



Bible Studies 2024

Psalms for the Journey

Greetings,

Welcome to the Psalms for the Journey, a bible study written specifically for you all as you prepare to go to Impact Camp. Each Year, the Israelites would journey to Jerusalem to worship and the Psalms of Ascent (120-134) were their song book of sorts. These were the songs they would sing as they traveled together to worship God in the holy temple. It seemed fitting then, to look again at these Psalms as our youth prepare to go on their own holy journey- to Impact Camp!

Throughout these Psalms you'll see a constant undercurrent of how much God loves us, wants good things for us, and calls us into life together. These studies were crafted primarily from *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* by Eugene Peterson, a wise voice for faithful living and thriving. If you have older students in your group (or leaders) who might be interested, I highly recommend the whole book to study. It's a challenging and encouraging look at what it means to be a Disciple of Christ on this journey together.

Getting to go to camp together is a marvelous gift filled with laughter and sometimes tears. My hope is that these studies will remind you all of the gift, joy and presence of God as you travel together and therefore make your time at camp even more meaningful. May you all find it as a time to thrive!

Grace and Peace,

Caitlin

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## To know before Each Study:

In his book, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene Peterson uses the Message version of scripture. I recognize this is not an actual translation from the Hebrew, but his attempt to put words of scripture into modern language. For the Psalms of Ascent, I find the Message version to be very helpful. Please use whatever translation you and your group are comfortable with though to guide your conversations.

In each study, I have included scripture notes I have taken from two different commentaries on the Psalms. I pulled from *Psalms* by Walter Bruggemann and William Bellinger along with the *NIV Application Commentary* by Dennis Tucker. Please read through those notes ahead of time and use what is helpful for your group and ignore what is not.

Please adjust the questions and activities to fit your group and to include all of your students who are present. I've worked with groups of youth and young adults who were privileged and others who were not as privileged, and I have found that sometimes I need to re-word my questions to make it appropriate for each of the different groups. I did my best to add broad questions, but I would recommend reading through it all ahead of time to pick what best fits your group. Please make these studies work best for your group!

## Study 1 (120) Discipleship

*“Repentance, the first word in Christian immigration, sets us on the way to traveling in the light. It is a rejection that is also an acceptance, a leaving that develops into an arriving, a no to the world that is a yes to God.”*

Supplies:

Pen and Paper

Suggested Group Gathering Activity:

“I Was Walking Down The Street”

**Participants needed:** 3 or more.

**Instructions:** This game begins by having one person finish the statement “I was walking down the street...” The point is for the person to begin crafting an imaginative story of their walk down the street and what they see or experience. When the student has completed a couple of sentences and got the story going, the leader should say “FREEZE” and point to another student to pick up the story right where the previous person left off. Continue doing this until you let everyone go or the story simply unravels. For an extra obstacle add the challenge that when they pick up the story they cannot say “um” and it needs to be seamless.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>From: <https://spirituallyhungry.com/youth-group-icebreakers/>

## Opening Questions:

1) Have you ever gone on any trips far away from home?

Have you ever gone on any big adventures?

What is the farthest place you have gone from home?

AND: What was it like to be in that new place?

How did it feel to be in a strange place?

Who went with you on the journey?

2) What comes to mind when I say the word pilgrim?

a) Have you heard of a spiritual pilgrim before? People of all faiths have long gone on journeys to find God. The ancient Israelites would go on a journey to the temple in Jerusalem to find God. They went so often that they had a song book, Psalms 120-133. Our study as we prepare for camp is looking at what it means to travel to God as we look at some of these Psalms they used to sing.

Bible Lesson:

Read through Psalm 120.

### **Psalm 120**

I'm in trouble. I cry to God,  
desperate for an answer:

"Deliver me from the liars, God!

They smile so sweetly but lie through their teeth."

Do you know what's next, can you see what's coming,  
all you bold-faced liars?

Pointed arrows and burning coals  
will be your reward.

I'm doomed to live in Meshech,  
cursed with a home in Kedar,  
My whole life lived camping  
among quarreling neighbors.

I'm all for peace, but the minute  
I tell them so, they go to war!

## Scripture Notes:

We start first with a Psalm of lament, with a call to God to fix something and a reminder of how God has fixed things in the past. Psalms of lament are different from a complaint because it reminds people of God's faithfulness while admitting current circumstances.

