

INSIDE  OUT



this
is  our
prayer

**Christian Resources
for Outdoor Ministry**

Contents

Welcome to InsideOut	4
Daily Overview for <i>This is Our Prayer</i>	8
Images for Each Day	9
More Support Online	10
Biblical and Theological Overview	11
Staff Devotions	25
Daily Guides for Younger Children	33
Daily Guides for Older Children	63
Daily Guides for Younger Youth	92
Daily Guides for Older Youth	121
Daily Guides for Intergenerational or Family Camps	148
Worship and Devotions	178
Introduction	178
Daily Worship for Children & Intergenerational	180
Daily Worship for Youth	192
Cabin Devotions for Children	203
Cabin Devotions for Youth	205
Extras	207
Arts and Crafts	207
Multi-Day Projects	209
Games	211
Group Building and Challenge Course Activities	213
Science and Nature	216
Table Talk	218
Story Resources	233
Peace Works! Journal	x
Tell Us What You Think	x
Writers and Contributors	x
InsideOut Themes and Sneak Peek at 2021's	x

Daily Overview for *This Is Our Prayer*

Daily Guide	Scripture	Theme	Prayer Practice	Campers Will
Day 1	Jesus calls disciples (Luke 6:12–16)	Longing to be Invited	Prayer Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be personally welcomed into the camp community know that everyone is called by God be invited to find their own sacred space, as Jesus did. learn prayer can be a time of preparation
Day 2	Esther and her people (Esther 4)	Longing Together	Keeping Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discover they are part of a community even when they feel isolated realize the power of community when everyone shares their gifts be encouraged to seek solidarity in community see the strength that emerges from a community at prayer
Day 3	Jonah speaks to God (Jonah 4)	Longing to be Heard	Call and Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledge that difficult emotions, such as anger, grief, and anxiety, are normal find the freedom to share their feelings with God wrestle with their expectations of God’s movement in the world learn that prayer connects us with God even in the midst of difficult emotions
Day 4	Solomon prays for wisdom (1 Kings 3:7–15)	Longing for Guidance	Labyrinth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify times in their lives they need guidance be invited to make God a partner in decision-making explore how conversations with God are shaped by reflection and wondering learn to listen for the ways God leads us through prayer
Day 5	Jesus takes time for prayer (Luke 5:12–16, Isaiah 40:1–5, 28–31)	Longing for Renewal	Guided Meditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflect on weariness and the importance of taking a break explore Sabbath as a time and space of renewal and experience camp as Sabbath discover prayerful ways to renew self and one’s relationship with God imagine ways to keep Sabbath after camp
Day 6	Sisters work for change (Numbers 27:1, 11)	Longing for Change	Cooperative Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflect on the impact of injustice in today’s world discover how speaking out against injustice can lead to change learn how prayer and action can change even long-standing injustice
Day 7	Paul’s words of joy (Philippians 1:3–11)	Longing to Celebrate	Movement/ Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> celebrate the experiences and relationships built this week be commissioned to share God’s love and joy with others know they are partners in ministry with others near and far learn the importance of giving thanks in all circumstances

Images for Each Day

These images represent the themes of each day of *This is Our Prayer*. They are simple to reproduce and they can be found in the Art folder.

Prayer is often understood in very specific ways. We want to invite campers to broaden their understanding and experience of prayer as we equip them to share their hearts with God and each other. Our prayers echo questions and longings that generations before have experienced. Through scripture, we see how those before us dealt with their big questions and powerful feelings and we follow their example as we proclaim, "This Is Our Prayer."



Day 1
Longing to be Invited
Prayer Partners
Luke
6:12-16



Day 4
Longing for Guidance
Labyrinth
1 Kings 3:7-15



Day 5
Longing for Renewal
Guided Meditation
Luke 5:12-16,
Isaiah 40:1-5, 28-31



Day 2
Longing Together
Keeping Hours
Esther 4



Day 6
Longing for Change
Cooperative Art
Numbers 27:1, 11



Day 3
Longing to be Heard
Call and Responses
Jonah 4



Day 7
Longing to Celebrate
Movement / Dance
Philippians 1:3-11

Biblical and Theological Overview

This Is Our Prayer, at its heart, is about longings of the human heart. The daily themes explore issues and concerns that all people wrestle with, regardless of their beliefs or background. As people of faith, we look to scripture and the traditions of those who came before us to see how we might face these same issues in our own lives. One consistent tool we see in both scripture and the tradition of the Church is prayer. People pray in different ways, yet that connection to God is at the heart of many happy endings. Likewise, in times of struggle and sadness, people have looked for guidance, comfort, hope, and healing. Often, those blessings have been realized through a form of Prayer.

For some, prayer is simply speaking their thoughts and feelings to God. For others, it is clearing their minds and settling their hearts to make space for God. Some pray through music, art, or the movement of their body in dance or exercise. Some pray out loud, while others' prayers are whispers of the soul. Sometimes the task we keep working at, even when it doesn't seem to make a difference, is a physical prayer of hope. Sometimes the relationships we build are prayers of love. It doesn't matter if we fold our hands and bow or raise them up and look to heaven, God is longing to connect with us. God is listening for the longings of our heart.



Day 5: Longing for Renewal

Introduction to Scripture: Luke 5:12–16 and Isaiah 40:1–5; 28–31

Today has two scripture readings to explore. Luke takes the lead, but the Isaiah text is a beautiful prophetic poem with its own background and powerful message about trusting God to renew things over time.

The story of Jesus' healing a leper is really a setup for his taking time away. The leper is longing for renewal of his body and his role in the community. Jesus does heal him, and we are told that Jesus healed a lot of people, but Jesus does not stick around to see what happens next. Jesus does not need to make sure the healing worked or that people accepted the man. Jesus simply did his part, then took time away to care for himself. This was a regular habit of Jesus, and can be seen throughout scripture. There are subtle examples, such as this mentioning in Luke 5, and bigger examples such as going into the wilderness to prepare for his ministry or praying in the garden before his arrest.

