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TAKING IT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN



I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you will face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!
John 16:33

Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp

2021 BIBLE STUDY

TAKING IT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN

We are very grateful to the following individuals for their work in writing the 2021 Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp Bible study.

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2021 TAKING IT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN

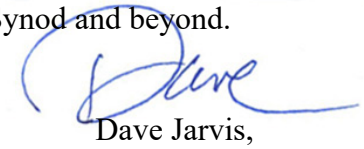
Over the years, one of the common themes of ALL of Friday Bible Studies is what are campers going to take down the mountain with them from their week of camp. In fact, in 2009, it was the theme of the whole Bible study that summer. Taking it down the mountain is probably one of the hardest things for our campers to do. Each camper leaves with the glow of camp and is inspired to be a new and different person away from camp. But a month or so after camp, campers slowly settle back into old routines and relationships, and the boldness that they brought home from camp has faded away.

So, this Bible study takes a new approach to this recurring theme. What if we tie a spiritual discipline to an everyday "thing" that will serve as a daily reminder of that aspect of the Christin life. So, the everyday and the ordinary become spiritual. As the quote from Chronicles of Narnia says, "**Remember, remember, remember the signs**…":

1. **The Power of Music… The Power of Prayer:** Music has an amazing ability to speak to our hearts and minds like no other form of communication. We find that prayer through music is heard by our ears and runs to the depth of our hearts. As we hear the promise of God, we are transformed.
2. **Telling our Stories…Telling THE Story:** We all have a story to tell! Story telling is a part of who we are and what we do. Every time we tell a story, hear a story or read a story, it is a sign for us that God has a story and we are part of that story too.
3. **Gathering Around the Table… Gathering In Community:** God created us to live and lean into life-giving community. Using the sign of a meal together (regular meals and communion), we create divine community amidst the mundane of life.
4. **Daily Shower….Daily Forgiveness:** The refreshment of an early shower washes off the remnant of sleep, the dust and dirt of yesterday's living, and prepares us for the day. We are cleansed and readied for a new beginning. This daily ritual also serves as a sign of God's promise. As we are immersed in the water of our morning shower we remember, remember, remember this sign of God's love and grace, and the new beginning that Christ makes possible for us.
5. **Boots on the Ground: Putting on Shoes…Putting on Love:** Every day we choose the clothing we will wear, and we choose what we will put on our feet, too. Putting on love and drawing on the love of God in Christ is a choice. And frankly, that love manifests itself like "boots on the ground."

Morning Watch is an important part of each day at camp. We will begin each Morning Watch with a welcome, some scriptural reading, a current song, and then move to about a half hour of God Time and reflection. We hope that this discipline of quiet time during the day is one that many will take home with them as they seek to grow in their relationship with God.

I am very excited about this study. This is going to be a challenging study in a new way. I hope this study can move campers, staff, and adult leaders to wake each morning, to think about their day ahead, and **remember the signs** that point to living a life that impacts others in the name of Christ throughout their day. If this happens, they will transform the lives of others, and in doing so, they will be transformed as well. I also hope this study will help you to continue to grow in your own faith journey. Thank you for the opportunity to be partners with you as we serve the people of the Rocky Mountain Synod and beyond.



Dave Jarvis,
Executive Director

2021 RAINBOW TRAIL BIBLE STUDY
TAKING IT DOWN THE MOUNTAIN
DAY 1: Remember, Remember, Remember the Signs
The Power of Music. The Power of Prayer. The Power of God's Presence.

