

Summer 2022

Vacation Bible School Family Program

First United Methodist Church of

# Bella Vista

Thank you for opening your Summer 2022 Vacation Bible School Family Program. My hope is that you'll take this program and customize it to best meet the needs of your family. Perhaps you'll even invite a few friends or neighbors to share in this experience with you.

Each lesson centers around an aspect of camping and is relates to our faith journey in an interactive way. There are Suggested Settings for fun and impact. I encourage you to pack a picnic to make a real adventure of it! All of this can also easily be done in your home or backyard, if you prefer. Get creative and have fun!! There is also a Key Bible Verse for each lesson. These are not intended to be memory verses, more of a teaser for the scripture in the main lesson. Short Object Lessons introduce the day's concept in fun ways. There are Game, Craft, & Song suggestions complete with supply lists and instructions. I tried to keep these fun, simple, and with minimal supplies. For the crafts that I found online, the sources are quoted if you desire additional instructions. The Main Lesson is the toasted marshmallow of the program (if you will). Please read it aloud. Make it Stick is a simple suggestion to help your family remember and practice what you've learned. Brief prayers are also included.

Most importantly, spend time together as a family, talk about your faith and have fun. It was a pleasure to put this together and I hope you truly enjoy it.

Happy Summer, friends! Be safe and always remember that God loves you!!

Ms. Renee

Series Overview: Teach kids about the adventure of living life with God! Tagline: Adventure with God awaits in the great outdoors.

Idea: When Jesus walked this earth, he invited twelve disciples to share in his life and to join him on a great adventure. Today, Jesus invites each of us to join on this great adventure of life in Christ.

\*Please note how easy it would be to combine some of these lessons together, especially the campfire ones. They can also be done in any order and still make sense!

#### Lessons:

Catching Some Fish: Nothing passes the time quite like going out and catching fish. Kids will learn that it is up to them to share the gospel with others as they become fishers of men.

Key verse: Matthew 4:19.

Putting Up the Tent: We must pay careful attention to pitch our tents just right. Kids will learn that Jesus deserves our attention.

Key verse: Mark 9:7

Setting Out Your Sleeping Bag: When you're roughing it you have to give up your warm house and comfortable bed. Kids will learn that following Jesus means being willing to give up things for God.

Key verse: Matthew 8:19

Going on a Hike: It's nice to go out to the hiking trails and explore nature. Kids will learn that Jesus sends us out to help & serve others.

Key verse: Luke 10:1

Making S'mores: No camping trip would be complete without fixing s'mores. Kids will learn that Jesus is the bread of life that makes us complete.

Key verse: John 6:35

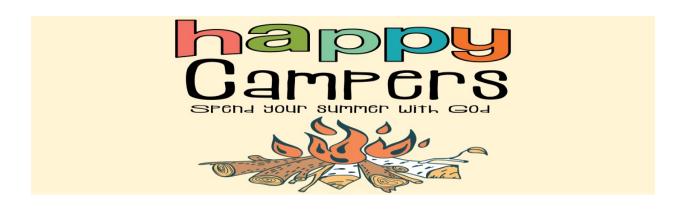
Singing Camp Fire Songs: Nothing's more joyful than singing songs under the stars. Kids will learn that they should praise Jesus joyfully.

Key verse: Luke 19:37

Telling Camp Fire Stories: It's nice to sit around the campfire and share stories. Kids will learn that we have the best story ever to tell: Jesus is alive! Key Verse: Luke 24:23

Keeping the Fire Going: When the camping trip is over, be extra sure the campfire is out. Kids will learn that with the Holy Spirit, the fire of Good News will never go out.

Key Verse: Acts 2:2



#### CATCHING SOME FISH

Setting: near a lake, creek or river if possible; Bring a picnic!!

Key Verse: "Come. Follow me," Jesus said. "I will make you fishers of people." -- Matthew 4:19

Object Lesson: Items needed: Fishing tackle box and tackle. If not available, show photos of such.

Show kids various lures and talk about how they work and why they are used. Lures and bait are used to draw fish to the hook. Whether you use shiny, reflective materials or things that look like worms or tiny fish, the goal is the same: to get a bite. Once a fish bites, it's up to you to reel them in and catch them. Jesus gave his disciples the calling to be fishers of men, to draw other people to Jesus. Like good fisherman, we need to show the world something to make them bite. Instead of tricks and fancy lures, we need to show God's love. God's love is the most amazing love there is. It's unconditional and endless. When someone sees God's love in action, they can't help but want that love for themselves. Let's pray that God will fill us with his love so that we, in turn, can share that love with those who need it most!

Game: Flying Fish Items needed: Swedish Fish Candy, Bucket

Have two people stand a few feet apart. One player will throw the Swedish fish, and the other has to catch them in the bucket. The catcher takes one step back with each successful catch. See how far you can go and still catch a fish!

What's the point? Jesus chose disciples to be fishers of people, and he wants us to continue the work of sharing Jesus with others.

Craft: Soda Pop Can Fishing Reel: You don't need expensive equipment to fish. Once your learn how to tie a good knot and attach a split-shot sinker and bobber, you can make your own gear from an empty can!

Items needed: an empty soda can, masking tape, 6-8 pound fishing line, fingernail clippers or scissors to cut the line, a fishing hook, split shot sinkers, a bobber (these items can easily be found at Walmart or any sporting goods store)

Build it: Tie one end of the line on the tab of the soda can. Securely tape the knot and the fishing line near the top of the can. Wrap the line around the can about 50 wraps. Attach the bobber, split shot sinker, and hook to the line.

Cast off: Unwind your line about 2 feet past the bobber. Hold the top end of the can in one hand and the bobber in the other hand. Point the bottom end of the soda can at the place in the water where you want the bobber to land. Toss the bobber underhand toward the water. The rest of the line should unwind and follow.

Reel it in: If your bobber tells you that you have a fish, give the line a quick jerk. Then wind the line around the can, keeping it tight until you can grab the fish with a net.

www.cyfernet.org

Song Lyrics: The Fishing Song (to the tune of Frere Jaques)

Let's go fishing,
Let's go fishing,
At the Lake,
Oh it's great,
Early in the morning,
Hope the fish aren't snoring,
Hurry don't be late,
We're fishing at the lake.