The concept of Sabbath runs throughout scripture. From the beginning, God shows the importance of taking time away from work for rest and renewal. Sabbath becomes a ritual that the Jewish community treasured and expressed in a variety of ways through their culture and ethical practices. It is helpful to name that Jesus was constantly practicing the concept of Sabbath, taking time for renewal but not being bound to the letter of the law on when this had to happen. He regularly clashed with the Pharisees about healing or "working" on the Sabbath. Jesus always focused on the spiritual foundation of traditions rather than on the explicit practice.

For some, Sabbath might take the form of prayer and meditation. For others, it could be a hike in the woods or playing an instrument. Sabbath can be a lunchtime tradition of listening to music or a favorite podcast. Sabbath is not a prescribed ritual with set behaviors, but a practice of self-care and renewal that also makes room for God to enter our lives.

As you work with campers, you will teach Sabbath by the way you conduct yourself. Do you take time away when you get cranky? Do you make time for prayer each day? Do you have healthy boundaries? Do you invite them to do the same? Sabbath is often taught through prayer traditions and practices because it is a big concept that is often best understood through tangible practices. Just don't get so caught up in the practices and traditions of your camp community that you forget the renewal that is at the heart of Sabbath. If there is a tradition at camp that has become more important than the needs of the community or that has become bigger than the lesson about God it was intended to teach, maybe this is the year to take a Sabbath from it. Sabbath invites us to evaluate and care for one another rather than fulfill expectations placed on us from the outside. Sabbath invites us to let God into the center again and bring peace to the chaos that swirls around.

Speaking of chaos swirling around, let's take a look at the text from Isaiah. Right before this beautiful poem, King Hezekiah makes a huge blunder. Welcoming envoys from Babylon, Hezekiah shows off his kingdom and its wealth. Maybe it was because Hezekiah had been very sick, and the king of Babylon had sent a letter of concern. Maybe it was because Hezekiah was insecure and wanted to show off. We quickly learn that whatever had happened in the past and was going on in the present, Hezekiah had little concern for the future. He receives a prophecy from Isaiah about future devastation of his kingdom and people, but Hezekiah takes it as good news, because it all will happen after his death. The poem that follows is a word of comfort in response to a prophecy of doom for the people and maybe even in response to the callousness of their leader.

Sometimes our chaos is a convergence of political events or a natural disaster. Sometimes our chaos is a result of life's responsibilities. Sometimes our chaos is self-inflicted. Regardless, God offers refuge—comfort and a promise of renewal. This promise is echoed in the resurrection of Jesus and gift of the Holy Spirit.

This is an important day for campers. Many have built up enough trust to really engage in the community. Some may have even shared or at least personally reflected on some big ideas or real struggles. Whether they are pondering existential realities or facing carefully guarded emotions, this is an important day at camp, and this then is a good match. Taking time to process and renew the mind, taking time to be with people who care, taking time to feed our souls; all of these things are part of Sabbath. Be intentional about explaining Sabbath. Don't let it just be a day of the week that people used to take off. Don't let it be a solemn prayer practice that campers want to avoid. Let Sabbath be what renews their hearts and lifts them up like the wings of eagles.

Staff Devotions

Day 5: Longing for Renewal

Luke 5:15–16

Camp can be chaotic! It sounds like a retreat or some utopia where everything works out just right, but in reality, camp is a lot of work. Finding time to rest, to relax, or to just be alone long enough for a shower can seem like a distant dream. When you start looking forward to going to the bathroom just to get a few minutes alone, you know it's been a long week of camp.

Luke's Gospel suggests that Jesus knew the feeling. People were constantly reaching for him, calling out to him, and expecting him to make everything better. Jesus spend a lot of time with a small group of diverse people while also caring about and ministering to countless others. They ate together and went on hikes, and he often wondered if they were listening to anything he said. Does that sound like your experience as a camp counselor? Jesu's life must have been exhausting, yet we rarely see Jesus act or speak resentfully. We never hear of him making up excuses because he was double-scheduled. As far as we know, there is no mention of his acting out because he was "hangry."

Jesus had a system in place to protect his physical and spiritual health. He understood Sabbath, and he regularly withdrew for times of prayer and solitude. Those times gave him what he needed to press on through his work. Those times gave him the balance needed to care for others without losing himself.

We need to practice Sabbath. Taking even a moment or two to be alone in prayer helps us meet the demands of campers and other staff. So get creative! Look for ways to sneak in a few minutes each day of rest, reflection, and prayer. Don't think you are so important that you do not need a break, especially if you are offered one. Don't think you don't need one just because you have not hit a wall yet. Help campers see the importance of Sabbath by practicing it.

Questions for Reflection:

- What gives you energy and makes you feel refreshed?
- What keeps you from taking time for yourself?
- What advice do you give to others who feel stressed out or overwhelmed?
- What is your self-care plan while working at camp?

Prayer:

God, slow us down and help us identify from where our strength comes. Renew our spirits and restore our strength. Amen.



Day 5: Longing for Renewal

Daily Quick Reference Guide

Scripture Passage: Luke 5:12–16 and Isaiah 40:1–5; 28–31

Scripture Focus: Luke 5:16

But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.

Theological Summary: These readings are all about renewal. All renewal comes from God, and each one of us renews in our own way. But we all must take time to rest, to refocus, to restore our relationship with God and with ourselves. There is hope even when we feel worn out, physically or mentally, because our God is one that provides us that renewal. Jesus must rest, and so must we.

Today, campers will...

- Reflect on weariness and the importance of taking a break.
- Explore Sabbath as a time and space of renewal and experience camp as Sabbath.
- Discover prayerful ways to renew oneself and one’s relationship with God.
- Imagine ways to keep Sabbath after camp.