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

"**But first, remember, remember, remember the signs.** Say them to yourself when you wake in the morning and when you lie down at night, and when you wake in the middle of the night. And whatever strange things may happen to you, let nothing turn your mind from following the signs…"

Welcome to our first full day of camp and to the words of C.S. Lewis from The Chronicles of Narnia. Many of you have read this series and know the story of how redemption would take place in this world of talking beasts. It is the struggle against darkness and the resurrection of Aslan. Struggle and new life. **Remember, remember, remember the signs.**

Welcome to a week of reminding ourselves of the sure promises of Jesus in his life, death and resurrection which give us a full life individually, collectively and for the world. Welcome to a week where we hold onto the promise that we are not alone, and that Jesus has conquered the world. Friends, for over a year we have needed this good news of Jesus, this gospel that gives us hope and a foundation from which to live. This promise has carried us through a year of a global pandemic from which the death toll is overwhelming for our thoughts and lived realities. This promise has carried us through racial struggles that seem to be a part of our lives for centuries, that we have had as the United States of America. This promise has carried us when the leadership of a democratic government has confused us, disappointed us, and frustrated us to the point that we are unsure of our democratic structure. This promise has carried us when we feel isolated and unable to be with those we love. In John 16:32-33 we read:

"The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"

This week we will be living into how we can remember, remember, remember the signs. This week we will look into and learn about the signs of Prayer, Word, Community, Forgiveness, and Love. We will lovingly repeat again and again…remembering that repetition becomes part of our lives…the ways in which we can participate and bring these gifts into our everyday lives. We will explore how music, storytelling, meals, showering (yes showering…trust us) and putting on shoes, (yes, those things that go on your feet) are the signs for our journey in the world by the power of Jesus and his presence in our everyday lives. Remember, remember, remember the signs.

"Let us pray." How many times have you heard that invitation? We say it at least ten times each day at camp with meals, in worship, and during the Bible Studies. We ask for God's

blessings. We ask for strength in tough days. We pray for help when homesick. In our lives we pray over tests, to score the winning goal, we pray for classmates to be kind or at least to not bully, and we pray for health.

Sometimes in our world we feel that we cannot pray because we do not have the right words, or we cannot say enough "fancy" church words. Sometimes we say that we can remember, remember, remember that prayer is a form of ACTS: A—Adoration; C—Confession; T—Thanksgiving; S—Supplication. Sometimes it feels as if our lives are just too busy to make time for prayer. And…

Our great God who creates us, who came to be one of us, who loves us, wants to have a conversation.

So, let us talk about prayer and music. Music is one of the few documented activities that engage both sides of your brain simultaneously, so when we pray through music we are literally "giving it our all." We are fully participating. We are showing up with our whole selves, fully engaged. Let's see if we can complete the following:

When you hear: Jesus loves me this I know… **For the Bible tells me so.**
When you hear: Na, na, na, na, Na, na, na, na… **Hey hey hey good-bye.**
And another one's is gone, another one's gone**, another one bites the dust.**
Hey now, you're an all-star **Get your game on, go play**
Whoa We're halfway there **Whoa-oh Livin' on a prayer**
Amazing Grace how sweet the sound…**that saved a wretch like me.**

Music has an amazing ability to speak to our hearts and minds like no other form of communication. It has been shown to help create new pathways in the brain for communication for those left without speech after illness or injury. It becomes deeply linked to memory and emotion. Music can speak what our minds cannot. Music can be universal. Songs connect with our emotions and hearts. The language of the lyrics is rhythmic and poetic. Although it may be hard to imagine, music goes to the depth of our spirits, our souls, and can help us understand at a level beyond language, beyond a simple formula, or beyond a hashtag. I have learned that as a song comes on in the car that I have not heard in years, the lyrics flow out, I sing with great energy and I say: Where does that live in my head? My family just shakes their heads and I know that I have been moved to a different time when that song was really important to me.

We live in a time when music is seen as a form of entertainment. Our ears are bombarded with music in our cars, on television and in social media, in stores…even in elevators. Grocery stores select certain songs from certain periods of time to motivate shoppers to buy more, to invite shoppers to linger in the store. We are sometimes told that we cannot participate in music because we cannot sing or maybe we are just a bit off key. Yet, through history, this is not the norm. In ancient times, some music was prayer…and still is in many parts of the world.

