

**On Camp and Conference Sunday** we have a special opportunity to join together with congregations across the Presbyterian Church (USA) to celebrate the creation of nature, to recognize the importance of retreating and to honor relationships that are fostered through outdoor ministry.

Encourage your home church to participate in **Camp and Conference Sunday**. This day is not only meant to raise an awareness of the camp and conference programs and possibilities within the denomination, but also to express gratitude and support for camps and conference centers of Presbyterian congregations, presbyteries, synods and the General Assembly and for all the dedicated and talented people who serve at them.



**Camps and retreats** have long been defining experiences designed to encourage persons to hear, respond, and develop as spiritual leaders called to inspire and lead others in lives of love. Camps and retreats have as part of their purpose the responsibility to assist persons in connecting the learning and transformation at camp or on a retreat with new ways of being and living in the world when they return. According to The Presbyterian Panel, the most common setting for a singular spiritual growth experience is a camp, followed by a retreat.



Our Biblical and Church roots affirm the values of occasional retreats for spiritual renewal and relationships. There were three annual worship/renewal pilgrimages expected of God's people; Passover in the Spring, The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) in the summer, and The Festival of Booths in the Fall. On the American frontier, week-long camp meetings became the primary annual spiritual pilgrimage. Gradually these were replaced by annual revival services and church camp programs. God has often chosen

to use retreats, revivals, pilgrimages, and even the "wilderness" to inspire, call, instruct, and/or renew people for service.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), along with The Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association, invites your congregation to rejoice, remember, pray for, and visit one of your camps or conference centers. This special emphasis Sunday is set aside by the General Assembly so that congregations all across the denomination may recognize the ministry provided by camps and conferences. As Presbyterians, and people of the Reformed faith, we are called to participate in active ministry. Our camp and conference centers manifest that active ministry and nurture that calling.

# CAMP AND CONFERENCE MINISTRY EMPHASIS SUNDAY

## GATHERING

GATHERING SONGS—Energizers (optional)

WELCOME

GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

**Leader** Sing, O heavens, for the Lord has done it;  
shout O depths of the earth;

**People** *break into singing, O mountains, O forest,  
and every tree in it!*

**Leader** For God has redeemed us and will be glorified  
in all the earth.

**All** **Let us worship and bring glory to God.**  
(Based on Isaiah 44:23)

\*HYMN

\*CALL TO CONFESSION

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, Creator of heaven and earth, we confess our sins to you. We are truly sorry for our wrongdoings and for our lack of sincere appreciation of your creation to enjoy and care for. Forgive us, we pray, in Christ's name.

(Silent Confession)

O God, you offer to us so many ways to draw close to you. You have given us your creation to enjoy and to care for. You have blessed us with camps and conference centers, places set apart where we reflect, pray, and grow in our relationships. Open our eyes to the possibilities that are before us, and draw us closer to you through times of renewal. May we take advantage of times to listen to your word and meditate on it in the beauty of your creation, to rejoice in your unfailing love, and to give you thanks. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## THE WORD

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

#### THE PSALM

Psalm 33:1-9

Old Testament

“Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright. Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. “

### TIME FOR CHILDREN

#### THE GOSPEL

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

New Testament

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many...”

L: The Word of the Lord...

P: **Thanks be to God.**

### SERMON

### SILENT MEDITATION

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

### OFFERTORY

Your church might consider designating a percentage of the worship offering for a scholarship fund for campers from your own church. Many churches invest in the Christian growth of their members by providing full or partial registration support if the camper will be returning to contribute to the community. This offering could also be forwarded to your camp or conference center to augment the scholarships that are offered to others who need financial assistance for events. In addition, your church could plan a work day at the site and use the offering to purchase materials.

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

L: Great and wonderful are your works, God the Creator of all.

**P: We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of earth and sky and sea;**

L: for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers;

**P: for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers.**

L: We thank you for these good gifts, and for making us stewards of mountains, lakes, streams, forests, hills and plains.

**P: Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation and that we may safeguard them for our posterity.**

L: We thank you for giving us camp and conference centers where we may withdraw for a while, to be filled with your Spirit in the beauty of nature.

**P: Grant that we may retreat and be strengthened, educated and inspired so that we may return home as people filled with your love and care.**

L: We thank you for the people involved in the ministry of camping, conferences, retreats and hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ.

**P: Grant that we may celebrate the ministry of the women and men, young and old, who serve as directors, administrative staff, program leaders, maintenance and food service staff, volunteers, board members and summer staff.**

All: Help us to see more clearly the vision of safe place and holy ground, O God. Help us secure this ministry for generations to come by sending campers to camp, by attending conferences, by going on retreats, and by supporting all who labor in this ministry. Support our Christian community as we, for a time, withdraw from our labors and gather in study, reflection, and worship in the name of Christ. Amen.

*Adapted from the Book of Common Worship*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

## SENDING

HYMN

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

"Go Now in Peace"

## **SUGGESTED LITANY FOR CAMP AND CONFERENCE SUNDAY**

LEADER: Give thanks to the Lord who is good.

**PEOPLE: God's love is everlasting.**

Come, let us praise God joyfully.