Our first psalm is also a Psalm of disorientation, it is written by a people who are experiencing isolation and location. It's a cry for help from far away. The psalmist has no sense of place- no sense of what or where he is. One of the places they mention, Meschec is a town in southern Russia, thousands of miles away. The other is a people group, Kedar is a wandering bedouin tribe - both strange and hostile to the Israelites. They supposedly were legendary inhumane people. So it's a prayer of people who are vulnerable and feel as though they are living in an unsafe place. It would be like living really far away from home and around people who are scary..

Psalm 120 invites us to give words to that human hunger for place and the Psalms of Ascent that we will be going through in the study invite us on a journey to God.

Repentance means to turn away, so the Israelites here are admitting they are fed up, frustrated, at the bottom of the hill and ready to change and make the journey up the mountain to God, and to Jerusalem. They are at a point of deciding to choose to follow God. *"The psalmist's God is a lightning flash illuminating just such a crossroads. Psalm 120 is the decision to take one way over against the other. It is the transition of discipleship in faith, from complaining how bad things are to pursuing all things good."* The Israelites are admitting they need to go to Jerusalem to find God, and starting on a journey of change, they repent and turn towards God.

Sometimes, camp can feel like our own journey to God. As we start the adventure towards camp, consider why like the Israelites of thousands of years ago, you might want to go to God. To travel to God, is to remind ourselves that we have the

power to change some things in our lives, but also that God wants to see us whole. To turn towards God is to remind ourselves that we are loved by God and that God wants good things for us. So as we prepare for Impact with our churches, we get to travel to God with our friends, and we can hope and pray that God will do mighty things along the way!

Questions:

- 1) Using a word besides good or fine, how are you doing this week?
- 2) Why are you coming to Impact camp? What do you want to gain?
- 3) Why would you want to climb the mountain to God?

Activity/Response:

*With a pen and paper, have the students individually respond to these questions. These might be worth saving to bring back during camp.*

- Why are you attending Impact Camp? It can be very serious or silly too, both have meaning to God.
- In one sentence, write what you hope to get out of going on this “journey” of Impact camp.
- What is one thing you want to bring with you on the journey? It can be a physical item that will make bible studies and camp more fun, or it can be a hypothetical item like a ‘spirit of curiosity’.



Closing Prayer:

A communal prayer for God's guidance and provision in the journey, taken from St. Columba

*Be a bright flame before me, O God  
a guiding star above me.  
Be a smooth path below me,  
a kindly shepherd behind me  
today, tonight, and for ever.  
Alone with none but you, my God  
I journey on my way;  
what need I fear when you are near,  
O Lord of night and day?  
More secure am I within your hand  
than if a multitude did round me stand.  
Amen.*

## Study 2 (121) Providence

### Supplies:

Pen and Paper

Drawing or collage supplies for the main activity

Look at group activity, you may want to print it for the group.

### Group Gathering Activity: Getting to know others on the journey<sup>2</sup>

**Participants:** 6 or more.

**Supplies:** Pens and paper. These might be better to have printed to hand out to the pairs.

**Instructions:** Have the youth break off in pairs with someone that they don't know well.

Have the pairs interview each other with the following questions

- Where were you born?
- What is your middle name?
- What time do you usually go to bed?
- Is this your first time going to camp? If not, what was your favorite year of camp?
- If you could be an animal what would it be?
- What's your favorite subject in school?
- Give me one word that describes you?

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from <https://spirituallyhungry.com/youth-group-icebreakers/>

## Opening Questions:

- 1) Have you ever felt scared? What made you feel scared?
- 2) Who comes to mind when we say the word guard? Any specific people you know, or characters in something?

## Bible Lesson:

### **Psalm 121**

I look up to the mountains;  
does my strength come from mountains?  
No, my strength comes from God,  
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

He won't let you stumble,  
your Guardian God won't fall asleep.  
Not on your life! Israel's  
Guardian will never doze or sleep.

God's your Guardian,  
right at your side to protect you—  
Shielding you from sunstroke,  
sheltering you from moonstroke.

God guards you from every evil,  
he guards your very life.  
He guards you when you leave and when you return,  
he guards you now, he guards you always.

## Scripture Notes:

Psalm 121 is a Psalm of Confidence. It is a gentle and quiet voice showing us the way.

The last psalm put words to our bewilderment, our frustration and confusion. Today's psalm importantly builds off of that and reminds us that we can trust in God.

