

Live the Story

**Camp Johnsonburg Summer Curriculum
2004**

**Exploring the faith practices of:
Friends, Music, Work and Play, Truth and Creativity**

Written and assembled by

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General Suggestions for how to use this curriculum

This curriculum was written to help you share this summer's faith practices with all the children who come here. It was created with the whole Johnsonburg community in mind--staff as well as campers. It is a tool to introduce these concepts to a diverse group of people who will ponder these practices from many different perspectives. It invites and makes space for different views and unanswered questions.

We challenge you to immerse yourself in the curriculum. Let it become a part of you. Reflect on it. Make it your own. Adapt it for your unit each week. Evaluate it. Add to it. Don't feel you have to use everything in it for each Story Time. We invite your comments and your questions on this curriculum at any time.

God calls us to this work, and Jesus is the ultimate teacher of these practices. We hope you enjoy using this curriculum and learning from it. Give yourself the freedom to flow, not only with the material, but also with the movement of the Spirit at work among your campers.

Blessings to all of you,
Erin and Lorelei
June 2004

Sunday Story Time --- **The Story**

Background on The Story: We all have family stories that are a part of our lives. They are passed on to us as soon as we are old enough to understand them, and we, in turn, pass them on to the next generation. They are told over and over again whenever the family gathers. We become a part of our stories and they become a part of us. Stories are a way that we know how much we are loved.

Stories are a part of our family of faith as well. Passed on originally by word of mouth and then through early manuscripts, these stories have been shared generation to generation through what we now know as the Bible. In this special book, we learn of God's amazing love for us. We see how God worked in the lives of our ancestors. We meet Jesus who calls us to live a life of abundance by following his way. We learn about the power of the Holy Spirit at work not only in the lives of the early disciples, but also in our lives as well.

This living history of our faith continues, and we are all invited to be a part of it by living the story. *Live the Story* is about seeing our own stories within God's story as we take a look at the five faith practices for this summer:

Friends
Music
Work and Play
Truth
Creativity

Our prayer is that each camper who comes to Johnsonburg this summer will discover God's love, Christ's way to live and the Holy Spirit's movement in his or her own life through this never-ending story of faith.

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: The Bible is the family story of the people of God. It reveals God's love for us and for all of creation. In it we encounter Jesus who invites us to enter the story and let it become a part of us. Changed by the story we find our own voice to share the news of God's love with others.

Read the Story: Psalm 78:1-7 (Good News Bible) "Listen, my people, to my teaching, and pay attention to what I say. I am going to use wise sayings and explain mysteries from the past, things we have heard and known, things that our fathers told us. We will not keep them from our children; we will tell the next generation about the Lord's power and his great deeds and the wonderful things he has done. He gave laws to the people of Israel and commandments to the descendants of Jacob. He instructed our ancestors to teach his laws to their children, so that the next generation might learn them and in turn should tell their children. In this way they also will put their trust in God and not forget what he has done, but always obey his commandments."

Explore the Story:

Questions for all---

(**Please note that younger campers may become homesick if invited to talk about family stories on their first day. Questions about school stories may feel more comfortable for them)

Do you have your own story? Have you ever written any of it? How might you do that?

How were stories shared long ago? How are they shared today?

What is the Bible?

Why is the Bible called the Bible? (It comes from *biblios*, the Greek word for book)

What is your favorite Bible story? How did you first hear it?

How were Bible stories passed on? Why were they written down?

What makes the Bible different from any other book?

The Bible is the most sold and the most read book of all time. Why do you think that is? What makes it a best seller?

If the Bible were to be renamed, what would you call it?

Questions for older campers and staff –

What is your favorite family story? Why? Who told it to you?

When do you hear your family stories?

How old are your family stories?

How are your family stories remembered?

Has any one ever written down your family stories? Do you think someone should? Why?

Do you find the Bible important in your faith journey?

Does it draw you closer to God?

What does the Bible say about God and people?

If the Bible was written so long ago, is it applicable to our lives today? Why or why not?

Should we take the Bible literally, or use it as a guide for our lives?

How can we use the Bible to help us know how to live our lives?

Do you ever share the Bible story with others?

What do you think you can do to make it easier to share Jesus' teachings with others?

