



## Ways to Involve Your Congregation

Camp offers a strong faith experience to your youth. It can become even stronger if your congregation integrates the camp experience into the life of the church. Below are some ideas for ways that you can help the campers to transition their camp experience into their everyday faith experience with your congregation.

### **Send Them with a Blessing**

Send the campers to camp with your blessing. Give them a sense that the congregation stands by them and is excited that they are going to camp by including a sending service in your Sunday worship. Some resources are provided below.

### **Have a Pre and Post Camp Session**

Before they leave for camp, have members of the congregation tell campers stories of how camp has impacted their faith practices. When they return, have campers tell the story of how camp changed how they think about faith practices. Have congregation members and youth compare what has changed, what they notice about their faith practices now, and how the way they interact with faith practices has changed.

### **Set up a Prayer and Mail Campaign**

Ask members of your congregation to write your campers letters and pray for them daily. Campers love mail, especially "snail mail". Imagine their reaction to receiving letters from members of your congregation while they are at camp from people who are praying for them! Send letters very early or bring them with you to distribute to your campers at camp.

### **Welcome Them Back and Let Them Share with the Congregation!**

Set up a time for the youth to tell your congregation about camp! Give them a few minutes to share at worship, have them share their experience with younger youth in Sunday school, or let them lead a whole camp-style service! Have campers tell what they know about faith practices after learning about it at camp.

### **Have a Family Faith Night Focused on Faith Practices**

Invite the families of campers, and any interested folks from your congregation or community, to a family faith night. You can begin with some camp games or singing, and then have the youth share what they learned on each day of camp. You can even have an open mic for anyone else who wants to share a story about faith practices from camp.

## Sending Service Resources

Feel free to use as much of this as you would like!

### Call to Worship

L: God calls us to practice our faith in a variety of ways.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We go to God for comfort and guidance.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We gather in community to seek new perspectives.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We pray, seeking connection with God.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We study the Word to grow our relationships with God and one another.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We share the Good News of what God is doing in our lives.

C: Thanks be to God...

L: We are called to go in peace and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God and We Will!

### Litany

L: Holy God, we pray this morning for all of the camps of Cross Trails Ministry – Camp Chrysalis, Ebert Ranch Camp, Day Camp, and Beach Camp. May they be ready.

C: You call them to go!

L: We pray for the staff who work to be examples of your welcoming, gracious, unconditional love. May they be ready.

C: You call them to go!

L: We pray for the youth who will grow closer to you with their questions and play. May they be ready.

C: You call them to go!

L: We pray for the adults who will have their faith journey strengthened. May they be ready.

C: You call them to go!

L: We pray for the faith-filled friendships that will be made and strengthened. May they be ready.

C: You call them to go!

L: We give you thanks to you God.

C: Amen.

### Songs

- Gather Us In
- Let Us Break Bread Together
- Go, Make Disciples
- Here I Am, Lord
- Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
- We Are Called
- Go!

## Scripture Readings

This summer at all Cross Trails Ministry programs, our Bible study is focusing on faith practices. We are learning how we go to God, gather together, pray, study the word, share what God is doing, and serve the Lord. These are some of the texts we will be using in our Bible study.

- Romans 8:38-39
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11-18
- Philippians 4:4-7
- Psalm 119, especially verses 105-112
- Luke 24:1-12
- Mark 16:15
- Philippians 2:1-4

## Blessing Your Campers

(Invite all who are planning to attend camp with Cross Trails Ministry this summer to come forward during worship.)

Today we are celebrating our partnership in ministry with Cross Trails Ministry. You have each heard God's call to attend camp this summer. At camp you will experience God's love in amazing new ways by living in God's creation, meeting new friends and worshipping daily. As the Holy Spirit prepares your hearts and minds for this camp experience we want to pray with and for you.

Awesome, Ever Present God, You are with us wherever we go and send us to do fun, important, and life-changing things with you.

Today, we are celebrating and asking for your blessing over our campers. They are about to embark on a journey filled with adventure, fun, and faith formation that will help them grow closer to you.

Bless them this week so that all of their questions and seeking might be explored with your guidance.

Bless them this week so that all of their excitement and energy might be met with your joy.

(Here, name each camper individually): Bless these campers that they might adventure with you this week. Help them feel you close as they learn about different ways to grow their faith, and remind them that we are here, back home, praying for their week ahead. Help them know our love and our hopes for them this week.

Bless our church, too, God.

Bless us as we wait for our campers to return home prayerfully and patiently.

Bless us so that we might be changed, just as they are, because of their week at camp and the stories they will share.

Do you, the members of \_\_\_\_\_ promise to pray for these people while they are away and to support them as they return?

C: We will!

Do you campers of \_\_\_\_\_ promise to be open to seeing and sharing God at camp?

Campers: We will!

Then let all of us, campers and congregation, get ready to learn and share, as we go in peace and serve the Lord in the coming week. Thanks be to God as we respond all together...

All: We will!

## Prayer

God who calls us to gather, be with our campers as they learn many ways to be in your presence. Let them be bold in their prayer and service. May they learn new things from your Word and bring them back to share with us. May they know you are always with them. Amen.

## Offering

Consider taking a special offering to give as a gift to camp or to have campers take with them for the summer offering.