Main Lesson: Some people pack food for camping trips, like sandwiches and fruits and veggies. Nothing wrong with that, of course, but for other people, nothing says camping like catching and preparing your own food. One of the best ways to do that is by fishing. Fishing can be a feast or famine plan. If you don't catch anything, you'll go hungry. But when you do, there's nothing more rewarding than eating something you yourself caught and prepared from the wild. One of the most famous passages in the Bible has to do with fishing. Jesus went to a group of fisherman and told them he wanted them to be fishers of men. What did Jesus mean by that?

(Read Matthew 4:18-22)

Peter, Andrew, James and John were just common, ordinary guys who went to work every day to catch fish. When they got up that morning, I doubt any of them thought to themselves, I'm going to leave my job to go and follow some new guy around and be his disciple. Even when Jesus stepped into

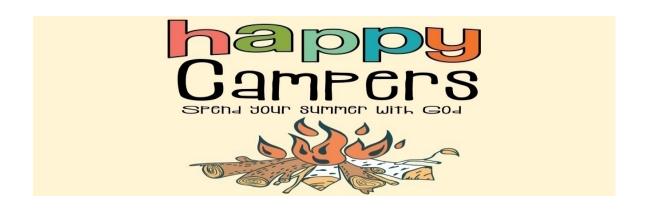
their boat and taught the crowd, I doubt if any of them knew what was about to happen. When he told the fishermen to take their nets out again after a day with no luck and suddenly their nets were full of fish, Peter fell to his knees and asked Jesus to go away. It wasn't because he was ungrateful. It was because he knew Jesus had come from God. Jesus then told Peter he was not going away. Instead, he was going to make Peter a fisher of men. Jesus showed his love to Peter on that boat, and Peter followed Jesus from that day forward. In that simple action Jesus not only called Peter to be a fisher of men, he showed him how to do it!

Any good fisherman knows it takes a quality lure to catch a big fish. Whether they use worms, insects, lures or jigs, fisherman apply their knowledge of fish to select the right bait to catch the fish they want. Jesus wants people to come to him so he can love them. Love can mean being a friend to a new kid in school. It can mean going the extra mile to help someone in need. It can mean standing up for the weak, or answering a bully with kindness. Love isn't always easy, but love is the key to helping people meet Jesus.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for sharing the Good News of Jesus with us. Teach us how we can share the Good News with other people. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Make It Stick:

Challenge kids to look for opportunities to do small acts of love for others this week.



#### PUTTING UP THE TENT

Setting: anyplace you can safely erect some sort of a tent – campground, backyard, even in your living room!

Key Verse: "Then a cloud appeared and surrounded them. A voice came from the cloud. It said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. Listen to him!'" - Mark 9:7

Object Lesson: Items needed: a few appropriate celebrity magazines

Let kids look at the magazines. Ask if they know who is on the cover, what they do and why they are important enough to be on the cover. The people who print these magazines choose famous people to be on their cover, hoping we will pay attention to them.

Have you ever noticed how magazines are displayed in the stores so we see them? We often look to famous people to tell us what's cool in fashion,

hairstyles, music and more. Magazine publishers know if they put the right people on the cover, we'll give them our attention and our money.

There's one person that we need to give all of our attention. He's more important than any singer, any president, or any other person in history. Can you guess who that is? Yes! It's Jesus. Jesus is God's Son, and he gave his life to save us from our sins. Jesus is a special person because he is the only one who could have given us eternal life.

God sent Jesus to save us, and to set an example for how we should live. We shouldn't copy everything that celebrities, but we can copy everything Jesus did, knowing that doing so will make this world a better place. When we live like Jesus, we love like Jesus, and we can help others develop a relationship with Jesus. Give Jesus all your attention every day of the week, and let him change the way you live.

Game: Almost Famous Items needed: Index Cards

Give everyone a card with the name of a famous person everybody would know – a cartoon character, a singer, an athlete, etc. The players will take turns pretending to be that character while the others try to guess.

What's the point? We pay a lot of attention to celebrities, but we need to give our full attention to Jesus.

Craft: Collage Items Needed: paper, magazines, scissors, glue

Make a collage using magazine clippings showing how we can love others like Jesus does. Tell others about your creation.

Song: Going On a Bear Hunt (lyrics included in Lesson)

Main Lesson: One of the nice things about being out camping is the freedom you have. There are no locked doors on your tent. There's no TV and sometimes, not even a cell phone signal. Bed times are more relaxed and you can go to the bathroom just about anywhere out there! Ewwww!

But even when you're camping, there are some rules and directions that are important. For example, there are rules about food storage, especially when you're in an area populated by bears. Bears? Maybe we should be Going On a Bear Hunt! (lyrics by Michael Rosen – this is an echo rhyme where each line is repeated)

We're going on a bear hunt.
We're going to catch a big one.
What a beautiful day!
We're not scared.
Uh-oh!
Grass. Long wavy grass.
We can't go over it.
We can't go under it.
Oh no! We've got to go through it!
Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy!

We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one. What a beautiful day! We're not scared. Uh-oh! A river! A deep, cold river. We can't go over it. We can't go under it. Oh no! We've got to go through it! Splash splosh! Splash splosh! Splash splosh! We're going on a bear hunt. We're going to catch a big one. What a beautiful day! We're not scared. Uh-oh! Mud! Thick oozy mud. We can't go over it. We can't go under it.

Oh no! We've got to go through it! Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch!

We're going on a bear hunt.
We're going to catch a big one.
What a beautiful day!
We're not scared.
Uh-oh!
A forest! A big dark forest.
We can't go over it.
We can't go under it.
Oh no! We've got to go through it!
Stumble, trip! Stumble, trip! Stumble, trip!

We're going on a bear hunt.
We're going to catch a big one.
What a beautiful day!
We're not scared.
Uh-oh!
A snowstorm! A swirling whirling snowstorm.
We can't go over it.
We can't go under it.
Oh no! We've got to go through it!
Hooo wooo! Hooo wooo!