Play the Story:

1. Unwinding the Story---(all campers)

(Things needed: 1 “story stick” -- a ball of yarn wound on a stick with knots tied along it at two yard intervals)

Have the campers gather in a circle. One camper or counselor will grab the beginning of the yarn to start off the story. Have that person tell a story until they come to a knot in the yarn. When he or she reaches that point, have them pass the ball to the next person who picks up where the last one left off. Each person continues the story until he or she

comes to a knot, at which time they pass the ball on. (Objectives: To acquaint the campers with one another, to have them use their imaginations, and to introduce the significance of hearing stories and telling them.)

2. Lost in Translation---(older campers)

(Things needed: Paper and pencils)

Tell the campers: “The Bible is a collection of oral and written stories that have been passed down for thousands of years. It was written during a specific time in our history, and because of that, it is sometimes hard to understand it.” Have the campers write down a significant event in their lives or an emotion they are feeling at the moment. Ask them why they would want to do that. After they have finished writing, ask them how they would change it if someone from a different time and culture would have to read it. Would it be easy for a boy/girl or a man/woman to read and understand it as it was originally written?

3. Thank-you notes---(older campers)

(Things needed: Paper, envelopes, and pens or pencils)

Have each camper take a few minutes to write a thank you note to someone who was instrumental in his or her faith journey. It could be a relative, friend, Sunday School teacher, youth group leader, etc. (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 20)

Sing the Story: “Roots” (From *Pick a Pack of Praise: 50 Songs of Fun and Faith for Kids*, 1988)

Join the Story: “Memory Stones” (paraphrase of story from Joshua 4)

Write Your Story: Now that we’ve talked about The Story, take a few minutes to think about your own story. How do *you* feel a part of God’s story? Write some of your thoughts in your book.

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today’s Practice:

Songs: “All Along My Way” (Words by Juan Trevino, 1996, Music from the Taize Community, *New Song: Leader’s Guide*, 2nd edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 3)

“Family of God” (Words and Music by Beth A. Watson, 1993, *New Song: Leader’s Guide*, 2nd edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 75-76)

Monday Story Time --- Friends

Background on Friends: Campers of different ages will view friendships in a variety of ways. Their qualifications for friends, the experiences they share together and the depths of their feelings for one another may differ dramatically. Be attentive to the fact that some campers may have emotional wounds related to friends or the lack of friends in their lives.

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: God created us to be in relationship with one another. Jesus, as our role model, shows us to love not only our close friends, but all of God's children.

Read the Story: John 15:12-17 (NRSV) "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

Explore the Story:

Questions for all --

What makes a "good" friend? A "bad" friend?

Is it hard or easy for you to make friends? Why?

How do you know if someone will be a "good" friend?

Do you ever feel like you are not being a "good" friend? What can you do to fix that?

Have you ever been hurt by a friend? How did it make you feel? Did you find it hard to forgive the person?

What does being a friend require of you?

What is your circle of friends like? Do you feel like you are welcoming to others?

Do you exclude others? Why?

Is it hard to welcome people you don't know as friends?

What do you think Jesus would want us to do?

What kinds of things do you share with your friends?

Are there things you share with certain friends but not others? Why?

Are there some things that you share with only one friend?

Could you share these things with Jesus?

Thinking about all of the characteristics of a friend that we just talked about, do you consider Jesus to be your friend? Why or why not?

Who are Jesus' friends?

Who do you think Jesus would want us to be friends with?

Is that hard or easy for you to do?
How do we do it?
Why should we do it?

Questions for older campers and staff --

Have you ever been in a one-sided relationship?
What are cliques?
Why do we have cliques?
Is it hard to be friends with people who are different from you?
If Jesus walked into your lunchroom, whom would he sit with? Why?
If you consider Jesus to be your friend, how does that change your image of who Jesus is?
What do you think Jesus is calling us to do in today's scripture reading? Does it apply to your life?
When is it difficult to love your friends?
Do you think that an enemy can become a friend by praying for that person?

Play the Story:

1. Wanted: Friend (older campers)

(Things needed: Pencils or pens and paper)

Have the campers write a personal ad for a friend. "What are you looking for in a friend?" When everyone has finished, have each camper read his or her own. Ask them if they could be the kind of friend they wrote their ad for. Let them exchange ads. Ask them if they could be the kind of friend described in the ad each of them read.

2. Recipe for a Friend (younger campers)

(Things needed: Pencils or pens, paper, patterns for gingerbread boys and girls)

Have each camper trace a gingerbread figure on his or her paper. Have them fill in the figure with words that describe the attributes they'd like to have in a friend.

