

This is the Day!

Camping Sunday Service – April 24, 2022

Introduction for Leaders:

This service is designed to be intergenerational with opportunities for people of all ages to provide leadership and to engage in a celebration of camping.

Preparation:

- A few weeks before, invite people to bring photos of themselves and their adventures at camp— either a United Church camp or camping trips they have taken with family or friends.
- Organize a slide show of pictures from your local camp and have it displayed as people arrive, or use one of the many camp videos available on the [United Church Camp Playlist on YouTube](#).

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome. Today is the last Sunday of April so in the tradition of the United Church of Canada, this is known as “Camping Sunday.” Camping is one of the biggest youth ministries in the United Church. Each summer thousands of children and youth across Canada come together to be in relationship in community, with creation and with God.

Camp is a place where young people are welcomed as they are, it is a place where they are encouraged to wonder and deepen into their connection to the environment and respect for creation. Camp is a place to be creative, wonder and engage in questions about our everyday lives and of the mystery of the Holy. Camp is a place where young people are nurtured in their own leadership skills and abilities.

Today we celebrate the work of God done through our United Church Camps.

Lighting the Christ Candle

We gather as a community around the flame of God's love, be that campfire or Christ candle, God's love burns brightly in our hearts.

Territorial Acknowledgment

Share the congregation's regular acknowledgement and/or offer this one:

We gratefully acknowledge that [camp name] sits on the traditional land of the [name(s) of Indigenous Peoples] people(s). We honour these ancestors and those of these nations who

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come to our camp today, by striving to care for the land, teaching new generations to do the same, and seeking reconciliation from past harms together.

Opening Hymn Suggestions: This Is the Day (*Voices United* 412)
And On This Path (*More Voices* 8)
This Is the Day (*More Voices* 122)

Call to Worship

One: This is the day you have made, O God.

All: We rejoice and are glad to be here!

One: You have opened the doors wide for all who wish to enter.

All: We rejoice and are glad to be here!

One: We marvel and give thanks for all you have created and all you have done.

All: We rejoice and are glad to be here!

Prayer of Confession

All: Creator God, we offer our thanks and praise and confess that we have not always treated your creation and one another with the respect you call us to give. We have treated the earth carelessly. We have traded nature for electronics. We have forgotten our community and put our own selfish ways ahead of the needs of the whole. Forgive us, we pray. Amen.

Time for quiet reflection

Assurance of Pardon

One: Indeed, at times we have forgotten that our wholeness lies in connection to community, creation, and Creator. As surely as the flowers bloom again in spring, God forgives us our past selfishness and will help us to bloom once again. From generation to generation, we can pass on the spark that lights the love of God in our lives.

Hymn: It Only Takes a Spark (*Voices United* 289)

Scripture Reading

Psalm 118:14-29 (VU p. 837, Parts Two, Three, and Four)

God is my strength and my song.

Lectionary Scriptures, if it is part of the congregation's tradition: Acts 5:27–32, Revelation 1:4-8, and John 20:19–3)

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Response after reading:

One: God's Word is a lamp to our feet,

All: And a light to our path.

Ideas to Engage All Ages:

- Show a video from your local United Church Camp
- Invite members of the congregation to share their camp memories
 - Design a time for folks to share camp memories with the whole of the community of faith. Consider asking people of a variety of ages to share. Or design your time to be in small groups. Here are a few questions for the group:
 - I wonder, what is your favourite camp song?
 - I wonder, if you have a place or spot at camp where you feel most close to God?
 - I wonder if you have a favourite camp meal?
 - Do you have a story of an adventure at camp?
 - How old were you when you went to your first overnight camp?
 - Create a skit called “This Is the Day” that tells the story of a day in the life of camp at your local camp and have a few people act it out while a narrator reads. Be sure to include some favourite activities and traditions as well as types of learning campers may do. e.g.: “Next, we had to sweep the cabin. I didn't want to, but my leader said we all needed work together to take care of the cabin as a way for showing our love for each other.”

Hymn: Amazing Grace (*Voices United* 266)

Prayers of the People

One: Close your eyes and imagine you are sitting out amid the trees in chapel at camp on a summer day. Hear the sounds of birds and other creatures around you, and water lapping on the lakeshore. Smell the trees. Feel the sun on your back and gentle breeze touching your face. Breathe deep and feel the peace of God in the natural world around you. Hold that peace as we share the Prayers of the People. (*Pause a moment before beginning prayer*)

God of All Time and Place, we thank you for our United Church camps. We thank you for the camp traditions that have sustained generations of young people. We thank you for friends made, lesson learned, and lives transformed.

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We ask your special blessing on our United Church Camps in the Pacific Mountain Region: Braeburn Camp, Camp Pringle, Camp Fircom, Camp Grafton, Mackenzie Camp, Camp Koolaree, and Rock Lake Camp, as well as our travelling Regional Day Camp, Camp Spirit. Bless the staff and volunteers that make camp possible for the many campers who come each summer. And bless each camper, that they may better know your love for them.

We pray now for others for whom we have care and concern...

(Include the congregation's prayers of concern such as prayer cycles and congregational prayer lists.)

We pray in the name and of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together, saying...

The Lord's Prayer

All: Our Loving God, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Offering

One: Our camps and our church ministries take many gifts from many different people to carry out God's work in the world. They take the time of dedicated volunteers. They take sharing of love and friendship through sunny days and rainy ones. They take money as well. Consider what gifts you offer to the work of God in our camps and in our church life as we sing our offering hymn. If you wish to put a donation to camp in the offering plate today, please make sure it is clearly marked.

Offering Hymn Suggestions:

Kumbaya, My Lord, Kumbaya" (Someone's: crying, praying, singing, laughing)

Sheet music available at https://makingmusicfun.net/pdf/sheet_music/kum-ba-ya-piano-solo.pdf

or "Tis the Gift to Be Simple [*Voices United* 353]

Prayer of Dedication

All: Generous God, we bring our gifts to you and humbly ask that you use them to share hope, transform lives and spark more love in the world. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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Commissioning

One: We have gathered around the warming fire of our community.

All: We carry that warmth out into the world.

One: We have sung songs and praised God,

All: We carry that joy out into the world.

One: We have learned together and held one another in love and prayer.

All: We carry that love out into the world.

Closing Hymn:

We Are Marching in the Light of God (*Voices United 646*)

or I've Got Peace Like a River (*Voices United 577*)

Blessing

One: Beloved people of God, go now into the world knowing you are a Child of God wherever you go and wherever you are. May the love of Christ fill you and the Holy Spirit guide you, this day and always. Go in Peace.