I find that music speaks deeply to my soul. So, let us consider the power of music as prayer. I have found songs that become my heart's cry – and if prayer is a conversation with God – then

music puts words to my conversation - to feelings, dreams, questions, doubts, sorrows. One of my most recent example of this is "You Say" by Lauren Daigle:

I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough;
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up;
Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low;
Remind me once again just who I am because I need to know.
You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing.
You say I am strong when I think I am weak.
And you say I am held when I am falling short.
And when I don't belong, oh You say I am Yours.
And I believe. Oh, I believe what You say of me.

Those words. I find that prayer through music is heard by my ears and runs to the depth of my heart. As I hear the promise of God, I am transformed.

Prayer as conversation – it can be sung, it can be spoken, it can be silent. It can also be in times of joy or in times of sorrow, times of laughter and times of anger. Prayer conversations can be even when we do not have words to say as scripture reminds us:

"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words." Romans 8:26 NRSV

Prayer can also be when we lift our eyes up to these "hills" around Rainbow Trail and say: **Thanks be to God!** There is no perfect time for prayer. There is no perfect way to pray. Prayer is a conversation and a connection with God, even when we struggle.

Today we are going to look at some examples of prayer in the scripture. Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Simeon in the temple singing his prayer of departure. Various psalms, which are prayers in song, are from ancient writings. All different forms, all different ways to pray. We will let the sign of music enfold us and help us remember, remember, remember the signs.

B. <u>OBJECTIVES FOR THIS DAY OF THE STUDY</u>

- We will explore the definition of prayer and look at how Jesus prayed in scripture.
- We will consider the many types of prayer and look at how prayer can be in music and how music can be prayer.
- We will listen to a variety of prayers in music and look at the gift of lyrics.
- We will name music as the sign to remember to take prayer down the mountain each moment we encounter music.

C. MORNING WATCH

Common Welcome

"But first, remember, remember, remember the signs. Say them to yourself when you wake in the morning and when you lie down at night, and when you wake in the middle of the night. And whatever strange things may happen to you, let nothing turn your mind from following the signs. And secondly, I give you a warning. Here on the mountain, I have spoken to you clearly: I will not often do so down in Narnia. Here on the mountain, the air is clear, and your mind is clear; as you drop down into Narnia, the air will thicken. Take great care that it does not confuse your mind. And the signs which you have learned here will not look at all as you expect them to look when you meet them there. That is why it is so important to know them by heart and pay no attention to appearances. Remember the signs and believe the signs. Nothing else matters."

~C.S. Lewis

Introduction to the Day

Today we begin our week remembering, remembering, remembering the sign of music for prayer. Today we will see how prayer takes different forms and how music can remind us to pray, music can bring us to prayer and music can be prayer in our singing.

Why we Chose the Passage and Scripture

We often make praying too complex, or we think it requires some formula to make it more holy or divine. Prayer is conversation with God. Prayer is being open to the will of God. Prayer is being open to things we cannot see or things we never imagine. Prayer can be often. Prayer can be short. Prayer can be without words:

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."

~ Romans 8:26

Song: "When We Pray" by Tauren Wells

People hurting, people broken
Beaten down and feeling hopeless
Wonder if it's gonna always be this way
Who will speak up for the captive
Show some love and heal a past that
Binds the wounds we think will never go away

But what if we could be a people on our knees
As one before the King

'Cause we believe

All the world starts changing
When the church starts praying
Strongholds start to break
Oh, when we pray
Prison walls start shaking
At the sound of praising
Nothing stays the same
Oh, when we pray
Oh, when we pray, oh

I see revival rising
I see hope on the horizon
As a generation stepping out in faith