DAILY ACTIVITIES		
TITLE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
If Then	LEARN CREATE	Charades on activity and recovery
Flying and Gliding	LEARN PLAY	Reflecting on energy and rest
Rest Relay	PLAY	Game to practice resting
Power Up	LEARN	Learn about Sabbath
Bird’s Nest	PRAY CREATE	Create a prayer reminder
Serving Sabbath	SERVE LEARN	Help others have Sabbath
Pyramid of Busyness	PLAY	Throwing game about Sabbath
Restless	PRAY	Guided Meditation

Prayer Practice: Guided Meditation

Leader Notes: Campers may see camp as a place of renewal, or not. Remember that renewal looks different to different people. Guided meditation for some campers will be awesome, and some will not find any rest in it at all. Allow them that space, as long as campers aren’t disruptive or disrespectful.

Prayer: Dear God, we love you. Thank you for helping us to rest in you, to look to you when we feel worn out and ready to quit. Help us to remember to take time to rest.

Daily Activities

If Then

LEARN CREATE

Why: Campers will explore the scripture and think about energy and rest.

Supplies: Notecards

How: Before campers arrive, write activities that are common to your campers on note cards. These should include fun things like playing with friends or going to a party, and difficult tasks like doing chores or being sick. Read Luke 5:12–16 together and ask the campers to tell you the story they just heard. Make sure they notice that Jesus responded to his work by resting, and that the man who had been sick and away from family was given tasks to renew himself as well. Let campers take turns drawing a card and trying to act out the activity written on it. Once the group has guessed the activity, ask them to discuss how much energy it takes to recover from each.

BTW: Consider going through your cards again, this time reading the activity and letting campers take turns acting out what they would need to do in order to recover from the activity.

Flying and Gliding

LEARN PLAY

Why: Campers will explore the scripture passage through play.

Supplies: Large sheet of paper, pen or marker

How: Read Isaiah 40:31 and remind the campers that this has a similar message to our story from Luke about Jesus going away to rest. Ask the campers to think about how birds flap their wings to fly but keep them still to glide. On a large sheet of paper, make two columns labeled “Fly” and “Glide.” Invite the campers to name things that require their energy (playing sports, going to school, performing, meeting new people, etc.) and list them in the “Fly” column. Now fill in the “Glide” column with activities that bring rest or renewal (praying, reading, taking a walk, petting a dog, listening to music, etc.) and compare the lists. Then have the campers spread out. When

you call out an activity, they can decide if (for them) this is a flying activity or a gliding activity. If it is a flying activity, they should quickly flap their arms. If it is a gliding activity, they should hold their arms out straight and lean forward.

BTW: This might be a fun way to travel between parts of camp. Campers could decide if their next activity is a flying or a gliding one. For example, they might glide to worship and fly to the pool.

Rest Relay

PLAY

Why: Campers will play a game about allowing themselves to lay down their burdens.

Supplies: Four or five unbreakable items from around camp (books, sleeping bags, boots, hiking sticks, balls, cones, towels, rocks, etc.) per person

How: Divide campers into a minimum of two teams and have campers line up in rows. At the other end of the course stack the items they are to carry in one large pile — all teams will pick from the same pile. Campers should run, one at a time, to the other end, grab an item, and bring it back. The next camper in line must take the item, run to the other end, grab an additional item, and then run back carrying both items. The next camper in line repeats the process. About halfway through call out “Sabbath.” The campers currently running get to run back to the pile and drop what they are carrying, and then tag the next camper in line, who starts again by running to grab one item. Repeat until every camper has had a chance to have a Sabbath. Talk with campers about how it felt to just drop everything and run unburdened, and how that relates to Sabbath.

BTW: Campers could also do this as individuals by carrying books or other easily stackable items while trying to navigate a maze of cones or other obstacles, then enjoying the rest when “Sabbath” is called.

Power Up

LEARN

Why: Campers will explore what Sabbath means and why it might be important.

Supplies: Large piece of paper, marker

How: On a large piece of paper write the word “Sabbath” so all can see it and ask the campers what they think it means. Explain that Sabbath is

a special time of rest or renewal that is a change from our day-to-day activities. Remind campers that rest doesn't always mean being still but can also mean doing something differently to give our bodies and minds a chance to recharge or reconnect to God. Ask campers to brainstorm things they do that give them energy or make them feel connected to God, and list them on the paper. Some may have conflicting responses, and that is ok. Now invite campers to imagine they are run by a rechargeable battery. List activities they do regularly and some from the list of Sabbath activities. Explain to the campers that they will be living power bars, rising up when something "fills them up" and squatting down when something "drains their energy." Spend some time talking about how they take time at home for filling their energy up and reconnecting with God.

BTW: As a group, you can come up with a daily Sabbath activity they can do at camp (five minutes of listening, yoga poses, listening to music, etc.) and practice it for the remaining days.

Bird's Nest

PRAY CREATE

Why: Campers will create a prayer resource.

Supplies: Paper cups, craft sticks, markers, collected natural items for decorating, glue

How: Give each camper a paper cup and five craft sticks and explain that birds create nests over time by finding bits of paper, string, twigs, feathers, etc., to create a place that provides a safe place for rest. Read Isaiah 40:31 and remind the campers that even the eagles in the Isaiah passage rested. Part of keeping a Sabbath is praying and waiting for God to renew us. Invite the campers to make a prayer nest to help them remember to pray and to rest in God's goodness. Campers should decorate the outside of their cup by gluing on natural items found on the ground or other items as available. On the craft sticks, invite campers to write something they are thankful for, something they need help with, something they are worried about, something they are excited about, and something they hope for someone else. The sticks go in the cup. After everyone is finished, allow campers to find a space within sight, and encourage them to use the prayer sticks, looking at each one at a time and saying a private prayer to God about that item. You may want to provide

a bag or other way to keep these prayer nests safe and help them get home after camp.

BTW: Campers could use the prayer nests in the mornings or evenings at camp to have a mini Sabbath each day. If you send them home with campers, they could continue to add sticks there.

