

Devotions – August 22-28, 2021

By Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

Summer Staff

Sunday, August 22, 2021

Submitted by Amanda Rasner, Camp Director

Reading: Psalm 100:5

For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

This summer's theme at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp is "From Generation to Generation," which is based on Psalm 100:5. If you attended camp this summer, you are likely now chanting the verse; we repeat it week after week in hopes of ingraining this profound truth on the hearts and minds of our campers. As we wrap up our summer camp ministry in this, our 91st year, God's faithfulness in this place and the lives that are touched here is increasingly apparent. This impact is perhaps felt best during our intergenerational camp weeks, when we often have grandparents, parents, and children/grandchildren camping together.

Last week I watched a camper and his grandmother as they sat together at the playground. The young boy had found a Bible at camp, and he had claimed it as his own. Grandma, happy to oblige, had taken direction from her grandson and added the following inscription in the front cover: "If you find this Bible, please return it to Marvin, or he will likely find you and snatch it back!" The word of God had begun to take root in this camper, and he was going to do everything in his power to hold tight to it. The faith of his parents, grandparents, and likely countless generations before that was being passed down. That faith was renewed and strengthened through his experiences at camp. Holy play, Sabbath rest, and a whole week of quality family time was impacting his young heart.

This week you'll be blessed with devotions written by the Fortune Lake Summer Staff. They are the young adult generation of our church. They give me such hope and are living examples of God's faithfulness. What a joy to serve alongside them and witness their impact on the next generation.

Reflect...

How has your own faith been strengthened and nurtured by the generations who have come before you?

How can you share God's faithfulness with the generations who are coming after you?

Pray with me...

Lord God, you are indeed good. Sometimes we see it, sometimes we don't, but we always trust *it to be true. Help us to abide in your love and rest in your faithfulness. Thank you for the*

countless generations who have gone before us, examples of the faith. May we, like those who have gone before us, be living models of your love and faithfulness to those who follow. In Jesus's name, Amen.



Monday, August 23, 2021

Submitted by Sophie Carlson, Youth/Intergenerational Camp Coordinator
and Amanda Rasner, Camp Director

Theme: We can trust God, even when everything in life feels uncertain.

Intro:

If I were to ask you to describe uncertainty, what would you say? How does it feel? What does it smell like? What does it look like? Taste like?

- How would you describe certainty?
- Is it easier to describe uncertainty or certainty?

Now imagine this: You're asked to pack your things and grab those nearest to you and set out. Where to? You'll find out when you get there. Could you do that and deal with that uncertainty? What if who was asking was God?

Reading: Genesis 12:1-9

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. ⁹ And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

As human beings, we crave certainty. We like routines, patterns, and predictability. We want to know what's coming next so we can adequately prepare. As my family gears up for an upcoming vacation, there are packing lists, itineraries, and tickets purchased. Although we don't know exactly what every day will look like, we've Googled area attractions, scouted out hiking trails, and mapped our route. It's so difficult to imagine God's call for Abram and Sarai, to abandon everything they know and leave forever for a land of uncertainty, a land that is already inhabited. The route is uncertain, the journey is long, and there is no GPS to lead the way. What faith they must have had!

Although we will likely never face the same challenge of Abram and Sarai, our lives are often riddled with uncertainty. Even if we trust that God has a plan, we want to know the destination, the outcome. The feeling, smell, and taste of uncertainty are uncomfortable!

In times of uncertainty, we must remember the promise made to Abram and Saria. That promise expands to you. God will never abandon you in times of uncertainty. Even when it may not feel like it, you are never alone in those times.

Pray with me...

Great Creator, I want to be a person who stands firm and trusts you wholeheartedly. I want to be resilient, but that can only happen by depending on you and trusting you. So develop that deeper trust in me, God; so that even when I feel alone or afraid and uncertain, I know you are alongside me and will stay there. Amen.