Because we will be a people on our knees
As one before the King
Cause we believe
All the world starts changing
When the church starts praying
Strongholds start to break
Oh, when we pray
Prison walls start shaking
At the sound of praising
Nothing stays the same
Oh, when we pray
Oh, when we pray, oh
Let Your kingdom come, Lord
Let Your will be done
All the world starts changing
When the church starts praying
Strongholds start to break
Oh, when we pray
All the world starts changing
When the church starts praying
Strongholds start to break
Oh, when we pray
Prison walls start shaking
At the sound of praising
Nothing stays the same
Oh, when we pray, oh
When we pray, oh
In Jesus's name (when we pray)
In Jesus's name (when we pray)
When we pray, oh

When we pray

Questions for Consideration:

- What do you think prayer is?
- Do you pray during the days at home, off the mountain? If yes, what are those times? As you wake up? Over food? When you get ready to take a test? At the end of the day?
- Do you have a favorite song?
- Do you hear/see a prayer in that song? Have you ever just read the lyrics?
- How can you bring prayer to your day when you are off the mountain?

Closing prayer

Good and Gracious God, thank you for the gift of prayer. Thank you for the many ways we can come to you in prayer. Open our eyes to the signs of prayer in your word, in creation, in our conversations with others, and especially this day in music. In Jesus' name we pray, **Amen**.

D. SCRIPTURE STUDY

Welcome to our first day of Bible study. Today begins a journey with our campers of being in a place of being welcomed, of being fully affirmed for who they are, for a space of deepening relationships, to read scripture in a new and transformative way, and being empowered to look for the signs of our faith in tangible ways once they go off the mountain.

Please remember that you may have campers who have been in a Bible study for years at this camp and you may have campers that have never opened a Bible and all of that is okay. Empower them in being more comfortable with the Bible by first making sure everyone has a Bible and please remember RTLC has new Bibles to give away for the campers to take home. Secondly, giving explanations of where certain books are is so helpful: "We will now read Matthew. You remember that Matthew is that first book in the New Testament in the second half of the Bible." Or "Let's read from Psalms. You can find Psalms most of the time by going to the middle of the Bible and finding it in the Old Testament." Empower your campers to be in the Bible as much as possible. Also remember that we have DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES in campers. If you have a wonderful "stick digger" or stone builder during Bible study, it does not mean they are not listening or learning. If you have a camper who does not like to read, please know they may have a fear of reading in public or are uncertain of their reading skills. Invite. Encourage. Be fully present where your campers are. Your presence alone will be a gift to them as they grow in their faith.

Opening prayer:

Welcome your campers to Bible Study. As you gather in your time of prayer, think about opening and closing in prayer and ask campers to lead or join in prayer. Our restrictions for

health reasons do not allow us to hold hands, and we can still stand in a safe circle and invite everyone to share. Praying is a gift and praying in community is a practice that creates skill and comfort. And they can take this down the mountain.

Opening Questions or Starting Points:

(1) Consider asking the campers to name their highs and lows in the last 24 hours or since arriving at camp. You can have them name the things they are grateful for.
(2) Do a check in for how everyone is doing and normalize feelings of awkwardness in a new situation, great joy in returning to camp, homesickness as a real thing, or feeling lost from the quick orientation yesterday.
(3) Ask them to think about music and get a feel for how music is in their lives. Do they play an instrument? Do they like multiple genres or are they true to one?

Martin Luther, the monk who asked hard questions of the Catholic Church and became the hesitant founder of the Lutheran church said of music: "I wish to see all art, principally music, in the service of Him who gave and created them. Music is a fair and glorious gift of God. I would not for the world forego my humble share of music. Singers are never sorrowful, but are merry, and smile through their troubles in song. Music makes people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. I am strongly persuaded that after theology there is no art that can be placed on a level with music; for besides theology, music is the only art capable of affording peace and joy of the heart…the devil flees before the sound of music almost as much as before the Word of God." Friends, he wrote that in the 1500s. The power of music is still with us today.

So let's read and study:

Ask them to open their Bibles to Matthew 26: 36-46

"Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again, he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

Ask them: What did you hear?
What did you notice?
What do you wonder about?