The Psalm mentions three different possibilities for harm while traveling. A sprained ankle from loose stones and heat stroke from traveling in the sun with no shade are two that still make sense in our modern world. The Psalmist also mentions moonstroke which is connected to our word lunacy. People long ago used to associate mental illness with the moon. To put moonstroke into our words, emotionally distraught from a long journey might be a good fit. By noting the threats of day and the threats of night, the psalmist is reminding us that God stands as "protective shade over all life" and protective through all perils we might find.

Other religions of the day would have gone to the hilltops to worship other gods like Baal, so the Psalmist is saying those other Gods will not save you. Also, in other religions of the region, the gods were frequently sleeping, but throughout Psalm 121, our God is said to be guarding six times! Our God's interest in us does not wax or wane in response to how spiritual we are, or how good we are, God is always guarding us.

Psalm 121 reminds us of God's providence- God will protect us no matter our action or our awareness. As we travel to God, that is a big comfort. God is protective of us, so we are safe to go on our journey! We can trust in God, and we can trust in Christ. As Eugene Peterson says, *"The Christian life is going to God... The difference is that each step we walk, each breath we breathe, we know we are preserved by God, we know we are accompanied by God, we know we are ruled by God."*

Are we to conclude bad things will never happen to us on the journey? Because we know people who will have bad things happen to them and we are also sometimes probably those people, but God still does love us. We can trust in the Lord. Psalm 121 reminds us that even in the middle of hard things, even in the midst of scary things, that God is still guarding us.

Faith “is the solid, massive, secure experience of God, who keeps all evil from getting inside us, who guards our life, who guards us when we leave and when we return, who guards us now, who guards us always.”

As we journey to our own place of finding God, as we journey to Impact, there is comfort in knowing God will guard us and protect us!

#### Questions:

(These can be individually answered if that's more your groups speed or answered as a large group)

- 1) How do you see God's providence or God guarding in your life?
- 2) What is your reaction when you read this Psalm? Do you like it? Do you dislike it?
- 3) What questions does this Psalm or the conversation of God's providence raise?
- 4) How do you make peace with those questions?

#### Activity:

On a large sheet of paper, have each student draw or make a collage of things that remind them of this Psalm. What images of security in God come to mind when they imagine God protecting them? Have them find a way to represent the providence, security, guardianship of God in their lives on the paper. Close with a time of sharing their images to encourage one another.

## Closing Prayer:

The LORD bless you and keep you

the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. *Numbers 6:24-26*

## Study 3 (127) Work

Supplies:

Paper and pens

Print out a copy of the Psalm for each of the youth to read on their own.

blindfolds

### Group Gathering Activity: Trust Walk Group

**Supplies:** Blindfolds.

**Instructions:** Have the youth group get in a single line, put on blindfolds, and put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Lead them through the church, or around the building, having them keep their line intact the whole time.<sup>3</sup>

Today's Psalm is a reminder to Trust God in our work. How hard was it to trust the person in front of you to keep you from bumping into things?

Opening Questions:

- 1) Do you like to sleep? Do you sleep a lot or a little on the weekend?
- 2) Do things ever keep you up at night? If you don't mind sharing, what keeps you up at night?

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<sup>3</sup> Pulled from <https://spirituallyhungry.com/youth-group-icebreakers/>

Bible Lesson:

### **Psalm 127**

If God doesn't build the house,  
the builders only build shacks.  
If God doesn't guard the city,  
the night watchman might as well nap.  
It's useless to rise early and go to bed late,  
and work your worried fingers to the bone.  
Don't you know he enjoys  
giving rest to those he loves?

Don't you see that children are God's best gift?  
the fruit of the womb his generous legacy?  
Like a warrior's fistful of arrows  
are the children of a vigorous youth.  
Oh, how blessed are you parents,  
with your quivers full of children!  
Your enemies don't stand a chance against you;  
you'll sweep them right off your doorstep.

Scripture Notes:

This is a psalm of work, and ultimately a Psalm of Humility

Now, we are in the middle of the psalms of ascent, the pivot in the collection, starting a move towards joy in life. The previous psalms focused on the needs of people in the midst of a hostile world. With Psalm 127, we remember that the blessing



of God is daily life in our families and in our community. This is a call to live differently than we want to, than culture naturally pulls us toward.