We're going on a bear hunt.
We're going to catch a big one.
What a beautiful day!
We're not scared.
Uh-oh!
A cave! A narrow gloomy cave.
We can't go over it.
We can't go under it.
Oh no! We've got to go through it!
Tip toe! Tip toe!

WHAT'S THAT?
One shiny wet nose!
Two big furry ears!
Two big goggly eyes!
IT'S A BEAR!!!!!

Quick!
Back through the cave
Tiptoe! Tiptoe! Tiptoe!

Back through the snowstorm!
Hoooo woooo Hoooo woooo
Back through the forest!
Stumble, trip! Stumble, trip! Stumble, trip!
Back through the mud!
Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch! Squelch squerch!
Back through the river!
Splash splosh! Splash splosh! Splash splosh!
Back through the grass!
Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy! Swishy swashy!

Get to our front door!
Open the door.
Up the stairs.
[Walking upstairs sound]
Oh no! We forgot to shut the door.
Back downstairs.
[Walking downstairs sound]
[Shutting door sound]
Back upstairs.
[Walking upstairs sound]
Into the bedroom
Into bed.
Under the covers.
I'm not going on a bear hunt again.

That's certainly one of the important reasons to set up your tent correctly! There's nothing worse than having a tent collapse on top of you at the end of a bear hunt especially in the middle of the night, or worse in the middle of bad weather! Imagine having to crawl out into the mud in your pajamas with pouring down rain and the wind blasting your tent as you struggle to rebuild it.

Some things, like setting up our tent, deserve our attention. That goes for rules and for people, too. We each pick and choose the things and people who get our attention. We pay attention to our favorite celebrities. We pay attention to business leaders, world leaders and politicians. We pay

attention to our parents, our teachers, our pastors, our friends, our coaches and other people we choose to trust.

But there's one person more important than all of them. Can you guess who? It's Jesus! Early in Jesus' ministry, his followers knew he was a special man. They knew it by the miracles he performed and the lessons he taught. Then one day, three of his disciples saw something even more incredible, a sight that left no doubt Jesus deserved their full attention.

(Read Mark 9:2-13)

Peter, James, and John saw Jesus standing with two of the most important men in Israel's history. Moses was the leader who brought God's people out of slavery in Egypt and led them to the promised land. Elijah was Israel's greatest prophet, a man who gave many signs and messages from the Lord to try and return people to God. There stood Moses and Elijah, speaking with Jesus. This told the disciples just how important Jesus was. As if that wasn't enough, God spoke and told them to pay attention to the words of Jesus. From that day on, they would give Jesus their full attention, knowing that no one they would ever meet deserved their attention more.

Jesus showed us the way to live. Through his teachings, his miracles and his interactions with people, Jesus taught us how to love the way God loves us. He went to the sick and disabled, showing them love. He went to the sinners and outcasts and treated them with love. Jesus never turned anyone away. He welcomed people and bears, too, with open arms.

The more attention we give to Jesus, the more we will act like Jesus. We will learn to love others and to reach out to people no one else wants to know.

We will become Jesus' hands and feet in this world, and we will change it for the better.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for Jesus, and all he has done for us. Help us to focus on Jesus, so we can be more like Him. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Make It Stick: Make this lesson real. Ask about the good and bad of following famous people. Why is it not good to follow everything a celebrity does? What about your best friend? Is it good to follow everything they do? What makes Jesus different that anyone else you might follow?



#### SETTING OUT YOUR SLEEPING BAG

(this goes well with Putting Up Your Tent lesson if time and attention span permit)

Setting: Inside or near your tent, if possible

Key Verse: "Then a teacher of the law came to him. He said, <u>'Teacher, I will</u> <u>follow you no matter where you go.'</u>" -- Matthew 8:19

Object Lesson: Items needed: Duffel bag with a few items you would <a href="mailto:not\_take">not\_take</a> camping

When you go camping, you get to experience nature. You get to fish, to hike, to explore, and to count countless stars in the sky. But enjoying all these things comes with a price. You can't have that incredible camping experience without giving up a few things, at least temporarily. For example......

You can't use this in the woods. (Pull out a few items and explain why you wouldn't take it camping)

Sometimes things that are worth having demand sacrifice. Camping and enjoying the outdoors means giving up the conveniences of technology and modern living. Following Jesus means sacrifice too. It may not mean giving up friends and family like the disciples did, but it can mean giving up some things that we cherish. Following Jesus could mean sacrificing time with your friends to be nice to the kid that no one else wants to talk to. It could mean leaving home to serve in a mission field when you're older. Whatever it costs you, it is worth the sacrifice. Nothing we hold dear can ever equal the life and the plans God has in store for us.

Don't be afraid to give things up for the Lord. Whatever he wants you to give up, you won't miss it in the end.

Game: Primitive PBJ Items needed: a pre-made PBJ sandwich for each person

Everyone tries to eat a peanut butter & jelly sandwich with no hands.

What's the point? Roughing it sometimes means giving up conveniences. Following Jesus means sacrifice, as well.

Craft: Summer Twig Stars Items needed: twigs, glue, raffia

These summer twig star ornaments are made with just twigs and raffia, but they'll add a little glam to any patio, porch or deck. Crafting with natural items found in your backyard is an inexpensive way to get creative.



Additional Craft Suggestion: Tie dye T-shirts:

## Easy Tie Dye Instructions for Kids

www.netmums.com

If want to tie dye without a kit you'll need:

- Rubber gloves
- Rubber bands
- Fabric dye put this in old spray or squeezy bottles, or use a paint brush to help you apply it
- Water to mix your dye

#### Where should I tie dye?

You can tie dye anywhere but make sure you protect any surfaces from the dye first. It's a good idea to tie dye outside on some plastic sheeting or an old towel incase the kids get a bit carried away. It's also best to wear old clothes or an apron when you're tie dying.



## How do I tie dye?

Now you've got everything you need together it's time to get crafty. For a simple tie dye, just follow the easy instructions below. We've presumed you're dying a T-shirt but the same steps will work for nearly all items.