Did you notice that Jesus was really struggling? Did you notice that he needed his friends to be with them and they were just so tired? Did you notice that he really did not have words? Did you notice he kept going back again and again to a place of prayer?

Here are the things that were happening in the Garden of Gethsemane: It was a time of deep agony. It was a time of wrestling and resolution. It was a time of weakness and failure.

It is helpful for us to remember that prayer is not always answered as we might wish. We see that Jesus, the perfect Son of God, poured out his heart. There is no doubt he longed to escape the cross. But God said 'No.' There was no fault in the person praying. There was nothing wrong with the prayer. It would have made no difference if the prayer time had lasted all night, or if the prayer had been repeated a million times by a million people. The answer would still have been 'No.'

The lesson? We can and should pour out our hearts to God, but with humility let us recognize that in the will of God what we find may not be the same as the will that we brought to the prayer. This is not the answer we may want, and it may be the answer we need.

It is also helpful to remember that the deepest of inner agonies can be shared with God. Jesus was troubled, and he tells his disciples his soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. It is a sad reality that some Christians think of any form of depression as weakness of faith. If that were true, then many of the Bible's greatest saints were weak. And Jesus was weak in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was, but it was not sin. Weakness is common to human experience and, at times, it is the very thing that drives us to God. And some Christians think that God is too busy to hear their inner agonies, and sometimes they measure their pain or compare their pain with others. There is no sin in being real about our feelings, and no sin in coming to God confessing our struggles. God copes very well with honest people. God, as we often say, can handle it! 😊 Cures are rarely instant, but being open before God is a beautiful place to start.

It is encouraging to remember, remember, remember that God's will does get done. Jesus prayed for that: "…not as I will, but as you will" (v. 39). And God's will was done.

We may never face death on a cross, but we may see some other appalling future that sends fear and dread through our whole being. The year 2020 could fall into that category and at the time of this writing, 2021 continues this struggle. At times like that we are tempted to say: "How can God be so absent? Where is God at a time like this? Why does God not step in?"

The answer is God is right there. God is here! Just as God was in Gethsemane, as God was at the cross, and as God was at the tomb raising Jesus back to life. Through all of it, God was there. God cries with us. God knows the agonies of our hearts. Our challenges and our agonies overwhelm us, and we feel so alone. But God is there, always there. God is not hiding, not gone astray, has not become unwilling. And God is at work, and God's work is always good. When Jesus left Gethsemane, the challenge of the future was still there. The agony of the cross was still ahead. Easter was about to come. But Jesus came through Gethsemane strengthened in

knowing God's will more surely and he could face anything God allowed in his life. Because of what happened in his Gethsemane, he was now prepared even for the cross. We pray that God would also make us ready for God's perfect will, whatever that may be.

Okay let's read again:

Luke 2:25-32: "Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."

Right now, many of you may be saying: Hey! I have heard this before. Why, yes! Yes you have! Many Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican churches and definitely the Lutheran liturgy have these words. This is called The *Nunc Dimittis* and it is traditionally seen as a song or a canticle and derives its name from the Latin Vulgate's opening words of Simeon's speech. In English, the Latin phrase means "now you dismiss," taken from Luke 2:29.

Simeon met the infant Jesus, Mary and Joseph in the Temple. This elder man had been promised by the Lord that he would not die "before he had seen the Christ of the Lord." Jesus' family had come to present their newborn son to the Lord, as required by Jewish law. It was understood that all firstborn males, human or animal, belonged to the Lord and had to be sacrificially redeemed from him. Mary and Joseph were doing this for Jesus when they met Simeon and Anna, the prophetess in the Temple. Simeon met them, saying, "Now, Master, I can go. His words of faith, along with a sense of joy-filled completion, is known as the *Nunc dimittis*.

