

Camp and Conference Ministry Emphasis Sunday

Worship Service Ideas

The following elements of worship are provided as a template and a resource for your church to utilize as you plan and coordinate this Sunday's worship service with an emphasis on outdoor ministries. Please utilize as much or as little of this information as you would like and thank you for your support of these vital ministries!

Welcome and Announcements

Minute for Mission Prior to Camp and Conference Sunday identify those in your congregation (or the local community) who have attended a camp and conference center. For instance, if you have youth who have recently attended camp you can ask them to speak about their experiences. A recent seminary student/graduate who attended a camp or conference center could speak as well. And to help demonstrate the wide and vast impact that camps and conference centers have had for generations it would be exciting to find someone that people may never have guessed that they had ever gone to camp. As an example, an elderly person in your congregation may wish to share stories of their days back at camp and discuss how that experience has impacted their life to demonstrate the lifelong impact these ministries can have on a person's life.

Call to Worship

Leader: Surely God is our salvation; we will trust, and not be afraid.

People: For the Lord is our stronghold and defense, and has become our Savior.

Leader: Sing praises, for the Lord has done great things; let this be known in all the earth.

People: We will shout and sing for joy, for great in our midst is the Holy One.

Hymn of Praise #469 (blue hymnal) "Morning Has Broken"

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, You are the light and truth. We confess that we often dwell in darkness and falsehood. Sin drives us into ourselves and away from you. We almost come to believe that it is possible for us to make it on our own. But in the moments we are honest, we see the errors of our ways. Walking away from you leads only to our ruin. Turn us around. Capture our hearts. Cleanse our spirits. Set us free from the trappings around us and lead us in your light, so may we see who we are and what we can become, as we seek to follow Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

We have been told the truth of God's amazing love for us; that while we were still sinners, Christ came into the world to live for us, to die for us, and to rise for us. Now we are free to love and serve God and to love and serve others in God's name. Believe the good news of the Gospel, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Prayer for Illumination

Gracious God, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts be pleasing in your sight. Our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

Scripture Readings

I Kings 19:11-13

Ephesians 3:14-21

Proclamation of the Word (below is a general scope of where you may go with the proclamation of the Scripture passages for today. Again, utilize as much or as little as you wish)

The idea, and ultimately the importance, of Camp and Conference Ministry Emphasis Sunday is to celebrate, embrace, and promote one of the church's indispensable ministries within its mission field. For generations outdoor ministries have played an integral role in developing and inspiring disciples of all ages. And now, more than any other decade in our history, camp and conference ministries are increasingly vital due to their ability to disconnect young people from their electronic devices and virtual realms in order to connect, or reconnect, them within a true community of people and with God. Actual face to face and tangible relationships are becoming harder to find, but they are alive and well within our camp and conference centers, which makes their impact go even deeper within the souls of our young people. Often, it is through these real relationships and interactions, or through the silence we find away from our day to day, that we can hear and experience God's call for us within our lives. This is why it is exponentially important to venture into the countryside to escape our everyday trappings and experience the true community and solace that God has provided for us.

Affirmation of Faith (Excerpts from the *Brief Statement of Faith*)

Leader: Do you believe in God the Father?

People: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Leader: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn Suggestion: #339 (blue hymnal) "Be Thou My Vision"

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings (part of the offering might be designated to your local camp and conference center or as scholarships to help campers from your congregation attend camp)

Offertory

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Pastoral Prayer and Prayer of Thanksgiving

Hymn Suggestion: #377 (blue hymnal) Lord, you Have Come to the Lakeshore

Charge and Benediction