### **Step-by-step tie dye instructions**

- 1. Read the instructions on your dye, some require you to wet the T-shirt you're using first to help absorb the dye.
- 2. Scrunch up your T-shirt.
- 3. Place rubber bands around the T-shirt to hold it in place.
- 4. Apply dye to the scrunched up T-shirt. Using different colours in different sections will give a multicoloured effect. Remember that the dye will bleed, so if you don't want colours to blend together, leave a bit of a gap between each one.



- 5. Let your T-shirt absorb the dye. The longer you leave it, the deeper the colour. Developing times will vary with different dyes so check the instructions. As a general rule, one or two hours will give you a pastel effect, while six hours upwards will give you a more vibrant pattern
- 6. To prevent your T-shirt getting dye on any surfaces while it develops, wrap it in clingfilm or put it in a ziploc bag.
- 7. Once you've left your T-shirt for a few hours, remove the elastic bands and rinse it in cold water until the water runs clear.
- 8. Now put your T-shirt in the washing machine. Once it's dry, it's ready to wear!

Song: Peanut Butter (scoutsongs.com)

#### Chorus:

Peanut, peanut butter, jelly! Peanut, peanut butter, jelly!

First you take the peanuts and you pick 'em, you pick 'em, You pick 'em, pick 'em
Then you crush 'em, crush 'em,
You crush 'em, crush 'em
Then you spread 'em, spread 'em,
You spread 'em, spread 'em...
(Chorus)

Then you take the berries and you pick 'em, you pick 'em, You pick 'em, pick 'em
Then you crush 'em, crush 'em,
You crush 'em, crush 'em
Then you spread 'em, spread 'em,
You spread 'em, spread 'em...
(Chorus)

#### Actions:

Pick: pretend to pick berries

Crush: squish something between your hands

Spread: use one hand to spread pb/jam over other hand

Main Lesson: For some people nothing compares to camping. Being in the woods, being close to nature, eating off the land and exploring God's creation is the greatest escape they could ever ask for. They love tents, campfires, and s'mores. They love fishing, hiking, horseback riding, laying on the ground in a sleeping bag and all the fun things people do in the woods.

So why doesn't everyone camp? Why doesn't everyone sleep in sleeping bags? Because not everyone wants to go camping. Going camping is a rough experience at times and not everyone enjoys that. Some people don't want to give up modern conveniences. Some people just aren't cut out for camping, and that's okay. There are lots of other places to stay on

vacation without giving up indoor plumbing and electricity. But when it comes to following Jesus, sacrifices are part of the deal.

(Read Matthew 8:18-22)

This is just one of the many passages where Jesus asks people to give up things that are important to follow him. He asks if they are willing to give up living in a home. Sometimes he says they must leave their family if they want to be a follower.

Sometimes people don't like these kinds of scriptures. They think it's unfair of Jesus to demand that we give up things to follow him. Who is this guy? What gives him the right to tell us to give up stuff?

He is Jesus, the Son of God. He gave up his throne in heaven to be born like an ordinary baby. He lived the life of a poor carpenter who had no home, and he died a cruel death so that he could give us eternal life. That's the man who says we must be willing to give up things for his sake. When we realize all he did for us, how can we not be willing to sacrifice for him?

PRAYER: Dear God, Teach us to be givers willing to sacrifice so we can be used by you to do good things. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Make It Stick: Challenge kids to find something they can give up this week in order to do something for the Lord; then recognize them when they do it: Ideas might include donating toys or outgrown clothing, giving part of their allowance to the church or other worthy cause, giving some time to help a neighbor in need.



#### GOING ON A HIKE

Setting: a favorite hiking spot, perhaps Tanyard Creek

Key Verse: "After this the Lord appointed 72 others. He sent them out two by two ahead of him. They went to every town and place where he was about to go." -Luke 10:1

Object Lesson: Item needed: pedometer or another way to measure steps

Ask kids if they've ever seen a pedometer. If possible, put it on one of the kids and let them walk around to test it out. Then, for fun, ask them to shake it and see what happens.

Pedometers are useful tools for people who want to get fit and stay healthy. They help us track our steps to see how far we've walked. They work in the woods, in the city, on the sidewalk, anywhere you want to go. And they tell you how far you've come.

God is calling us to go out into our world. He wants us to get out of our homes and churches so we can serve God by serving others. There's work to do in our communities, and even in our neighborhoods. We can assist the poor, the needy, the elderly or even just a friend in need. By doing so, we can be God's hands and feet and share his love with others.

Don't just sit there and watch things happen! Get up, get moving, and get serving! See what adventures God has for you to do, right here in our community.

Game: Shake it Up! Item needed: pedometer

Take turns strapping on the pedometer set at zero. Each player gets one minute to shake, jump, and stomp. See who can get the highest number of "steps" in.

Craft: Scavenger Hunt bag for each participant and a list of nature items to find, cardboard, glue

Take a hike with a buddy. Remember, Jesus sent them out two by two! Each person will have a bag and a list to collect nature items. You may work with your buddy to fill your bags. Remember to stay with your group and on the trail! Take time to look around at the beauty of God's creation! After the hike, have a show and tell of everyone's finds. Then use your treasures to make a natural self-portrait. Talk about how you can be the hands and feet of Christ.

Song: The Happy Wanderer (scoutsongs.com)

I love to go a-wandering, Along the mountain track, And as I go, I love to sing, My knapsack on my back. Chorus:
Val-deri,Val-dera,
Val-deri,
Val-dera-ha-ha-ha-ha
Val-deri,Val-dera.
My knapsack on my back.

I love to wander by the stream That dances in the sun, So joyously it calls to me, "Come! Join my happy song!"

I wave my hat to all I meet, And they wave back to me, And blackbirds call so loud and sweet From ev'ry green wood tree.

High overhead, the skylarks wing, They never rest at home But just like me, they love to sing, As o'er the world we roam.

Oh, may I go a-wandering
Until the day I die!
Oh, may I always laugh and sing,
Beneath God's clear blue sky!

Main Lesson: No trip into the woods is complete without a little exploration. For as long as people have been going into the woods, people have been taking hikes. Some prefer the relative ease and safety of trails that have been well-tread and marked out for them. Many of our national and state parks have beautiful hiking trails that can lead to some breathtaking sites, from mountaintop views to hidden waterfalls. Some people even like to take trails on horseback!