Simeon's song is one of the three canticles we have in Luke, and Simeon was releasing his life to the Lord. Can you imagine that this was a time of song? Can you imagine being so at peace with the will of God that you embraced this promise and then sang to say "I am ready to have this life journey be complete?"

Let's read again:
Keeping in mind that the Psalms were often and now are often sung as prayer.

Psalm 5:3: *In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice;*
In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

Psalm 55:17: *Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur,*
And He will hear my voice.

Psalm 59:16: *But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength;*
Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your loving kindness in the morning,
For You have been my stronghold
And a refuge in the day of my distress.

Complaining, connecting, and counting on God. All of these places of prayer are acceptable to God.

Closing Prayer: Now dear Bible Study leaders, it is your time to get creative with prayer and music. I am imagining that you all have favorite songs that move you, inspires you, and leads you into what can be a place of prayer. I shared one of my many favorites and as you plan your Bible study really think about a song you love. A song that brings you in a different place. A song with lyrics that can be lifted as prayer. You can consider Jonathan McReynolds' *Situation* or go with old school and listen to John Lennon's *Imagine.* Dig deep and share songs that can become a prayer.

E. ADDITIONAL STUDY IDEAS

If your campers are struggling with paying attention, think about using a full body prayer to engage them in a different way.

1. Inhale and raise both arms forwards and upwards, as you look up, reaching and stretching, expressing relationship with God, our Creator.
2. Then exhale and lower the arms out to the sides at shoulder level, with the palms up, to form a cross. Hold them there and turn your attention to Jesus, our Redeemer.
3. The third person of the Trinity, the Hold Spirit or Sanctifier, we experience both within us and among us. Inhale and bring your hands inward towards the heart-center. Then exhale and reach forward, with palms up in a receptive position.
4. Finally, return the hands to a folded prayer position at your breast.

As additional tool kits for our campers consider the following:

(1) Let the Song Be Your Prayer: Sing along to a favorite song and allow the words of the song to be your prayer. Sing it. Listen to it. Let the song permeate your heart. Allow the song to open your heart and mind to conversations with God. If a verse or a few words tug at your heart, enter the conversation with God. See if you can find that "favorite song" at camp.

(2) Pray the Lyrics: How often do you sing songs in church or along with the radio, but don't take time to really consider the words? Hymns and worship songs are based on prayer and Scripture. Try using just the lyrics for your prayer. During our Advent evening reflections each night at Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, folks offered a story, a poem, or a musical offering of instrument or song. In a couple of those gatherings, folks offered to read familiar

hymn lyrics that we often can miss because "we have sung this song a million times." When we slow down, listen to the intention of the writer of the lyrics, new meanings and new possibilities can come into our thinking, come into our prayer time. Don't sing along. Instead, simply read the words, taking time to consider what they mean and how they can be your prayer.

(3) Use Music to Help You Focus: Do you listen to music when you study or work? I do. In fact, I have different playlists, depending on how much I need to focus. I've found that music has a profound ability to drown out the distractions in my mind and help me become focused on the task at hand.

(4) Use the Labyrinth with music as part of your study. Some of our campers have not walked the labyrinth and this walking discipline can be powerful!

F. IDEAS TO INCORPORATE THEME THROUGHOUT THE DAY

All Camp Ideas:

Scavenger Hunt: looking for signs throughout camp, or maybe looking for signs during orientation tour.

Variety Show/Open Mic Night with Campers: Sharing different songs, prayers, ways to pray, artwork, poems, etc. that have spoken to the campers in their own lives. Consider a "Name that Tune" event in the show.

Karaoke

Song Writing Workshop

Activities:

Eye Spy: looking for signs

Freeze Dance: Say a prayer when the music starts and you are dancing

Instruments/Singing throughout the day

Making instruments: instruments could be used in worship

Telephone: practicing listening to God's message to us

Pray while creating artwork (paintings, clay, drawing)

Walk the Labyrinth with Music

Worship:

Completely sung worship

Each prayer in worship is a different format: artwork, poem, song, sight prayer (saying a prayer for whatever your eyes land on in that moment), silent prayer, popcorn prayer (open space for everyone to voice a prayer request), try praying in a different position, etc.

