

A Night of Silence

“Leaders Guide”

Prep and Setup.

This night was designed to be a night of silent worship, but also a night where our youth could see that worship can be simple. I designed each of these stations to be easy for them to do at home, with their families, or at school. I'm going to followup with each station for 5 weeks after the event, reinforcing the underlying ideas of each station.

We used two rooms, about 20'x30', divided with simple transparent cloth hanging from the ceiling to allow some privacy. Each station had a mix of seating: couches, chairs, and pillows. Space wise, 5-6 people could have been comfortable at each station, but the less the better.

Person Reflection Thoughts.

The night was amazing. It was hard for me to silent and still, and to allow our youth to experience God on their own and in their own way. It was a different change of pace for me. I spent most of the night walking up and down a hallway, praying for each of our students by name.

At the last minute, I decided to have our leaders be in the hallways outside of the rooms, rather than in the rooms. I didn't want the youth the feel like they were being watched, or that they needed to perform. We were still able to see everything that was going on, but to allow the youth some space.

Next time I'll prepare some simple guides for our leaders, as they struggled with the silence as well.

Beginning the Silence

We met together in a small room, that we never use to help create some mental separation from “business as usual”. We briefly went over each station together, and had some time for questions. We then transitioned into our Station 4 - Worship space. I had Keynote running so we could begin and end our time of silence with these prayers:

Our Prayer to Begin Silence
God, Great Merciful Savior.

We are here. We are waiting.
We've made a space for you.
We're asking you to be with us now.

Speak to us.
We are listening.

Our Prayer to End Silence
God, Most Epic Comforter.

This time has been our gift to you.
We thank you for being with us.
Let your voice be loud,
let our lives be loud for you.

Station Specifics

Station 1.

This station was the largest, and had 3 smaller spaces within it to allow for more personal room.

Station 2.

My favorite stage. Our youth commented that this helped them realize that other people were struggling with the same things they were. They also mentioned that they didn't realize they had so many things to pray about. It's interesting how community is built through silence.

Station 3.

Most youth didn't do repetitive writing like I had intended. Rather, they spent a considerable amount of time creatively writing the verse once. They ended up being AWESOME!

Station 4.

I just snagged 3 songs from YouTube that had simple lyrics displayed. I used Gungor Dry Bones, Gungor Beautiful Things, and Elevation Worship Give Me Faith. I combined them into one video (15 minutes long), and had it within a Keynote presentation set to loop infinitely.

Station 5.

I was fearful of this station, but several mentioned this was their favorite station. I put the same cloth that we used as dividers on the floor, so they didn't have to have direction contact with our dank carpet.