

ASCENT: REGIONAL RETREATS

WORKING DOCUMENT FRAMEWORK

In Scripture, the Israelites were encouraged to meet together at the temple at different times of the year, up on the high grounds of Jerusalem. In their pilgrimages, they encouraged one another and remind themselves of God's goodness and faithfulness through the **songs of ascent** (Psalms 120-134).

In the last 24 years of winter retreats through Avalanche and Blizzard, we aimed towards four objectives:

1. We want to establish a space for guests and staff to encounter Jesus, perhaps in ways they're not used to. This is our primary reason for hosting our retreat.
2. Since all guests are coming in church groups, we want those group leaders, whether they be paid youth pastors, volunteers or parents, to see their role as the "pastor and priests" of their students. We want them to focus on those students for spiritual conversations, disciplinary actions and overall care.
3. We want to model and stretch youth ministry models. We get to experiment with innovative youth ministry elements. More importantly, we want to make as many components, ideas and concepts as possible transferring (not necessarily replicating) back to their home/church context.
4. We want to exemplify God's broader kingdom, beyond our own churches or even our own tribe known as CBOQ. We are wanting youth to see the value of being connected within the family of God beyond the walls of any one church or denomination.

With our new regional retreat framework called ASCENT, our aim is to continue striving towards these objectives through a weekend experience for churches within reasonable driving distance in partnership with area churches/associations.

We seek to work with our CBOQ churches and associations to host these regional experiences.

EXPECTATIONS

CBOQ Youth desires to work together with groups of local churches and associations to facilitate these weekend experiences. The timing of the event can be mutually agreed.

Below are some expectations CBOQ Youth can fulfill, and we are seeking from the region of churches/associations.

FROM CBOQ YOUTH	FROM REGION	SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides annual theme - manage registration and finances - promotional materials (e.g. graphics, registration package, print & digital materials, etc.) - some administrative tasks (e.g. printing) - selection of Regional leadership Team - vetting of retreat personnel - selection of contract roles (e.g. speaker, worship team, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recommends personnel (see roles) for retreat team - promotions to area churches - commitment for 2 retreat seasons (i.e. 2025/26, 2026/27) - leadership team commits to minimum 5 team meetings per year - all personnel commits to completing all CBOQ Youth personnel screening requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - liaison with retreat site - creation and implementation of program schedule

ROLES (sample job descriptions are available for each role)

Below are the roles the regional churches will recruit to form the retreat team.

- **General Manager:** oversees and ensures that all the various parts of the retreat are in place for the event. This person may be the Youth Ministries Associate or can be a shared role with regional personnel.
- **Team Pastor:** ensures the group and event is covered in prayer. This may include a team of prayer persons coordinated by one individual.
- **Administrative and Guest Relations:** oversees the administrative and operations of the retreat and is the primary contact for on-site guests. This person will work in tandem with the Slingshot Supervisor for additional support.
- **Facilities Liaison:** communicates with the venue as the primary point of contact.
- **Session Producer:** produces and directs the plenary sessions of the retreat. This person will work in tandem with the AV Coordinator.

- **AV Coordinator:** ensures all audio-visual requirements are operational. This person may oversee a team of AV personnel including the photographer and videographer.
- **Photographer:** captures pictures of participants and team challenge results. This can be a team of photographers.
- **Videographer:** captures video footage of participants and create a highlight video encapsulating the experience. This can be a team of videographers.
- **Slingshot Supervisor:** manages the youth/young adults under the slingshot program (cboqyouth.ca/slingshot)
- **Recreation Leader:** organizes and implements all recreational activities onsite. This person may also recruit a team to assist with implementing the recreation program.
- **Social Media:** shares any memorable moments via CBOQ Youth's social media accounts during the event.

INAUGURAL (retreat seasons 2025/26, 2026/27) TIMELINE

June 2024: framework doc is published

July-September 2024: CBOQ Youth meets with regions to discuss possibilities and opportunities

- CBOQ Youth will connect to known contacts, Church Life and Leadership Regional Associates for possible leadership team candidates
- Regions may also nominate candidates

November 2024: fall 2025-spring 2026 retreat schedule is finalized with confirmed regions and retreat team personnel; retreat teams begin planning

- Planning will include finalizing location and initial program framework/schedule

Spring 2025: theme, speaker, worship team per region finalized for 2025-26 season

- Recruitment begins for each retreat's personnel roles
- Promotional materials, registration packages launched at Assembly 2025
- Registration begins July 1, 2025

Fall 2025-Spring 2026: implementation of regional retreats for season 1 including debrief/evaluation

- Finalizing of retreat schedule and program elements
- Creation of lead-in, lead-out materials, all other preparatory materials

Spring 2026: theme, speaker, worship team per region finalized for 2026-27 season

Fall 2026-Spring 2027: implementation of regional retreats for season 1 including debrief/evaluation

Spring-Fall 2027: discussions about region's involvement in 2028/28,29/30 retreat season

CBOQ-WIDE RETREAT

Every third year (i.e. retreat season 2027/28), CBOQ Youth will host a CBOQ-wide retreat for jr. high students and high school students respectively. These will be similar to our previous Avalanche and Blizzard retreats.

- Dates/locations and other promotional materials will be finalized spring 2027.
- CBOQ Youth will host and manage these retreats with support from a volunteer to be recruited by CBOQ Youth.

THEMES

In previous years, CBOQ Youth has developed its annual theme based on 4 key concepts (<https://cboqyouth.ca/about-us>). With the revised regional retreat framework, the two regional retreats will focus on "I believe" and "I breathe"; the CBOQ-wide retreat will focus on "We're becoming". "I belong" will be an underlying concept for all of our retreats.

We welcome any questions, comments and suggestions; contact Alvin (alau@baptist.ca, 416-620-2946).