Invite the campers with "Join me in praying" before singing a song

G. OTHER SONGS, STORIES, THOUGHTS, QUESTIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

#94 You Say
#39 Trumpet Sounds
#45 Dance With Me
#88 We Lift Up
#88 10,000 Reasons-Bless the Lord
#50 Shout to the Lord

H. IDEAS TO ADJUST STUDY DOWN FOR JUNIORS



If you use this poster, invite your little ones to see if they can name a tangible thing which can help them pray.

I. IDEAS TO ADJUST STUDY UP FOR SR HIGHS

This could be the ONE bible study day where they can bring their phones, play a song that resonates with them and read the lyrics in search of a prayer. Perhaps they could even make their own video about prayer including their favorite music.

J. PARENT DEVOTIONAL

Scripture: "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."
~ Romans 8:26

Reflection: Thank you, dear parents, and grandparents, for allowing us to accompany your camper(s) in this week of affirmation, transformation and learning to take the faith practices "down the mountain" for an active engagement with God and our communities.

This week we will be living into how we can remember, remember, remember the signs. This week we will look into and learn about the signs of Prayer, Word, Community, Forgiveness, and Love. We will lovingly repeat again and again, (remembering that repetition becomes part of our lives), the ways in which we can participate and bring these gifts into our everyday lives. We will explore how music, storytelling, meals, showering (yes showering…trust us and then thank us later! 😊) and putting on shoes, (yes, those things that go on your feet) are the signs for our journey in the world by the power of Jesus and his presence in our everyday lives. Remember, remember, remember the signs.

This first day of Bible study we stepped into the practice of prayer and how music can be one way of praying. We read scriptures about how prayer is related in biblical contexts and how we can pray in different ways. We discussed that prayer does not have to be long, theologically complicated, or "perfect" to be acceptable to God. God hears our prayers, those of joy and those of sorrow. God even receives the groans of prayer in times of tragedy and when we simply run out of words to say.

Activity: Does your family have times of prayer? Think about ways your family can incorporate prayer into even the small moments of your day. Are there any songs that are prayers for you? Consider choosing a song each month that is a prayer for your family. Do you pray in the morning as the day begins and then at night when your campers go to bed? Have you placed a sign of the cross on your campers' forehead and reminded them of "who they are and whose they are?" Do you pray over meals? Do you pray for those who are going through a hard time such as in illness or death? When you hear an ambulance, do you stop and ask God to bring healing to the situation they are attending to? Can you play "I Spy" and seek signs to remind us how to pray for what the sign brings to mind? Do you ever ask your camper: Is there something going on in your life that I can pray for? You may be surprised by their answers.

Prayer: Good and gracious God, help us to see the signs of your presence in our lives. Teach us to pray in many areas of our lives in many ways. May we not only come to you with our

needs, our praise, and our thanksgiving, but to make a habit of spending time in worshipful listening. Remove any distractions of social media and the busyness of life that would drown out your still small voice. Help us be guided in all things by you, seeing your presence in all areas of our lives. **Amen.**

K. **FOR SUMMER STAFF**

Staff, use these questions every week on this day and see what changes in your journey as we move through the summer.

(1) When did you find yourself praying this week? Do you remember the context, the request, the thanksgiving, the emotions you had?
(2) Have you found a way to pray that brings you peace, comfort, answers? Do you have rote prayers? Do you pray the Psalms? Do you sing prayers? Do you dance prayers? Why do you think this style of prayer fits you best?
(3) Are there prayers you feel you cannot bring to God?
(4) Are there others for whom you can pray as you have conversations?
(5) Do you feel comfortable asking folks "for what may I pray?"
(6) What songs this week became prayers for you?