### **House building**

The American dream teaches us “that our greatest asset is our own ability.” But in reality, human effort alone does not make for a meaningful life. The psalmist is not assessing value on a house or city, but the work is contingent on God's involvement in the activity. If God is not involved, such activity remains deceptive, delusional, and ultimately unsuccessful. God must be involved in our work for it to be good. The Psalmist uses the phrase, “Bread of toil” to mean strenuous labor or pain and not eating the fruits of our labor.

As you read Psalm 127, remember that house-wide could have a range of meanings: family dwelling, household, family line, dynasty, or entire nation. The Psalmist is not thinking of any sort of traditional American home.

### **Sleep**

Have you ever been unable to sleep? This passage stands out for our sleepless nights and the things that worry us and keep us awake at night. Worrying about a test, or things friends said or didn't say can keep us up at night. But we are to remember that God wants to grant us sleep, God wants us to be able to relax, rest and not worry.

*In vain you rise early  
and stay up late,  
toiling for food to eat—  
for he grants sleep to those he loves.*

“The claim that God grants sleep to his beloved ones means that human beings ‘can afford to relax and sleep because Yhwh continues to be active.’”

## **Children (future)**

The second half focuses on children. Parents might think we made that, but children are a gift from the Lord. They are not controllable, and children are much bigger than either parents' DNA. Children in the bible are understood as a legacy and a future. God wants to give us good gifts and give us a future- this is a reminder to Israel that they will have a future.

This Psalm is prescriptive on how we all must approach our work, but also how we as a community can remind each other to trust God and not just our own work.

### Questions as a Group:

- 1) What line stands out to you in this Psalm? Why?
- 2) What worries you?
- 3) When you find yourself worried, how do you best pass that worry off to God? Is that an easy thing to do or a difficult thing to do?
- 4) This Psalm reminds us to be grateful for our daily life and community. Name one thing from the last 24 hours (big or small, mundane or normal) that you are grateful for:

### Reflection Activity:

Send the youth to write out these answers on their own. We are using the Message version, so if you would like the youth to have that version to contemplate you might print them out for them- or have them use their phones.

- 1) Re-read through Psalm 127
- 2) What line or portion of the Psalm rings true in your life?

- 3) What are you building in your life these days? How do you think God wants to be a part of that?
- 4) Where might the Spirit be nudging you to let God grant you rest, to let things go, or to remember that only when we build with God are we building anything of worth?

#### Closing Prayer:

This day O Lord is full of promise and opportunity; let me waste none of it. This day is full of mystery and the unknown; help me to face it without fear or anxiety. This day is blessed with beauty and adventure: make me fully alive to it all. During this day keep me thoughtful, prayerful and kind.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dioceseofkerry.ie/media/uploads/Morning%20Prayer.pdf>

## Study 4 (132) Faithfulness

### Supplies:

A bowl

Three slips of paper per student

### Group Gathering Activity: Blast from the Past

Have the youth play the fishbowl game, but with things that are retro-whatever that means to them! Lean into nostalgia by encouraging things they remember fondly from their childhood, or what they think sounds nostalgic (like things from the leader's childhood).

To play fishbowl, have the youth write out retro things on three different slips of paper. In order to make this work,

To look up detailed instructions, I found these to be excellent:

<https://sarasfavoritethings.com/2012/12/17/the-fishbowl-game/>

### Opening Questions:

- 1) What is your favorite childhood memory of something good happening (pick just one)?
- 2) Is there a story in your family (or another social group) that you all like to remember together?
- 3) Why do you think we enjoy remembering the good things?

## Bible Lesson:

### Psalm 132

O God, remember David,  
remember all his troubles!  
And remember how he promised God,  
made a vow to the Strong God of  
Jacob,  
“I’m not going home,  
and I’m not going to bed,  
I’m not going to sleep,  
not even take time to rest,  
Until I find a home for God,  
a house for the Strong God of  
Jacob.”  
Remember how we got the news in  
Ephrathah,  
learned all about it at Jaar  
Meadows?  
We shouted, “Let’s go to the shrine  
dedication!  
Let’s worship at God’s own  
footstool!”  
Up, God, enjoy your new place of  
quiet repose,  
you and your mighty covenant ark;  
Get your priests all dressed up in  
justice;  
prompt your worshipers to sing this  
prayer:  
“Honor your servant David;  
don’t disdain your anointed one.”