Serving Sabbath

SERVE LEARN

Why: Campers will learn how they can serve others by creating Sabbath opportunities.

Supplies: Large pieces of paper for writing, markers, index cards (one per camper)

How: Campers should list, as a group, people in their lives. Then have campers think about how they can help those people have a chance for Sabbath—for rest—from everyday tasks. They might suggest things like taking on a chore, doing their own chores without asking, asking to read the Bible together, or other ideas. Invite the campers to think about one person in particular and what they might do so that person can have time for Sabbath time. They should write what they want to do and who for on a card. Encourage them to put their cards someplace safe to take home, and see if they can do their idea once a week, or once a month, after camp.

BTW: You could also have campers fill out envelopes with their address and mail them a card each week, or each month, after camp. Their task is to complete the Sabbath-giving task before a new one arrives in the mail.

Pyramid of Busyness

PLAY

Why: Through play, campers will explore the ways Sabbath helps us to be ready for everyday tasks.

Supplies: Paper cups, markers, beanbag or ball

How: Give each camper a cup and ask them to write on it something they do most days. If they have time, let them decorate the cup with pictures of the activity or with faces about how the activity makes them feel. After campers have written on their cup, divide into two teams and ask them to build simple pyramids out of their cups. You may want to add some extra cups with common tasks they did not write. Once the pyramids are set up, campers take turns trying to knock the "pyramid

of busyness” down with a ball. Before they throw the ball, they should say something they can do to create a Sabbath (pray, take a walk, write in a journal, draw a picture, etc.) and then throw the ball. See which line can go the fastest with setting up and knocking down the pyramid. You can also have them do a timed challenge, seeing how many times they can knock it down and set it back up.

BTW: This could also be done with wooden blocks, with campers building a “tower of business” that is a little more creative than a simple pyramid.

Restless

PRAY

Why: Campers will experience guided meditation as a form of prayer.

Supplies: Restless handout

How: Have campers find a place to lie down or sit comfortably. Explain that you are going to tell them a story that might help them to find a new way to talk to God. Invite them to close their eyes and just listen. Read the meditation handout or create one of your own. Be sure to pause and

allow them to find space in their story. When finished, allow time for the campers to come back into the fullness of the day.

BTW: This could also be done at the end of the day, when campers may need help with relaxing from the day.



Story Resources

***For the Beauty of the Earth*, by Folliot S. Pierpont (Sparkhouse Family, 2017).** A lovely book with the words of the hymn that invites us to stop and look around and give thanks for the simple beauty God has surrounded us with. A chance to stop, to have a mini Sabbath time, just in a book.

***The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Illuminated Films, 2017)** An animated version of the Eric Carle book. The Caterpillar must do lots of things—mostly eat—but at the end, he needs to rest so that he can change into what he was meant to be. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75NQK-Sm1YY>

“Restless” Guided Meditation

Close your eyes. I’m going to help you see what David describes in a Psalm, which talks about how God loves us, that God sent us the good shepherd Jesus to be with us, and that God wants us to rest and have Sabbath times. I want you to picture a beautiful green field. Are there hills? Is it flat? Think about the green grass; maybe there are white flowers. Pretend that you are a sheep in that field. There are some other sheep around you, who love you and are just being with you. Along comes a person—your shepherd. The shepherd is kind, and smiles, and is there to protect you and keep you safe. Look over there; can you raise your hand and point? There’s a river. It’s a peaceful river. Listen; can you hear the water going over the rocks? There’s a little pool where the shepherd brings you so you can drink. The water is cool and it makes you happy. The Shepherd leads you over to where there is good food to eat. You look around, but the shepherd is keeping anything dangerous away. Even when you are climbing up some steep big rocks, the shepherd is there helping you. You run to the end of the meadow, running so free and so happy. You look back, and you can still see the shepherd, and the shepherd can still see you. You know that there is nowhere that you can go that the shepherd won’t be there. When you feel sleepy, you look around. The shepherd has a safe place for you to sleep. What does it look like? Is it big or small? by the river or close to the hills? Pretend to lie down there and relax. Wave to the shepherd, knowing that the shepherd will always watch you. The shepherd is Jesus, and our good shepherd is always with us. Give yourself a gentle hug, knowing that the good shepherd, Jesus, is always with you.



Day 5: Longing for Renewal

Daily Quick Reference Guide

Scripture Passage: Luke 5:12–16, Isaiah 40:1–5; 28–31

Scripture Focus: Luke 5:16, Isaiah 40:4

But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.

“Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.”

Theological Summary: When things get tough, everyone benefits from a break.

Today, campers will...

- Reflect on weariness and the importance of taking a break.
- Explore Sabbath as a time and space of renewal and experience camp as Sabbath.
- Discover prayerful ways to renew oneself and one’s relationship with God.
- Imagine ways to keep Sabbath after camp.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

TITLE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Desert Island	LEARN PRAY	What would you take to your desert island?
Un-Wreck It!	CREATE	Making mosaics
Dodge and Live	PLAY	A fun twist on dodgeball
MacGyver It!	CREATE LEARN	Make something useless into something useful
Eye of the Storm	LEARN PLAY	Experience chaos and calm in one game
Like Jesus	PRAY	A time of restful silence
Buy My Donkey	PLAY SERVE	Bring renewal through laughter
Take a Hike	LEARN	A nature hike to experience weariness and rest

Prayer Practice: Guided Meditation

Leader Notes: It’s important to talk about literary devices in the Bible, particularly with the Isaiah passage. While God could literally smooth the physical landscape, campers need to know this is about personal paths.

Prayer: God, we thank you for the retreat of coming to camp, and we ask you for help finding ways to take restful breaks in our daily lives.

Daily Activity

Desert Island

LEARN PRAY

Why: This activity gives campers space to really think about what rest means to them, as well as giving them concrete ideas for how to practice Sabbath in their lives once they've left camp.