Still others, craving real adventure, explore the deep woods. This can be dangerous, so never explore the woods without an adult.

Whatever path people take, it can be exciting and thrilling. Some Christians choose to take an adventurous route in their spiritual life while others choose to spend their time sitting inside and looking out the window. Some like to sit in their pews on Sunday morning and keep their faith at home during the week. They're missing out on the adventures they could have serving Jesus! God doesn't want us to hide our faith. He needs us to get involved. Early on in his ministry Jesus began preparing his own disciples to take on the work he began – work he expects us to continue!

## (Read Luke 10:1-17)

Jesus didn't pretend with his followers. He told them they had to go, and he told them it would be challenging, saying they would be like lambs among wolves. That sounds pretty scary! But still, Jesus asked them to go and spread the Good News that he had given them.

The people returned to Jesus amazed. They shared the Good News, just as Jesus asked, and they found that all the power Jesus had promised them really was theirs.

Jesus sent the seventy-two out to show them that they could continue his work when he was gone. He also did it to show us that we could do the same.

The seventy-two learned some important things from their experience. They learned that Jesus needed their help. They also learned to go in peace and they learned that Jesus would give them what they needed. Our church is here to help those who believe in Jesus to grow and learn more about him, but it was never intended to be our hiding place. Jesus wants us

to go out into our community and the whole world, sharing the good news in words and actions. We can tell people about Jesus and we can serve people, becoming the hands and feet of Jesus. Many times it's our actions, not our words that will convince people that Jesus really loves them!

PRAYER: Dear God, Lead us and guide us as we go out into the world and serve others in your name. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Make It Stick: Run an errand with the kids this week to do some good for someone in need. Drop some non-perishable in the Blessings Box, donate some clothes, or get involved in church or community project.



#### MAKE S'MORES

Setting: Anywhere it's safe to make a campfire

Key Verse: "Then Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever go hungry. And no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty.'"

- John 6:35

Object Lesson: Items needed: Loaf of bread

Ask if anyone is hungry. Hand them a piece of bread and let them snack. Then ask, "Will that be enough for the rest of the day? Will you be okay tomorrow now that you've had some bread today?" Not at all, right? That piece of bread is a nice snack or even a nice part of a meal, but soon you'll be hungry again.

Earthly food can give us energy, vitamins and nutrients to keep us going and help us thrive, but no matter what we eat, we will always have to eat more. We need to keep ourselves going.

Jesus, on the other hand, is the bread of life When we receive Jesus, we will no longer be spiritually hungry. He will continually fill us with his Spirit so that we can face life's challenges and do his good work. Jesus is the bread of life. He is all we need.

Game: S'more Towers Items needed: Graham crackers, chocolate sauce in a bowl, marshmallows

See who can make the tallest tower out of s'more ingredients. Start with a graham cracker, then dip a marshmallow in sauce and stack the marshmallow on top of the cracker. Then add more sauce and a graham cracker on top. Continue this pattern until the tower collapses. Last tower standing wins.

What's the point? S'mores are the perfect camp treat, and although they're yummy delicious, Jesus is the bread of life and all we really need.

Activity: Make S'mores Over the Campfire Items needed: campfire, graham crackers, chocolate bars, marshmallows, roasting sticks