**Let us come to God with thanksgiving.**

For this wonderful world in which we live; for things great and small, beautiful and awesome;  
for seen and unseen splendors;

**Thank you, God.**

For the freedom to worship you in spirit and in truth in our churches, in our homes, and in the  
sanctuary of the outdoors;

**Thank you, God.**

For the ministry of camp and conference centers across the Presbyterian Church (USA)  
denomination; including those General Assembly centers, Ghost Ranch, Montreat and Stony  
Point;

**Thank you, God.**

For the ministry of our local camp or conference center;

**Thank you, God.**

For the service of all servants working in this ministry; employees and volunteers, directors,  
counselors, cooks, maintenance workers;

**Thank you, God.**

For the opportunity to serve as partners in the stewardship of the land;

**Thank you, God.**

Above all, O God, for your Son, Jesus Christ, who, by example, has taught us to set  
ourselves apart from the world to pray and meditate.

**We thank and praise you, Eternal God for all your goodness to us.**

**Amen.**

*Adapted from "A Litany of Thanksgiving", Book of Common Worship.*

## SUGGESTED LITANY FOR CAMP AND CONFERENCE SUNDAY

### For Nature

Lord, may we love all your creation,  
all the earth and every grain of sand in it.  
May we love every leaf, every ray of your light.

May we love the animals;  
you have given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled.  
Let us not trouble it;  
let us not harass them,  
let us not deprive them of their happiness,  
let us not work against your intent.

For we acknowledge unto you that all is like an ocean,  
all is flowing and blending,  
and that to withhold any measure of love from anything in your universe  
is to withhold that same measure from you.

**Amen.**

*Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821-1881), Book of Common Worship, pg 802*

### For Nature

We give you thanks, most gracious God,  
for the beauty of earth and sky and sea;  
for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers;  
for the songs of birds  
and the loveliness of flowers.  
We praise you for these good gifts,  
and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity.  
Grant that we may continue to grow  
in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation,  
to the honor and glory of your name,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Book of Common Worship, pg 802*

# SUGGESTED LITANY FOR CAMP AND CONFERENCE SUNDAY

## For Creation

Almighty God, your word of creation  
caused the water to be filled  
with many kinds of living beings  
and the air to be filled with birds.  
We rejoice in the richness of your creation,  
and we pray for your wisdom  
for all who live on this earth,  
that we may wisely manage and not destroy what you have made  
for us and for our descendants.  
In Jesus' name we pray.  
**Amen.**

*A prayer from Samoa, Book of Common Worship, pg 799*

## For the Human Family

O God, you made us in your own image  
and redeemed us through Jesus your Son.  
Look with compassion on the whole human family,  
take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts,  
break down the walls that separate us,  
unite us in bonds of love,  
and, through our struggle and confusion,  
work to accomplish your purposes on earth;  
that, in your good time,  
all nations and races may serve you in harmony  
around your heavenly throne;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

*Book of Common Worship, pg 797*

## CHILDREN'S SERMON



**Sing:** "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"

**Ask:** What do you think about when you think of the stars and the moon?  
Did you know that God created them and gave them to us as a gift?  
Did you know that God counted and named all of the stars in the sky?  
If we go look up right now, can we see the stars? What if we go outside right now and look up, then will we see stars? (Be ready for the child who knows the sun is a star!) Sometimes we cannot see the stars because it is too cloudy, or there is a roof over our head, or sometimes there is too much light from the city.

When you are out at camp, on a clear night, in an open field, you can look up and see so many stars it is hard to count them all. You have all the same stars above your house, too. God made all of them.

**Read:** Psalm 147:4-5 "He determines the number of stars; he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure. "

If you are ever outside at nighttime, look up into the sky and see the stars and moon shining brightly. Remember that God gave us the stars and moon to have light in the darkness. The sun gives greater light, but the moon is a lesser light to remind us of God's presence all of the time.

**Activity:** Give each child a star sticker as a reminder that God knows each star's name, just as He knows each of their names.

**Short Prayer:** Dear God, thank you for the twinkling stars at night and the sun during the day. Amen.



# CAMP AND CONFERENCE SUNDAY 2007

## Subject-Scripture Suggestions

Subject:      **Relationships**

- a. The condition or fact of being related; connection or association.
- b. A particular type of connection existing between people related to or having dealings with each other.

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many...”

### **Romans 12:4-8**

“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness”

### **Ephesians 2:19-22**

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.”

**Subject:    Creation**

- a. The divine act by which, according to various religious and philosophical traditions, the world was brought into existence.
- b. The act of creating or causing to exist. Specifically, the act of bringing the universe or this world into existence.

**Genesis 1-2:4**

“In the beginning when God created...”

**Psalm 19:1-6**

“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hidden from its heat.”

**Psalm 33:1-9**

“Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright. Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. “

**Jeremiah 10:12-13**

“It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens. When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, and he brings out the wind from his storehouses.”

**Hebrews 11:3**

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.”

**Subject: Retreat**

- a. The act or process of withdrawing, especially from something hazardous, formidable, or unpleasant.
- b. A period of seclusion, retirement, or solitude.
- c. A period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation, or study:  
*a religious retreat.*

**Matthew 17:1-8**

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

**Jeremiah 9:2**

"O that I had in the desert a traveler's lodging-place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a band of traitors."

**Luke 5:16**

"But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray."

**Matthew 11:28-30**

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."