Tuesday, August 24, 2021

Submitted by Olivia Mai, Cabin Leader, Summer 2021

Reading: Genesis 45:1-15; 50:19-20

“Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Send everyone away from me.” So no one stayed with him when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me father to the Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do

not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there-since there are five more years of famine to come-so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. "

When I was fourteen years old, my family moved from Escanaba, Michigan to a small town in Wisconsin, a little over five hours away. This was a difficult time for my family, especially my older sister and me. We had left the town we grew up in, along with all our family and friends that lived there. At the time, we didn't know how the word "home" would apply to our new house. Four years later, I can say that this town is home to some of the kindest people I will ever meet. The kids that I became friends with in school were the students who saw a new kid and decided out of the goodness of their hearts to take her in. The church family that I grew into treated my family as one of them from the very start; even stocking our empty fridge with cheese curds and casseroles (the Wisconsin essentials).

Clearly, the story of a fourteen-year-old moving from one house to another does not compare to the hardships that Joseph endured before today's text. Joseph was sold into slavery, falsely accused, and wound up in prison. As the reader, we know that God is with Joseph, and he can trust in God. That is easier to see from a reader's perspective. I don't think that we need to go through what Joseph did to understand a message from this story. In the happiest moments in our lives, it's easy to know that God is with us. It's in these moments, that we're able to look back and see the ways that God was with us in our lowest of times. The story of Joseph shows us that God is with us through every part of our lives and can bring new life to the toughest of situations. It is at times hard to trust in God, but we know that God wants the best for us and the creation around us.

Pray with me...

Dear Creator God, help us to trust and know that you are here, even in our times of doubt. Give us strength to be your light in the world, and to see in ourselves and others what you see in us. Amen.



Wednesday, August 25, 2021

Submitted by Summer Bachand, Media Coordinator, Summer 2021

Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

16 The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”² Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.”⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?”⁵ He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is now before the LORD.”⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.”¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.”¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.”¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Reflecting on my summer spent serving at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp, I find myself relating this story -- that of David being chosen as King -- to this faith community’s shared experience. Simply put, many of us were called by God to serve in this important capacity: caring for, tending to, and nurturing a vital generation of campers in God’s word. However, while we all shared in this meaningful role as staff, we also all experienced personal growth in our own abilities and gifts, as well as how we can confidently use these capabilities in our interactions with campers and peers.

In this story, David’s anointing was surprising to everyone, except God. They knew David’s heart and character; that he was the right choice for the kingdom of Israel. Much like God’s ability to call upon our staff, knowing our hearts, skills, and gifts, using them to do their work for our faith community. God called upon us to aid in their work at Fortune Lake.

Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.” So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah. -1 Samuel 16:11-13

At the beginning of summer, during our staff training, and then at our weekly Bible study lessons where we interpreted the story of David, we were asked to consider what makes us ‘good leaders.’ Many gifts were expressed -- communication, organization, kindness, empathy, musicality, creativity, support, leadership, etc. Throughout the programming weeks, these gifts were also echoed by both youth and adult campers. These abilities were evident with each passing day that we grew together as a community. Encircling back to the beginning, in reflecting upon the summer it is evident that God knew what Fortune Lake needed -- much like God’s trust in David -- and using our gifts, we were able to experience an outstanding summer in Christ.

Now, as you reach the end of this short devotion, I invite you to reflect upon your own abilities and gifts; ruminate on how these strengths aid in your life and your relationship to God’s work.



Thursday, August 26, 2021

Submitted by Taylor Clark, Fortune Lake Health Officer, Summer 2021

God is bigger than what we know. Even when God calls us into crazy situations to do his work and we aren’t sure how it will work out, he holds the future for us. Before reading the scripture, think about what ways your presence and gifts make a difference to your family, community, church or for God’s mission?

Reading: Luke 1:26-38, 46-55

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How

can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^{cl} will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

⁴⁶ And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Excerpt from the Hymn, “Here I am Lord”

*“Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if You lead me. I will hold Your people in my heart.”*

The story of Mary’s calling to give birth to Jesus, the Son of God, is a common story. We often read this story in the church around Christmas, in celebration of Jesus coming to the world to save us. We hear it again and again, but we frequently forget how unusual and wild of a story it really is. Mary was fourteen and unmarried and the mere fact that she was pregnant was a shock and an outrage to those around her and in her community. Mary, despite the fear and shock and anxiety, took the call and said, “I am a servant of the Lord, let it be according to your word.”