Supplies: Paper, pens or pencils

How: Give each camper a piece of paper and a pencil and ask them to make a list of five things they would take with them if they were dropped off on a week-long vacation on a deserted island. There is no electricity or data towers, so computers and phones won't work. Encourage them to think of things that would help them relax, rejuvenate, and come out reeling refreshed or better connected to God. Talk about their choices as a group, lifting up similarities and differences in their answers. Encourage each camper to think about what they need most to feel renewed. Finishing by giving them time to write a prayer, asking God to help them remember what they really need to feel rested and renewed.

BTW: After campers have made their choices and discussed them with one another, ask them to spend some time thinking about how those choices can be worked into their everyday lives to create moments of Sabbath even when they don't have a lot of time.

Un-Wreck It!

CREATE

Why: Explore how God renews and refreshes us, even when we feel broken or worn out.

Supplies: Old ceramic pots, plates, or scraps of natural items that have fallen to the ground; cardboard squares; craft glue

How: Either have broken pieces ready for campers or let them break up items themselves. Invite the campers to create their own design or image by combining pieces into a mosaic. Use the glue and solid surface to attach all the pieces and make a beautiful piece of art. Spend some time looking at one another's work and discussing how God can make broken things into something beautiful.

BTW: You could also do this with tissue paper and cardstock if you can't find other mosaic pieces or if your group needs to avoid sharp edges.

Dodge and Live

PLAY

Why: Bring the video game concept of renewing lives to the outdoors with a fun game about renewal.

Supplies: Balls, red construction paper hearts

How: You are going to have the campers play dodgeball with extra lives available by grabbing the red hearts. Before playing, set the boundaries of the game and place red construction paper hearts randomly inside the game space. Play dodgeball as normal, except that players can be hit with a ball three times before they are "out." Once a player is "out," they must retreat the back line for ten seconds. After this, they can reenter play by running onto the field and finding three "lives" (red hearts). The "lives" need to stay in the field, so players should pick them up, count to ten, and then put them back down. Once they have done this with three hearts, they are back at full health and can play until they are hit another three times. If they are hit with a ball before they pick up the three hearts, they must go back to the back line and start again.

BTW: A simpler version of the game could include a safe zone inside the dodgeball field, where players can go if they need a rest. They can't be hit inside the zone, and they can't throw from the zone either.

MacGyver It!

CREATE LEARN

Why: Take the idea of renewal and rejuvenation literally with this project.

Supplies: Discarded items from around the camp, such as tin cans, plastic bottles, boxes, or old craft supplies, anything that might have been thrown away but is still in good enough shape to use

How: Provide used items from camp.. Ask campers to take as many items as they need and create something useful or artistic out of them. Discuss the idea of making things new again, and how this connects to today's teaching about rest and renewal.

BTW: Campers could collect their own items from around camp. Take a walk through areas of camp and pick up any rubbish or discarded items together, talking about the importance of renewing the camp as well as the items.

Eye of the Storm

LEARN PLAY

Why: Use a fun game to explore the difference between being in the storm and finding the calm in the center.

Supplies: none

How: This game will be played with two more or more circles of youth walking in different directions, representing a storm, and others trying to get into the center. You can play with a group of ten to twelve campers with one or two trying to get through two circles of five campers, or a larger group of campers with two or more circles of campers trying to keep out a team of five or six. After they've played, debrief the activity, asking what it felt like to be creating chaos and what it felt like trying to break through. Expand the conversation to things that create chaos in their lives, what chaos is self-inflicted, and how they find peace in the middle of rough times.

BTW: This could be turned into a total camp activity with campers breaking off into groups to debrief after. It could also be done in smaller numbers as a pool activity.

Like Jesus

PRAY

Why: Introduce campers to the power of silence as a calming and prayerful experience.

Supplies: none

How: This activity is literal. Jesus went to a lonely, silent place and prayed. Have campers spread out in an area of camp and time them taking five minutes of silence. Close in prayer, either personal or as a group.

BTW: Most campers have a phone or watch at home that has a timer. Encourage them to start taking silent breaks using a timer. They can start small at one to two minutes and work up to longer intervals.

Would You Like to Buy My Donkey?

PLAY SERVE

Why: Let campers experience laughter as a source of renewal.

Supplies: Enough chairs for all but two campers

How: Arrange your chairs in a circle and ask for two volunteers (remind them this is a service to their friends). Your two volunteers will be in the middle of the circle, with the rest of the campers seated in the chairs. The two campers in the middle are the salesperson and the donkey. The salesperson chooses a camper in the circle, approaches them, and asks, "Would you like to buy my donkey?" The point of the game for those in the circle is to keep from laughing. If the person can successfully say "No, I don't want to buy your donkey," then the salesperson follows up with, "But my donkey can..." and inserts whatever silly trick they can think of, which the camper acting as the donkey must then try to do for the group. If the salesperson is still unsuccessful, the duo moves on to another camper. If they succeed, the person who laughs becomes the donkey, and the donkey becomes the seller, while the original seller sits down. Continue until every camper has had a chance to make their friends laugh.

BTW: Some campers might not be natural comics or actors. You can change the rules so that it is smiling, not laughter, that makes the salesperson successful, or give staff members the chance to play the donkey.

Take a Hike

LEARN

Why: Explore your natural surroundings while learning a real lesson about weariness and rest.

Supplies: Blankets or other ground coverings for when you take breaks

How: Take a long, winding, nature hike through camp. Make some parts difficult and some parts easy, and take breaks after the difficult parts to sit down and rest. As you walk, talk about weariness—what it means and how it can come from physical activity like hiking or from emotional/mental work. Encourage campers to take note of the difference between the easy parts and difficult parts, and to really savor the rest breaks.

BTW: Take a picnic with you, and really truly rest at the end of the hike by choosing a breathtaking spot at camp for a long, lingering picnic lunch.