God gave David his word,  
he won’t back out on this promise:  
“One of your sons  
I will set on your throne;  
If your sons stay true to my Covenant  
and learn to live the way I teach  
them,  
Their sons will continue the line—  
always a son to sit on your throne.  
Yes—I, God, chose Zion,  
the place I wanted for my shrine;  
This will always be my home;  
this is what I want, and I’m here for  
good.  
I’ll shower blessings on the pilgrims  
who come here,  
and give supper to those who arrive  
hungry;  
I’ll dress my priests in salvation  
clothes;  
the holy people will sing their hearts  
out!  
Oh, I’ll make the place radiant for  
David!  
I’ll fill it with light for my anointed!  
I’ll dress his enemies in dirty rags,  
but I’ll make his crown sparkle with  
splendor.”

## Scripture Notes:

Today's psalm is one of Call and a Psalm of response. You can break Psalm 132 down into two parts, 1-10 and 11-18. It is one of the oldest psalms in the bible. It probably came from Jerusalem around the time of the Davidic rulers.

“This psalm sings of renewal and of hope for this pilgrim community of faith.” Commentators note that some of the kings they reference often abused their rights but still they sing of their communal ideals and enduring hope.

In section 1-10, King David makes a vow to Yahweh. The Ark of the covenant was the most holy and sacred object, and maybe the only object that it was ok to revere. The ark was built while the Israelites were wandering through the desert till the Temple was first destroyed. It was thought to be the physical manifestation of God on earth. That section names two places, Ephrathah, which was a location associated with David where they learned about the Ark and Jaar, where the ark of the covenant was located. The worshiping community is looking for a sacred place for the Ark and therefore God to dwell. They want to find a place worthy of God.

In section 11-18, Yahweh makes a vow to David. It centers on God's oaths and follows similar patterns to David's promise. God is declaring his faithfulness in David and in Zion. Some speculate that this old Psalm was placed in with the Psalms of Ascent because they are remembering history as they embark on their pilgrimage. They want to remember how faithful God has been, and therefore will be.

This psalm reminds us that “Such faith is not rooted in foolish naivete that closes its eyes to the world about us; rather, such faith “cultivates our memory and nurtures our hope.” Psalm 132 invites us to think more deliberately about how we cultivate that memory, how we nurture that hope.

When we think of our own connection to rooted faith, we can look to others in our churches or in our lives who can remind us of the goodness of God. We look to our leaders of small groups, or of the church, our grandparents, and others who can remind us of God's goodness in the past. Even older kids in the youth group can remind younger ones of times that God has been faithful before. This is how we continue the story- we remind others of God's love!

### Questions:

- 1) What stands out to you in David's words?
- 2) What words of hope stick out in God's promises to Israel?
- 3) David references many stories of God's work in Israel. What kinds of stories do you think we need to hear at this season of our pilgrimage?  
(communally or individually)
- 4) Share with the table a story of God's faithfulness if one comes to mind.
- 5) What stories need to be told as we make our pilgrimage to Impact Camp?

### Response Activity:

- Read through Psalm 132
- Prayerfully consider:
  - What parts of the Psalm speak to your life?
  - Giving thanks to God, what do you want to remember today about God's faithfulness?
  - What in Yahweh's response to David still rings true for you?

### Closing Prayer:

Father in heaven, the hand of your loving kindness powerfully, yet gently, guides all the moments of our days.

Go before us in this pilgrimage of life to prevent our falling. Send your Spirit to unite us to your heart, that we may rejoice in Your abiding presence. All this we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Traditional Benediction)



## Study 5 (133) Community

### Supplies:

Olive oil and a small bowl (or multiple) to pour it into

### Group Gathering Activity:

Have the youth break up into two equal groups and form an inside circle and an outside circle. Set a time of a minute and ask them to learn 3 different things about the person they are paired with for the minute. After the time stops, have the outside circle rotate one. Continue rotating until they have partnered with each person or until you all have run out of time. Adjust for the group size and attention span as needed.

The intent here is to foster communication and positive interaction, so feel free to edit this one to better fit your group!

### Opening Questions:

- 1) Do you have any siblings?
  - a) Or friends who are like siblings?
  - b) Do you get along with your siblings? What does it take to get along with your siblings?
- 2) Who are your closest friends? Good friends are so special, if you all are willing to share, what makes your friends special to you?