## Song: I Like to Eat (www.campsongs.com)

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I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas
I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas
I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays
I like to ate, ate, ate ay-ples and ba-nay-nays
I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and ba-nee-nees
I like to eat, eat, eat ee-ples and ba-nee-nees
I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and ba-ni-nis
I like to ite, ite, ite i-ples and ba-ni-nis
I like to oote, oote, oote oo-ples and ba-noo-noos
I like to oote, oote, oote oo-ples and ba-noo-noos
```

Main Lesson: There's one little problem with being out in the woods. One problem that is more important than any other challenge that comes with roughing it. It's not where to sleep. It's not where to use the restroom even. There are plenty of hidden spots in the woods to do that.

The big question is, how will you eat? What kind of food will you bring? How will you cook it? How will you keep it safe from animals? Remember our bear hunt?

Planning to eat and drink is critical on a camping trip. Your parents know that and have probably prepared well for your nutritious needs. Maybe they even prepared snacks and what better camping snack than a s'more? There's nothing better than a fresh s'more to fill your belly after a long day of playing in the woods. But just like any food we eat, it won't keep us full for long.

There is one food we can have that will satisfy us, not just for a few hours but for life. It's not food for our bellies that comes from the store or even nature, but the spiritual food Jesus speaks of in today's scripture.

(Read John 6:25-51)

Think about a time you've taken Holy Communion in church. If you remember, during this Sacrament, the pastor blesses some bread and juice then we eat and drink it. The juice represents the blood Jesus shed for us on the cross, and the bread represents his body broken for us. Jesus instituted communion the night before he was crucified, but long before that night, Jesus told people he was the bread of life. He is the bread that satisfies the spiritual hunger we all have. Jesus is the bread of life, and if we eat the bread of life, we will never be spiritually hungry again.

We are all born with a hunger inside us. There's a hole in our hearts that only can be filled by one thing, and that's Jesus. Jesus tells us that there is no substitute for himself. He is the only thing that can satisfy our hunger. He is all we need. Because Jesus died and rose again, he can forgive our sins. We can invite Jesus into our hearts, and his Holy Spirit will fill us up.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for Jesus and all that he has done for us. Help us to find contentment in him. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Make It Stick: No camping trip would be complete without fixing up s'mores. They really hit the empty spot in our bellies. When it comes to filling the empty spot in our hearts, Jesus is the bread of life that makes us complete. When you say table grace this week remember to thank God for providing us with the bread of life – Jesus.



#### SINGING CAMPFIRE SONGS

Setting: Around a campfire, if possible or outside in nature

Key Verse: "Then Jesus came to the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives. There the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God with joy. In loud voices they praised him for all the miracles they had seen." — Luke 19:37

Object Lesson: Items Needed: Birthday cake with lit candles

Bring the cake out. Sing "Happy Birthday" to the person with the most recent birthday. Birthdays are one of many occasions where people like to sing. Singing is a popular campfire tradition too. If you ever go to a camp,

you'll learn lots of fun songs that people have sung around the campfire for generations. Singing can be a fun way to end your day with a smile on your face.

There's another time and place where we sing, and that's in church. At church we sing about God. We sing to thank him for all that he has done. We sing to tell him how wonderful he is and to praise him for who he is. And guess what? Jesus loves to hear us sing! When it's time to praise God, sing loud and sing with joy! He deserves our love, our praise, and our songs!

Game: Don't Forget the Lyrics Items needed: a few songs the kids will know, sillier is better!

Play or sing a few lines from a song, then pause it. Take turns singing the next line of the song. Allow the kids to get silly in their responses. Do this with several different songs.

What's the Point? God wants us to sing loud and strong when we praise him.

Craft: Rain Stick



#### **How to Make a Rainstick Instrument**

#### Materials for Homemade Rainstick

- Sturdy cardboard tube (We used the empty cardboard tube from an aluminum foil roll.)
- Paint
- Large, brown paper grocery bag
- Yarn
- Rubberbands
- Scissors
- Pipe cleaners and/or craft wire
- Beads, rice, beans, pebbles or other material for inside the rainstick

#### **Directions for Homemade Rainstick**

1. Start by <u>painting</u> your cardboard tube. We painted ours to resemble a piece of hollow wood. Let it dry.



- 2. Cut out two circles from a large, paper grocery bag. We crumpled the paper up to make it soft and look worn. We also cut some fringe around the outside of the circle.
- 3. Attach one circle to the end of your cardboard tube using a rubber band.

4. Experiment with different items and the sound of your rainstick.

One favoritexperimentionites differing tawleys the site of properimentionites of the rainstick along with rice. It sounded most like a typical sound you'd expect from a rainstick.



Another favorite combination because the sound is louder with the hard beans knocking into the metal wire as they traveled down the tube.



- 5. Once you're happy with the sound of your rainstick, rubberband the other paper circle to the opposite end.
- 6. Tie some different colored pieces to yarn to each end.

Activity: Campfire Sing-a-long What campfire songs do you know? Here are a few songs to sing together.

Go Tell it on a Mountain
Chorus:
Go tell it on a mountain
Over the hill and everywhere!
Go tell it on a mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.
Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born
And brought us our salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.

I Have the Joy!
I have the joy, joy, joy, joy
down in my heart, where?
Down in my heart, where?
Down in my heart.
looking
I have the joy,

looking I have the joy, joy, joy, joy careful little down in my heart to stay. See. Chorus:

(repeat with ears/hear, tongue/say,

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me this I know,

for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to him belong,
they are weak, but he is strong.

Chorus: Yes! Jesus loves me.

Yes! Jesus loves me.

Yes! Jesus loves me.

the Bible tells me so!

Oh Be Careful Little Eyes
Oh be careful little eyes
What you see, Oh be careful
Little eyes what you see,
For the Father up above is
down in love. Oh be

And I'm so happy so very happy,

hands/do, heart/who you trust) I have the love of Jesus in my heart.

And I'm so happy so very happy,
I have the love of Jesus in my heart.

(replace "joy" with love of Jesus x2;

the peace that passes understanding x1)

Rise and Shine

The Lord said to Noah there's gonna be a floody floody (sing twice)

Get those children (clap) out of the muddy muddy, Children of the Lord.

Chorus: So, rise and shine and give God the Glory Glory

Rise and shine and give God the Glory Glory, Children of the Lord.

The Lord, he told Noah to build him an arky arky (sing twice)

Make it out of hickory barky, barky, Children of the Lord. Repeat

Chorus.

The animals they came in, they came in by twosies twosies (sing twice) Elephants and kangaroosies, roosies, Children of the Lord. Repeat Chorus.

It rained and poured for 40 daysies daysies (sing twice)
Nearly drove those animals crazy crazy, Children of the Lord. Repeat
Chorus

The sun came out and dried up the landy landy (sing twice)

Everything was fine and dandy dandy, Chilren of the Lord. Repeat

Chorus.

He's God the Whole World

Chorus: He's got the whole world in his hands (repeat) He's got the whole wide world in his hands, He's got the whole world in his hands.

He's got the		(wind and the rain;
little bitty babies; brothers and sister		ldies) in his hands.
He's got the	in his hands	He's
got the	_ in his hands.	He's got the
whole world in his hands!		
Rejoice in the Lord Always	Jesus Wants M	le for a Sunbeam
Rejoice in the Lord always	Jesus wants m	e for a Sunbeam,
And again, I say rejoice (clap, clap)	to s	hine for Him each