Story Resources

“Guided Meditations,” Mindfulness for Teens.

<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/guided-meditations>

. With today’s prayer practice being guided meditation, consider using one of these meditations created to help teens with mindfulness, which will allow them to rest and relax.

“How Laughing Affects Our Health,” by

Health Chronicle. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DB_cSy0IIQg

Before you play Would You Like to Buy My Donkey? use this video to show campers just how important laughter is and why we consider it a service to make others laugh.

Desert Island Discs, BBC Radio 4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qnmr/episodes/a-z/a>

Since one of the activities (Desert Island) is modeled after this program, choose a celebrity campers know and like who is represented on the show and listen to that episode together before starting. It will be fun for the campers and give them an idea of how much thought should go into their lists.

Mindful Games Activity Cards: 55 Ways to

Share Mindfulness with Kids and Teens, by Susan Kaiser Greenland with Annaka Harris (Shambhala, 2017).

This deck of cards offers 55 activities that you can use for campers to help them have fun and rest their minds and/or bodies at the same time.



Day 5: Longing for Renewal

Daily Quick Reference Guide

Scripture Passage: Luke 5:12–16, Isaiah 40:1–5; 28–31

Scripture Focus: Luke 5:15–16

But now more than ever the word about Jesus spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.

Theological Summary: Renewal. Refreshment. Recharging. We routinely run ourselves ragged trying to maintain our overbooked schedules. Even if we are doing good things, we have to find ways to create balance between rest and activity. We are never doing anything too important to ignore our physical and spiritual need for rest and renewal.

Today, campers will...

- Reflect on weariness and the importance of taking a break.
- Explore Sabbath as a time and space of renewal and experience camp as Sabbath.
- Discover prayerful ways to renew oneself and one’s relationship with God.
- Imagine ways to keep Sabbath after camp.

DAILY ACTIVITIES		
TITLE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
The Quiet Game	PRAY	Get quiet to be present and pray
Crazy Balloon Race	PLAY	Balloon rocket race
Bubble Prayers	PRAY	Bubble-blowing prayer activity
Run and Get Weary	PLAY LEARN	Relay and rest
Spell Sabbath	LEARN	Learning about Sabbath
Squeeze Stress Ball	SERVE CREATE	Balloon stress ball
Soaking Wet Relay	PLAY	Water relay

Prayer Practice: Guided Meditation

Leader Notes: Campers are coming from varied backgrounds, and many may have overscheduled lives. Younger campers have very little control over their schedule and may feel conflicted when discussions about the need for taking a break take place. Be sure campers can experience these conversations free from judgement.

Prayer: Thank you for the gift of rest and renewal. Forgive us for thinking we can ignore our need for rest. Help us find opportunities to create rhythms of rest and play in our everyday lives.

Daily Activities

The Quiet Game

PRAY

Why: Campers will connect physical and mental rest in a prayer practice.

Supplies: none

How: Sitting or lying in the grass, invite campers to spread out where they will not be touching each other. Once everyone is comfortable, ask campers to close their eyes and simply listen. Starting with their feet, invite them to flex and relax muscles, then give God thanks for how those muscles help them function. For example, "Thank you God that my feet carry me as I run and play."

BTW: Campers could use this as a way to relax and settle themselves for sleep at night.

Crazy Balloon Race

PLAY

Why: Campers will learn that they have to be filled up to do the activities they want to do.

Supplies: Balloons, straws, string, tape

How: Break the group into teams of three to four members. Each team will run their string (approx. 10 feet) through their straw and tape a balloon to the side of the straw. Two team members will each hold an end of the string. The third member will blow up the balloon and hold the end tight, make sure the tape holds it to the straw, and take the balloon to one end of the string. When the leader says, "Go," teams release their balloon and allow the straw to race along the string. After a few rounds, gather campers to discuss what made the straw move and what was required to restart the activity each round. Ask campers to name things that help them keep going and give them energy. See what renewing and energizing activities are shared between different generations.

BTW: If you have time, you could have a conversation about naps verses activities that give us more energy. Adult and younger campers may have very different perspectives on naps.

Bubble Prayers

PRAY

Why: Campers will practice breath prayers in a fun way.

Supplies: Bubble mix, blowers

How: Give a bottle of bubbles to pairs of campers. Explain that a prayer does not require closing our eyes and can even be as short as a breath. Invite partners to come up with a simple prayer of just a few words they can think while breathing in or out. Partners take turns blowing bubbles. As one blows, the other calls out the prayer. The one blowing can practice thinking the prayer. Repeat several times, alternating between partners. If they would like to try a breath prayer without the bubbles, they could try one prayer breathing in and one breathing out, such as, "Fill me with your love" (breathing in) and "Help me share your love" (breathing out). Ask campers how these prayers are different from what they are used to. Ask the campers to imagine how they could use the same type of prayer without bubbles and all the places they could use such a prayer.

BTW: Campers could also do this with bubble gum if it is allowed on site, or you can blow a lot of soap bubbles and continue repeating a breath prayer until all the bubbles pop.

Run and Get Weary

PLAY LEARN

Why: Campers will reflect on rest after becoming weary.

Supplies: Four buckets, two plastic cups

How: Campers will form two teams, each lining up behind a bucket of water for a relay race. Place an empty bucket 50 ahead of each team. Runners will use a cup to transfer water from the full bucket to the empty one. The first team to fill the empty bucket wins. Once the relay is over, ask campers to pay attention to their breathing and how their bodies feel. Spend a few minutes talking about how good it can feel to rest and what things help our body recover. Shift the conversation to recovering from stress or from being really busy.

BTW: This could be a camp-wide activity. After other times of recreation ask campers to reflect on the need for rest.

Spell Sabbath

LEARN

Why: Campers will brainstorm their own strategies for keeping Sabbath.

