

INTRODUCTION

The Way of Love is a way of life. More than a program or curriculum, it is a return to the ancient pathways and Rules of Life that followers of Jesus have observed for centuries. They knew the power of commitment to a core set of practices—Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest—and the power of gathering in a small group where you find love and support for living into these commitments.

At Barbara C. Harris Summer Camp, young people of all ages have the opportunity to explore what a Christian community might mean within the context of the lighthearted and playful world of summer camp. Arts and crafts, music-making, archery, swimming, sports and outdoor adventure—these are all crucial parts of the camp experience. By weaving the ancient “ways of love” in and through our day-to-day activities, we seek to grow closer together and closer to the wellspring of joy and love which we know in and through Jesus Christ.

With the Way of Love curriculum, we will spend the summer discovering ancient rhythms of life which have oriented and sustained Christians for centuries. And we will have the chance to experiment with incorporating these rhythms of turning, learning, praying, worshipping, blessing, going out, and resting into the other rhythms of our lives together. Like a climbing vine which clings to a sturdy wall to grow, these daily practices can support us as we grow in joy and in faith. Like an athlete who practices over and over before playing the big game, these practices can gradually teach us habits of care and kindness towards each other and to God’s world. And like an orchestra which plays together until each part rings in harmony, following these practices together helps us grow closer in tune with one another as a community of joyful love.

OUTLINE OF THE WEEK

Monday: Holy Habits and the Way of Love

Scripture Text: Ephesians 3:17-19: I ask that Christ will live in your hearts through faith. As a result of having strong roots in love, I ask that you’ll have the power to grasp love’s width and length, height and depth, together with all believers. I ask that you’ll know the love of Christ that is beyond knowledge so that you will be filled entirely with the fullness of God.

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Text: “Strengthen [us], O Lord...with your Holy Spirit; empower us for your service; and sustain us all the days of our lives.” (p 418)

Themes: How can our habits shape our lives? What habits are part of the structure of camp already? How can the habits of our community shape us as individuals, and how can we as individuals shape camp as a whole? What role do Rest, Prayer, and Worship play in our lives?

Tuesday: Turn

Scripture Text: Mark 1:16-20: As Jesus passed alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” he said, “and I’ll show you how to fish for people.” Right away, they left their nets and followed him. After going a little farther, he saw James and John, Zebedee’s sons, in their boat repairing the fishing nets. At that very moment he called them. They followed him, leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired workers.

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Text: “Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as our Savior?” (from Baptismal examination, p. 302)

Themes: What can we do each day, here and at home, to turn ourselves to the love of God? Turn, like a flower turns its head to the sun. What are ways we can remember to turn toward the love of God and

God's beloved community? What might we need to turn away from, in order to point ourselves to God?

Wednesday: Learn

Scripture Text: Proverbs 2:1-6

My son, accept my words
and store up my commands.
Turn your ear toward wisdom
and stretch your mind toward understanding.
Call out for insight,
and cry aloud for understanding.
Seek it like silver;
search for it like hidden treasure.
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,
and discover the knowledge of God.
The Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Text: "Grant us so to hear [the Holy Scriptures], read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit." (p. 236)

Themes: What kinds of different types of literature make up the books of the Bible? How do we think about the Bible in the Episcopal Church, and what can we learn from it? What might we discover from "trying on" different attitudes or approaches to learning from the Bible? Where can we find joy, love, and strength from learning?

Thursday: Bless

Scripture Text: Isaiah 2:2-5

In the days to come
the mountain of the Lord's house
will be the highest of the mountains.
It will be lifted above the hills;
peoples will stream to it.
Many nations will go and say,
"Come, let's go up to the Lord's mountain,
to the house of Jacob's God
so that he may teach us his ways
and we may walk in God's paths."
Instruction will come from Zion;
the Lord's word from Jerusalem.
God will judge between the nations,
and settle disputes of mighty nations.
Then they will beat their swords into iron plows
and their spears into pruning tools.
Nation will not take up sword against nation;
they will no longer learn how to make war.
Come, house of Jacob,
let's walk by the Lord's light.

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Text: “Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ? We will, with God’s help.” (p. 305)

Themes: What does it mean to bless something or someone? What does it mean to become a blessing? Where have you received blessings this week? How have you yourself been a blessing—to your cabin, to the whole camp? What will it mean to bring your blessing to the outside world after this week?

Friday: Go

Scripture Text: Luke 10:25-37: A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to gain eternal life?” Jesus replied, “What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?” He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.” But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day, he took two full days’ worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, ‘Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.’ What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?” Then the legal expert said, “The one who demonstrated mercy toward him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” (CEB)

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Text: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” (p. 366)

Themes: How are you already engaged in transforming the world in your community, nation and world? How have you personally experienced the need for transforming the world through a direct encounter with injustice or the victims of injustice? What need or concern touches your heart most, and has the power to move you to compassion and action like the Good Samaritan, who stops to care for the wounds of a fellow human being in Jesus’ parable? How would you like to be engaged in transforming the world in your community, nation and world? Don’t be afraid to dream big.