day Rejoice in the Lord always	In e	every way try to
please Him And again I say rejo	íce (clap, clap)	at home, at
school, at play. Rejoice, Rejo	oíce,	А
sunbeam, a sunbeam And ag	gain, I say rejoice (cla	ap, clap)
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam,	9	
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,	And again, I say rejoice (clap, clap)	
I'll be a sunbeam for Him. Re	5	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
•	I say rejoice (clap, cl	

There are certain things we do when camping that we just Main Lesson: don't do at home. We spend more time interacting with real people. We speak to real people. We don't have a choice, because oftentimes there is no power or signal out in the woods. We spend more time being active. We

fish for our food. We explore. We pay more attention to the beauty of nature because there is less to distract us. We see more sights. We see animals and the beauty of creation.

You know what else is fun to do? We sing! Instead of listening to devices, we sing our own songs with each other. Sometimes people even bring a guitar or other instrument. Often times we just sing. We sing old, familiar songs.

Singing is an important part of the Christian life. We sing in church and we sing whenever we gather. We sing because it is one of the things that believers have always done to celebrate God. Today's scripture takes us to a day when the people of Jerusalem burst into song. It's one of the last happy, joyful days Jesus had before he went to the cross: the day he rode into Jerusalem. Think about the day we wave palm branches in church. It's that day.

What an amazing picture Luke gives us. First, we have Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey! It was an entrance fit for a king, for real! In ancient times when a king came in peace, he rode on the back of a donkey as the people came out to greet him. Jesus chose to ride in on a donkey to let the people know their true king had come.

What makes the scene even more beautiful is how the people greeted him. They filled the streets. Those who had cloaks lined the streets with their garments, and those who did not have cloaks grabbed palm branches to lie on the road. Others waved palm branches in the air. Everyone was singing, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Less than a week later, this same mob of people would be the one to condemn Jesus to die. As tragic as that story is, Jesus' death would only give us more reason to sing his praises.

We have lots of ways to show gratitude and thanks. We send thank you cards to people who have done nice things for us. Sometimes we even get people gifts as a way to say thank you. But sometimes words just aren't enough. That's when it's a great time to sing, so our voices can really be heard.

God has been so good to us. Sometimes we take those blessings for granted. Every day, God gives us new blessings and new reasons to celebrate our Creator's love. What's your favorite song to sing for God?

PRAYER: Dear God, We thank you for all the things you have done. We love you, and we give praise to your name! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Make It Stick: Tune into a Christian radio station in your car and sing some songs to God as a family. Or forget the radio and just sing praise songs on your own!



TELLING CAMPFIRE STORIES

Setting: Sitting around a campfire or a lit candle, if indoors

Key Verse: <u>But they didn't find his body</u>. So they came and told us what they had seen. They saw angels, who said <u>Jesus was alive</u>. – Luke 24:23

Object Lesson: Item needed: Photo Album

We all love to tell stories, don't we? We love to share good memories we've had and places we've visited. When we get together with friends, we love to remember the times we had in the past, even as we make new memories in the present.

We tell stories every day of our lives. Some are funny. Some are scary. Some can even be sad. The story of Jesus is not just a story with a happy ending. It can be a happy ending for all of us! Share the good news of Jesus so the whole world will know that Jesus loves them!

Game: Name That Story Items Needed: Cut out the clues on the next page.

Take turns reading the clues while the group guesses the answers. Make up your own story clues for extra fun!

N	ΔΝ	ИF	THAT	· STOR	וו) ע	lifs –	CLIT	INTO	<b>STRIPS</b>
17	AI.	VIL	IIIAI	JIUN	ICL	ULJ —	CUI	11410	JIMES

Girl does not listen to her stepmother, goes to a ball, loses a shoe, marries a prince.

CINDERELLA

Girl runs away from stepmother, makes friends with little people, bites into a poisoned apple, comes back to life.

SNOW WHITE

Boy leaves family farm, travels in space, becomes a knight, and fights his father to save the galaxy.

STAR WARS

Boy is bitten by a bug, becomes a super hero, fights lizards, goblins, and rhinos.

SPIDER-MAN

Girl lives in a tall tower, has long hair that is used for a ladder. RUPUNZEL

Guy steals from the rich and gives to the poor. He's good with a bow and arrow.

#### **ROBIN HOOD**

Girl meets a monster, falls in love, and he turns out to be a handsome prince.

### **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST**

One sister wants to build a snowman. The other sister keeps freezing everything.

## **FROZEN**

Craft: Memory Book glue, markers or crayons

Craft: Memory Book Items needed: 2 pieces of paper, scissors,

# Make a Fold-In Square Book



This is a great first book making project for kids because it is super easy to make and you don't have to make the binding for it. All you have to do is cut 2 rectangle pieces of paper...both the same size. Then criss-cross them like you see in the illustration above. Glue them together on the one square where they meet. After that dries then you can write your criss-cross book on the inside. You close the book by closing the square upon itself. You may want to add a tie to keep it secure when closed.

Write or draw about your memories from Spending Your Summer with God and with your family.

# Song: "Kumbaya"

Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Oh Lord, kumbayah

Someone's sleeping, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's sleeping, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's sleeping, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbaya

Someone's dreaming, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's dreaming, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's dreaming, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbayah

Someone's crying, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's crying, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's crying, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbaya

Someone's laughing, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's laughing, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's laughing, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbaya

Someone's singing, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's singing, my Lord, kumbaya Someone's singing, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbaya Come by here, my Lord, kumbaya Come by here, my Lord, kumbaya Come by here, my Lord, kumbaya Oh Lord, kumbaya

Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Kumbayah my Lord, kumbayah Oh Lord, kumbayah

Main Lesson: Who wants to hear a scary story? It's a good old-fashioned campfire ghost story! Just kidding!

Stories are a good way to entertain ourselves on camping trips, especially at night. When you're camping you have to make your own fun. Sometimes it's tales about monsters and ghosts, or silly stories that make you laugh. Stories are fun and a memorable part of any camping trip.

People love stories. That's why we have books and why when the radio and TV were invented, the first thing people did with them was tell stories. Jesus also told stories called parables because he knew that we learn well from stories.

The greatest story is the story of Jesus. Today we're going to meet two men who heard the story of Jesus firsthand.

(Read Luke 24:13-32)

The fun part of this story is that the two men walking with Jesus think they know the whole story. They know Jesus was the son of a carpenter. They know he did miracles. They know he died on the cross. What they didn't know was why Jesus came or why he had to die. Jesus tells them the story

in a whole new way. He tells them the old stories of the Old Testament and uses those stories to explain why everything happened the way it did. Then, at just the right moment, the happy ending was revealed. Jesus is alive – and he was right here with them the whole time.