Supplies: Bible, paper, pens/pencils

How: Read Isaiah 40:28–31. Ask campers to reflect on what God does for us based on this passage. Now read Luke 5:12–16 and ask campers to reflect on how Jesus handled the stress and chaos of his work. Explain that Jesus knew what to do because he understood Sabbath, taking time for rest and renewal. Give each camper a sheet of paper and have them write the letters S A B B A T H in a column down the side of the page. Invite campers to add a word for each letter to remind them how to practice Sabbath. It can be the first letter of a word, or even on in the middle. For example: B could be “Breath prayer” or “early Bedtime.”

BTW: Campers can do this activity as a group instead of individually if the group is mostly younger campers. Brainstorming options together may be helpful.

Squeeze Stress Ball

SERVE CREATE

Why: Campers will make something to give to others to help them relax.

Supplies: Balloons, funnel, flour, spoon, water, markers

How: Set up stations with the supplies. Let each camper choose a balloon. Using a funnel and spoon, they will fill the balloon with flour. Add water one tablespoon at a time, gently kneading the balloon while holding it closed at the end. Continue adding water until the balloon is moldable and squishy, but not sloshy. Tie the end and decorate the balloon with markers. Once the squeeze stress balls are finished, ask the campers to think of someone they think will benefit from having it. Ask them to take a few minutes to squeeze so they can get the benefit of a little stress relief. Encourage them to share the stress reliever they have made with someone who could really use it.

BTW: Campers can make one to keep if time allows. You could also let campers brainstorm and design a prayer station using stress balls to use in worship later.

Soaking Wet Relay

PLAY

Why: Campers will have fun working together and will feel refreshed if they get wet.

Supplies: Cups, water

How: Have campers line up in three lines. Give each camper a cup. The person at the front of the line has a cup full of water to the very top. When the leader yells “Go,” the first person will hold the cup over their head and pour it backwards while the person behind them tries to catch the water in their cup. This is repeated until the water reaches the end of the line. At the end, ask the following questions: How was it to pour water where you could not see it? What was it like to try and catch it? How many of you dumped water on your own head? How many of you got water dumped on you?

BTW: For an extra challenge, once the water goes all the way to the back, have campers try to send the water back to the front of the line and see how far each team gets before all the water is on the ground.



Story Resources

***Minimalism: A Documentary About the Important Things* (Netflix, 2015).** This documentary follows the lives of many people who have made a conscious decision to live a bigger life with less, stress, stuff, and strain.

***Wall-E* (Walt Disney Pictures, 2008).** In their quest for more and more, people have completely used up all the resources and Earth is no longer inhabitable. Only a lonely robot is left to clean up the mess.

***Simplify: 7 Guiding Principles to Help Anyone Declutter Their Home and Life*, by Joshua Becker (Amazon Digital, 2014).** The author recounts a Sunday afternoon that should have been for rest and relaxation, but was instead filled with cleaning the garage, mostly moving stuff from one pile to the next, while his wife cleaned bathrooms and the kids clamored for their attention outside. That began his search for simplicity to enjoy his life instead of constantly trying to manage it. He gives practical tips and encouragement for anyone who wants to develop the discipline of a simple and restful life.

***Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns Too Much of a Good Thing Is Bad: A Story About Moderation*, by Howard Binkow and Reverend Ana (We Do Listen, 2011).** Howard B. Wigglebottom learns that eating and doing as much as he wants with no limit is not good for him. Campers will learn the value of limiting themselves so they can eat and do what is best for them. An animated video of the story is available at https://youtu.be/Ds6_QevCYgA and is followed by a song that further develops the idea of moderation in all things, including our activities.

Worship and Devotions

Introduction

Services at camp offer a unique opportunity to connect campers and creation in worship. The resources in this section are designed to help you and your campers express your faith and give thanks to God. You will find cabin devotions and song recommendations, as well as outdoor worship resources that are age appropriate.

Song Recommendations: Remember that we are simply giving some suggestions, and our list should not be considered the definitive list for the themes. The goal is to provide you with a starting place for music selection, while also providing some recommendations from different genres or generations you might not have thought about. Some music will be great for sing-along, while other is best used for reflection or as a response to scripture. Singing is a powerful community builder. Be sure to provide enough time for campers to learn songs by singing them more than once, while teaching new songs to engage the various tastes and preferences of your camp.

Cabin Devotions: We recommend doing devotions in cabins before bed. This is a good time to let campers reflect on their day and connect with one another. Showers and getting ready for bed can be a chaotic time that is particularly difficult for younger campers and those who are homesick. It can also be a time when community is challenged by teasing or the insecure posturing of peers. A devotion to end the night can put things back on track or help keep community norms in the forefront of camper's minds. Versions for Youth and Children/Intergenerational cabins are provided.

Planning Worship: We recommend having campers plan worship. While they will need help, camp provides an opportunity for campers to step into roles normally played by adults. There is also some creative freedom not found in the local congregation. Campers can be loud, silly, angry, excited, joyful, or thankful as they share their hearts with God. Each age group has

its own challenges and gifts when it comes to planning. Lean into the blessings of your camp and find ways for personal gifts to become a gift of worship.

Daily Worship resources will provide you with a simple structure for planning, but you can also use the various pieces in your own way. You can mix and match – pick and choose. They are arranged in a suggested order of:

- Opening Prayers / Litany
- Prayers of the People
- Scripture Sharing
- Celebrating and Centering Responses
- Stewardship
- Communion
- Benediction/Blessing

We hope these resources will help you create worship services that allow campers to express their faith, creation to sing God's praise, and the community to feel the Spirit move. However it might look to others, we know that when creation, Christ, and community come together, worship is happening!

Parts of the Service

Opening Prayers or Litany: This is intended to center the camp for worship in a way that connects with the scripture or daily theme. You might want to write words for any responses on posters if you are worshipping outside. If you have technology in your services, these can be projected.

Prayers of the People: Each day's prayer experience is different, but each invites campers to be connected in prayer. Some are more reflecting and some more expressive, but all are a good way to pray through the daily themes or in connection with the day's scripture reading.

