?

"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him." Romans 6:8

Goals for this session: Introduce the theme, start students thinking about what God wants to do in their lives, and invite them to go all-in this weekend.

At creation, we see that God was not afraid to get a little dirty, to get down on his knees in the mud, sculpt a human, and then breathe life into him. And then, again, in the person of Jesus, we see Him enter our world and ultimately die that we might live. He went all in. Will you?

Genesis 2:7, Romans 5:8, Romans 8:32, Philippians 2:6

Students will meet with their leaders in small groups following the Friday night session. Please provide several questions, scriptures, and thoughts to inspire discussion in these small groups.

Saturday AM: **ALTERED:** We are called to live a different kind of life.

"...do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness..." Romans 6:12-13

Goals for this session: Show students the reality sin, and call them to live life differently from the world, aligned with what God intended.

Upon arrival provide a printed information packet with the following:

1. Summary schedule for the event
 - a. Include rehearsal, productions meeting, and sound check times
 - b. Include all off-stage requirements
2. Updated session flows
3. Contact information for program staff, production needs, and accommodations.
4. A map of the property

Upon arrival, meet in person to review the following:

1. Set lists, big ideas, and teaching content
2. Talk about illustrations, appropriate language, and anything off-limits
3. Review how to do an invitation in your context
4. Talk about off-stage expectations

Prior to each session:

1. Review the session flow
2. Discuss transitions, cues and special needs
3. Pray together

Following each session:

1. Confirm rehearsal times
2. Review the next session flow and song selections
3. Check any media, scripture or slides

At the end of the event:

1. Pay them.
2. Thank them.
3. Share any relevant feedback.
4. Plan a time to connect about future events.

For more information, visit www.ericdwoods.com/hirethebest

Eric Woods

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