There's no more amazing story we can share with people than what Jesus has done. The Son of God left Heaven to save us! His story not only has a happy ending, but it is our happy ending as well. As John 3:16 says, "Anyone who believes in Jesus will not die but have eternal life."

From the time Jesus' story was first told on the road to Emmaus to today, the story has changed people's hearts and lives in a good way. Jesus gave his followers the command to share his story and we still do that today.

People love stories. It's through stories that we learn how to be brave, how to do the right thing, and how to dreams big. Don't hide the story of Jesus. Share it when you can so the whole world will know Jesus and we can all live happily ever after.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for Jesus and all he has done for us. Help us to share that good news with others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Make It Stick: Be sure to include Bible stories as part of your bedtime reading routine. There are lots of age-appropriate Bibles and books with children's Bible stories available.



# KEEPING THE FIRE GOING

Setting: When the camping trip is over, it's time to carefully extinguish the campfire

Key Verse: <u>"Suddenly a sound came from heaven. It was like a strong wind blowing.</u> It filled the whole house where they were sitting." – Acts 2:2

Object Lesson: Item needed: flashlight

We've been talking a lot about camping recently. We've talked about camping gear, camping activities, and camping traditions. We've talked about tents and sleeping bags. There's one more piece of camping gear we should talk about. It's the tool you want to have late at night when you

need to leave your tent for any reason. Can you guess what it is? (Take out a flashlight)

You don't want to go camping without a flashlight, do you? Out in the woods, there's no outside lighting, except from the moon. If you don't bring your own light, you'll stumble in the dark. That's not a very safe idea, is it?

If you bring a flashlight with you, the light you need goes where you go. It lights your path, and it helps you see where you are going. It can give you some comfort too, especially when you hear some spooky sounds out in the woods!

Jesus wants us to take a light with us everywhere — his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God's presence who dwells in our hearts. When we have the Holy Spirit, the fire we get from being with Jesus goes with us. The fire is with us at home, at school, any place we go. It keeps us connected to Jesus, and he lights our way in the darkness.

Create a race course that will require participants to zigzag through a variety of obstacles. Each participant must carry a spoon with an egg on it through the course. See who can complete the course without dropping their egg. Repeat this activity in the dark or with blindfolds to simulate darkness.

What's the point? It's hard to cross the finish line with your egg intact. It's also hard to get through life's obstacles unless you have the light of the Holy Spirit with you.

# Craft: Create a Campfire Items needed: listed below; creations by sheryl. blogspot.com

# Campfire!!



## What you'll need:

Old CD or round piece of cardboard

Rocks – about the size of a quarter

Twigs

A handful of soil, dirt or sand

White craft glue

Small scraps of red, orange and yellow tissue paper

Toothpick

### How to make it:

Cover CD/cardboard with glue then spread the glue out for an even coat.

Cover glue area with dirt or sand and tap off excess.

Use your finger to push back a little of the dirt from the edges, all the way around the circle, to make room for the rocks.

Squeeze out a generous amount of white glue onto the cleared edge. Press a rock into the glue. Repeat until entire rim of circle is covered in rocks.

If necessary, break twigs into approximately 4 inch pieces. Using white craft clue, build a "fire" with the sticks by laying them down in a tee pee formation, gluing as you go. Let everything dry for 2 hours (will not be completely dry, but won't slide around).

Tear tissue paper into small pieces, approximately 1" or 2" squares.

Place tip of toothpick into the center (don't poke through) of a piece of red tissue paper. Wrap the tissue paper around the toothpick.

Dab some glue on the tip and dip it into the twigs, removing the toothpick once inserted. Repeat around the top of the twigs with several red pieces and then add a few orange toward the middle, and lastly one or two yellow pieces at the top of the twig mound.

Let project dry completely overnight.

## Tips:

If you don't have tissue paper, crepe paper streamers work well. You may also use construction paper cut into flame shapes.

We do not recommend hot glue for this project. While the rocks will stick well, they can easily pop off later on. White glue will adhere much better so be sure and plan for an overnight dry time.

Song: "This Little Light of Mine"

This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine
This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine,
This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Hide it under a bushel, no!
I'm gonna let it shine
Hide it under a bushel, no!
I'm gonna let it shine,
Hide it under a bushel, no!
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine

I'm gonna let it shine
Don't let Satan blow it out
I'm gonna let it shine
I'm gonna let it shine
Don't let Satan blow it out
I'm gonna let it shine
I'm gonna let it shine,

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Let it shine til Jesus comes
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine til Jesus comes
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine til Jesus comes
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine
This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine,
This <u>little</u> light of mine, I'm <u>gonna</u> let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Main Lesson: Our time with VBS Family Camp is almost at an end. It's always sad when something fun ends, isn't it? One of the most important things to do before you leave the campsite is to make sure the campfire is out!! Whether you burn it only at night or keep it burning all day, campfires require special attention. One spark in a stray wind can devastate entire forests. That's why we have so many rules about campfires and why it's so important that we make extra sure that it's out before we leave.

It's a shame we can't take the campfire with us, isn't it? The smell of it would bring back so many memories every day as we go about our normal lives. The good news is there is a way we can take it with us. Our campfire has

been more than just a campfire. It's been a spiritual fire. It's the fire that burns in our hearts when we meet Jesus – anywhere we are! It's the fire of God's Holy Spirit. Unlike the campfire, this is one fire we can take with us. Jesus wants us to take it with us! Jesus wants us to take this fire with us to help us remember all he has done for us and to share the good news with other people.

# (Read Acts 2:1-12)

Jesus wanted a relationship with us, but he could not do that in his earthly form. There was only one Jesus the man, one Son of God, and that person could only be one place at one time. When Jesus returned to God the Creator, he sent God the Holy Spirit to earth. That's confusing, isn't it? The Spirit landed on each of the disciples in the upper room and filled them with God's presence and light. He gave them the power to speak the gospel in many languages and the courage to spread the gospel.

The same fire comes to us. The Holy Spirit connects us to Jesus. He allows us to pray directly to the Lord. He fills us with what we need to do the work of the Lord, and he lights our path so we can follow God's will.

The Holy Spirit is a fire that can go with you everywhere you go!

The Holy Spirit goes into action as the early church begins to spread. As people come to know the Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit, miracles happen!

The Holy Spirit will guide you, protect you and comfort you. It will be a constant reminder of the love and goodness of the Lord.

PRAYER: Dear God, Thank you for sending your Holy Spirit so that we can have a personal relationship with you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Make It Stick: What are some things you never leave home without? Ask children the same question and remind them we need the Holy Spirit with us at all times.

Thank you for participating in our Family VBS program. Here's a list of more traditional United Methodist VBS events happening in our area:

Bentonville FUMC

July 17-22

Fruits of the Spirit

Central UMC, Rogers June13-16

Monumental

- Celebrating God's Greatness

Please refer to the church websites for information and registration.