Scripture Sharing: Some scriptures work well as a skit. Some lack a narrative but can be shared in other creative ways. This section is provided to help you present the scriptures to campers in a creative way while still being true to the text.

Celebrating and Centering Responses: You probably want to pick one of the two or put them at different parts of your service. Celebrating responses are more active, while centering tries to create a calmer mood in the service. You might want to use these as described, or use them as a jumping off point for the creativity of your campers.

Stewardship: More than “giving,” stewardship is about being responsible for what God has put in our care and working as partners with God for the care of all creation. At camp, we might take an offering for a special project, mission, or even to support camp scholarships, but we can also talk about care for the earth, and how to use our blessings to care for others.

Communion: This curriculum is created by representatives of many church traditions, and all celebrate communion in different ways. The communion resources provided are intended to be an “introduction” or “invitation” to the table that can be used with liturgy and prayers specific to your tradition. These resources also assume the table is open to everyone present. If this is not the case for your tradition, remember that these are just resources and you are free to edit or use other resources that reflect your beliefs and practices.

Benediction/Blessing: A closing prayer is often called a benediction. It is a blessing and sending out. Remember that worship has moods, and how you leave worship can impact the rest of your day. Think about what comes next. Do you need campers upbeat, or do you need them calm and attentive? Will you make announcements after the benediction or before? We recommend making the benediction the last thing as often as you can so that in your gathering time, the last words are either to or from God.

Day 5: Isaiah 40 / Luke 5:15-16

Longing for Renewal

GATHERING

*Leader stands up and shouts: Make a joyful noise!
(Wait.)*

*I said, make a joyful noise! (Wait and encourage
volume.)*

*I said, make a joyful noise! (Make sure the clamor is
really loud at this point.)*

*Raise up your hands and make a calming motion,
then wait for silence.*

Say: Through the noise, God still hears us. Come,
and be at peace.

PRAYER

Invite campers to follow your motions as you
pray.

Prayer to read:

When we are so wound up, we can't sit still (*stand
up and bounce on toes*),

Help us settle down (*slowly sit*).

When we are so upset, we can't shake the blues
(*cross arms and hunch over*),

Help us rise up (*stand up slowly and reach arms out
wide*).

When we are so twisted up and confused (*turn
body, wrap arms around head and belly*),

Help us unwind and just be (*sit calmly with palms
up*).

Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Have a primary camp leader reading the scripture
but have others keep interrupting them with
questions and needs so that it hard for them
to get through the reading. Once they have
completed the interrupted version, have someone
read it again from the back of the worship space
and let that leader simply sit and be in prayer.

RESPONSE

Celebrating

Supplies: Squeeze bottles of water

Yell, "Time out!" Remind campers that Jesus
often changed what he was doing to take
care of himself; that way he would be better
prepared to help people later. Point out that
even professional athletes have to stop for
a break. Invite campers to kneel down like
football players on a water break, and have
counselors come around and squirt some water
in each person's mouth. Now, invite campers
to stand up, shake out any nervous energy,
then shout, "Game on!" and move on to the
next thing in worship. A song would be great.

Centering

This is a great place to use a guided meditation.
See the Prayer Packet for some great options.

STEWARDSHIP

Invite campers to think about people they
know who are very stressed. It could be a friend,
parent, teacher, etc. Ask campers to think about
something they could do to help that person
rest or relax. Maybe it's helping with a chore,
or telling them a joke, or just giving a hug.
Lead the following repeat and answer litany as
an affirmation of the things we can do and a
commitment to follow through in the days and
weeks ahead.

Pause after each statement for them to echo:

It's OK; I'm with you.

It's OK; we are with you.

It's OK; God is with you.

Peace be with you!

Amen.

COMMUNION

For this communion, you might have ministers/
chaplains or counselors prepared to be available to
pray with the children.

Day 6: Numbers 27:1-11

Longing for Change

Invitation to read: I want to read a verse from our Isaiah passage. Verse 1 from chapter 40 states, “Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.” For many people, coming to communion is a time to feel comfort, or you might say peace, in the middle of a wacky week. Several times Jesus would tell his followers that he was leaving them peace. He modeled how to get away from the nutty schedules and take time to sit and pray with God. In these communion moments, you are invited to do the same: to receive comfort and prayers. After you take the bread of life and the cup of love, if you want someone to pray with you about what is going on in your life, counselors will be around our space and will offer prayers of peace to you. Come, now, for God meets us here.

CLOSING

For each statement, have campers respond by shouting or whispering, “Thank you God.” If close to bedtime, you may want to go with the calmer version.

Prayer to read:

Hallelujah! God gives peace! (Thank you, God!)

Hallelujah! God gives hope! (Thank you, God!)

Hallelujah! God gives peace! (Thank you, God!)

And so, we give thanks. (Thank you, God!)

Amen.

GATHERING

Say: Raise your hand if you have stood up for someone when something bad was happening. In worship today, we will hear a story about not being quiet when something isn’t right in the world. So, let’s practice being loud. On the count of three I want you to yell the word *justice* as loud as you can. 1...2...3 (repeat several times as needed).

PRAYER

Invite campers to match your motions as you pray.

Prayer to read:

Make our voices and our actions share your love, God.

When we stand up for those being mistreated (*stand up*),

When we sit with those who are hurting (*squat down*),

When we march for equal rights for all your people (*high step*),

When we sit in prayer for those who are sad (*sit*),

Make our voices and our actions share your love, God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Set the scripture reading as story time with a stool for the reader. Be sure to have them show pictures as they read “The Daughters of Z,” from Rabbi Sandy Sasso’s *But God Remembered: Stories of Women from Creation to the Promised Land*.

If you don’t have the story, you can simply read the scripture. Consider having campers act it out as you read to help them keep up with the narrative. The worshiping body can be the “assembly of Israel”