Growing up in a small town, it was clear that volunteers made the world go round. I was inspired by the servants and leaders who devoted so much of their lives towards the community and the people around them. Even though their gifts were different, there was a place for everyone to lead and share their love with others. I am constantly inspired by people like that who live selflessly, who give their time to bettering the lives of the people around them. And often they lead and serve as a call from God and because they live to serve others. We, too, are called, like Mary, to do God’s work. Whether it’s a small call, like offering prayer or being a friend to

someone who needs one, or big things, like carrying the Son of God, we are encouraged to be like Mary and continue in God's mission as a servant. We are invited to push past our fear and stand up to the call, as a servant of the Lord. Though our calls may not appear like an angel coming down, keep your hearts open for your call and for the role God needs you to play in sharing his love with the world.

We are valuable servants of God who each have a part in the greater mission. Each of our gifts are needed and, even though it can be scary to be called into some situations, God has equipped us to do his work.

Prayer:

Dear God, as you called on Mary to show the way through the birth of your Son, Jesus, let us follow in her actions. Open our hearts to your call and give us the strength to go willingly to fight the good fight. Send us to hold your people in our hearts and love and serve as you call us. Amen



Friday, August 27, 2021

Submitted by William Lyons, Cabin Leader, Summer 2021

Reading: Acts 16:11-15 (NRSV)

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

Christianity has come a long way. From quiet gatherings in the presence of close friends and family, to the immense gatherings in the grand chapels that have been constructed across the world. The Catholic church as of 2018 has 3,037 cathedral-level churches in the world. When we think about the famous European cathedrals, such as Notre Dame and The Sistine Chapel, we can often lose sight of the humble beginnings of Christianity.

In the story of Lydia, we find her with a group of women at the river's edge in Thyatira (Modern day western Turkey). The Lord, after opening Lydia's heart to Paul's message, compels Lydia

and her family to be baptized by Paul and Silas, extending an invitation for the apostles to stay with Lydia's family while in Thyatira.

When I think about the story, I think about the great power that the Holy Spirit must have brought forth for Lydia to accept the mantle of being Christian. At the time Christianity had not yet spread in Europe. Lydia stands in Biblical theology as the baptized European Christian.

From a small gathering of women on the bank of a river to the dominating arches and columns that make up present day cathedrals, we see how a small beginning can lead to something so amazing.

We all experience new beginnings. Whether it be with the sun rising every morning, or you find yourself in a hard time of transition in your life. It always remains difficult to see the way God can take these small moments of change and construct something with them.

Pray with me...

Lord, your power sweeps over us and runs through us. It compels us to love one another, and to look forward to all of the amazing things that you have planned for us. Through small moments, such as the baptizing of Lydia, to the accomplishments that you have put us on this earth to achieve. Be with us during times of great transition and change in our lives. We thank you for your continued love and your guiding hand through all of these uncertain moments. Amen.



Saturday, August 28, 2021

Submitted by Charlotte Strom, Guest Services Coordinator, Year-Round Staff

Reading: Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

The end of summer marks a time of transition for many people. The nights are cooler, the sun is setting earlier, and we begin to shift our gaze from the frenzy of a summer well spent to the seasons ahead of us. It could mean going back to school, starting a new job, or a multitude of other things.

Our theme verse and Bible Study teachings at camp this summer revolved around some common themes of God keeping God's promises in new and surprising ways, even when we are feeling sad, lonely, or scared. We talked about how God keeps God's promises continually and to all generations through time. As I worked and played within a loving community this summer, it often struck me how evident the truth of Hebrews 13:8 really is. The love of God shown through

the words and actions not only of our youngest campers, but also the grown adults that came to stay with us. Not only this, but in discussions I had the privilege of learning more and more about Jesus through the people around me.

As we transition out of our summer season, whatever that means for you, it can feel like we're a bit lost, or like we're unsure of what to do next. It is in times like this that this verse has a particularly impactful echo for me. Jesus Christ is indeed the same yesterday, today, and forever. That being said, amidst all of the change that is going on in our personal lives, in our communities, and in the world, there is always an opportunity to lean on Jesus as a constant. The love of Christ is unchanging and unwavering, all we need to do is trust in it and go from there.

Pray with me...

Holy Creator, I give thanks for the abundance of summer and for the opportunity to see what comes next for me. Help me to know that you are with me at all times and in all places. In a world that is constantly changing in new and unexpected ways, guide me with your gentle hand to a path that serves you. In your name I pray, Amen