Bible Lesson:

### **Psalm 133**

How wonderful, how beautiful,  
when brothers and sisters get along!  
It's like costly anointing oil  
flowing down head and beard,  
Flowing down Aaron's beard,  
flowing down the collar of his priestly robes.  
It's like the dew on Mount Hermon  
flowing down the slopes of Zion.  
Yes, that's where GOD commands the blessing,  
ordains eternal life.

### Scripture Notes:

Psalm 133 is a psalm that starts but never really ends. The point is made in the first verse and then it chases a chain of similes into a verbal whirlpool and just stops. This Psalm writes from the perspective not of "am I going to be part of a community of faith?" but "how am I going to live in this community of faith". It's based on a proverbial wisdom suggesting that a complete life comes from a blessing of God and is found in community.

We live in an individualistic world, but that would have been totally strange for anyone in scripture. All our people of faith in the bible are members of a community. As Eugene Peterson says, "we come to declare our love for God, we must face the unlovely and lovely fellow sinners whom God loves and commands us to love."

The Psalm pulls from two different metaphors for a good community, oil and dew. The oil is a celebratory oil that you might wear to a banquet, it's as if to say, wear your good perfume or cologne. The imagery of it dripping down the beard might sound strange to us, but it points to the anointing of Aaron as a priest. As one commentary

said, “The image is suggestive, the oil of blessing poured out on the high priest in worship at the temple symbolically extends to the entire community.”

The Psalm also references dew, which was thought to have life giving capacity. In the desert, many things survive on the dew. Throughout scripture, dew is connected with life, with plenty of food to eat, and with blessing. The unity of God’s people is as life-giving as the dew in the desert, or maybe for us like a cold Gatorade on a hot jobsite.

Christian community can be one of the most precious gifts, to get us through hard times and to laugh with in good times. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, “Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this... We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ.” There is something deep and holy in recognizing our own beauty and the beauty of those around us. To really see the person in front of us as a gift from God, and to know that they see you as a gift from God. Our community is a community because of you.

One of the gifts of traveling to camp as a group is the opportunity to experience that community for a week. But it’s also something that takes work on all our parts. We have to be willing to care for one another, to apologize when we mess up, and to be intentional to include everyone. When a group who goes to camp together really lives out this Psalm, it is an incredible thing. I think it’s fitting that we end on this Psalm, because we remember right before we go to camp how good it is when we all can work together, worship together, and laugh together.

### Questions:

- If you could add another simile or comparison statement about a beautiful community to this Psalm, what would it be?

- Share about a time, place or season where you saw best demonstrated “how wonderful, how beautiful when brothers and sisters get along”?
  - Who was in the group and how long were you all able to get along?
  - What made this group unique?
  - What made it wonderful or beautiful?
- Where could you be called to help build community that is wonderful and beautiful?
  - How would you help build community in your youth group, in your school, or even at camp at your worksite?

### Activity:

The Psalm talks about oil flowing down, as though the anointing of priests with oil. Some traditions do anointings as a part of their regular worship, but my tradition does not. If your group is comfortable, I recommend getting some olive oil, and having the youth dab the oil and put it in a sign of the cross on each other's hands. As they anoint one another, below is a prayer to pray over each other. The intention of this activity is to recognize how God wants to bless each of us, and how God wants to bless those around us.

Here is a traditional prayer from the Methodist tradition:

*Lord God, protector of all who believe in you, bless this oil and give wisdom and strength to \_\_\_\_\_ who is anointed with it. Bring them to a deeper understanding*

*of the Gospel, help them to accept the challenge of Christian living, and lead them to the joy of new birth in the family of your Church, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

If your youth are not comfortable with this activity, this might be a good time to create a group covenant. Name some rules for your time at camp together, like when cell phones will be used, what sort of language is tolerated, what they want to do when someone hurts others feelings, etc. Let the youth guide what sorts of things they want to agree to- the goal of this activity is to promote unity throughout all of camp.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious Lord,

We give thanks for the gift of good friends. We give thanks for the gift of those who work alongside us, who we can laugh with, and for those we fight with. May you lead us into good community and may we serve one another well. In Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen,

## Additional Resources

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society by Eugene H. Peterson, 1980

The NIV Application Commentary, Psalms Volume 2 by W. Dennis Tucker Jr. and Jamie A. Grant, 2018

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