3. Seismic Shift (older campers)

Ask if anyone can explain "plate tectonics" (a geological term describing the constantly shifting land masses underneath what appears to be "solid ground"). Then ask how this term relates to our experience of friendships. Ask campers to choose a partner and recall a time when they experienced a "seismic shift" in a significant relationship. (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 83)

4. Paper Faces (younger campers)

(Things needed: Paper plates, markers)

Have the campers draw a sad face on one side of the plate and a happy face on the other. Give them situations where they would have to decide whether each described a good friend or a not-so-good friend.

5. Spiritual Friends Web (older campers)

(Things needed: Paper large enough to draw a web divided into five areas with room for 12 circles in each, circular labels and pens or pencils)

Tell the campers that spiritual friends are people whose friendships draw them closer to one another and to God. These include: companions (family or church friends that practice their faith together), mentors (older wiser friends who guide us in exploring our faith), soul friends (people about our age with whom we share our deepest joys, struggles and longings), famous friends (people we don't know personally but who are an example

for us through their lives, their work, their music, etc.), and kindred spirits (friends who may have religious beliefs that are different than ours, but that give us insights about God and our faith). Ask each camper to take 5 labels and write the names of people who have been their five types of spiritual friends. When everyone is finished, have each camper place his or her labels on the appropriate area of the web and share his or her story. (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 85)

Sing the Story: "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" (Words and Music by Rev. Peter Scholtes, F. E. L. Publications, 1967, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2nd edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 311)

Join the Story: "Real Friends" (story) (*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, p. 169-170)

Hi Harry by Martin Waddell (book) (Candlewick Press: Cambridge, MA, 2003)

Write Your Story: Now that we've talked about Friends, take a few minutes to think about your own story. How can you be (or when have you been) the kind of friend that Jesus talks about?

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today's Practice:

Quotes to reflect on: "Friends are quiet angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly."

"Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thought nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with a breath of kindness, blow the rest away." Anonymous (Shoshone)

"We all need friends with whom we can speak of our deepest concerns, and who do not fear to speak the truth in love to us." Margaret Guenther

"What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies." Aristotle

"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: 'What! You, too? Thought I was the only one.'" C.S. Lewis

"A faithful friend is a strong defense: and he that hath found such a one hath found a treasure." Ecclesiasticus 6:14

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares." Henri Nouwen

"It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business." Mohandas K. Gandhi

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

“That is the beauty of love, whether in passion or friendship. A sharing that multiplies joys and thins the pains.” R.A. Salvatore in *The Silent Blade*

“Is this my home? I know not. Another stepping stone, I would guess, but whether there really is a road that would lead me to a place called home, I do not know. Nor do I think about it often, because I’ve come to realize that I do not care. If this road, this series of stepping stones, leads nowhere, then so be it. I walk with friends, and so I have my home.” R.A. Salvatore in *Passage to Dawn*

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (Good News Bible) “Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it’s just too bad, because there is no one to help him.”

Related camp activity: Trust walks at Ropes

Music: Let campers listen to a song about friends and then discuss it afterwards. Ex. Alanis Morissette’s “What if God Were One of Us?”, James Taylor’s “You’ve Got a Friend”, Michael W. Smith’s “Friends”, etc. (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader’s Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 82)

Tuesday Story Time --- Music

Background on Music: Today's practice is all about uniqueness, spontaneity, expression and experience. Be open to the ways that music defines each of us and marks times in our lives. Music is about personal choice and should be honored as an expression of that person. Something to remember--not all kids play instruments or enjoy singing but can still express their music in other ways.

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: Music is a unique gift from God and a spontaneous expression of who we are and what we're feeling. It is a universal language that connects our bodies, minds and spirits to God and to each other.

Read the Story: Exodus 15:19-21 (NIV) "When Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. Then Miriam, the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: 'Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea.'"

Explore the Story:

Questions for all --

- What's your favorite camp song? Why?
- What is music to you?
- How does music make you feel?
- Where do we hear music?
- What's the difference between music and noise?
- What do we use music for?
- What would life and our world be like if there was no music?
- Do you sing in the car? How does it make you feel?
- What songs do you hear creation singing?
- What kind of music helps us to worship God?
- What instruments do we need to make music?
- What instrument would you be and why?
- Why do you think the Israelites burst into song after what God did for them?
- Do you ever feel like you want to burst into song? When do you feel that way?

Questions for older campers and staff --

- Do we take God's music all around us for granted?
- What types of music do you listen to?
- How important is music to you? When did it become important to you?
- Does music trigger a memory for you?
- Do you connect with different types of music at different times?

What message does your music send?
What do you think about music that demeans women, glorifies violence or encourages hate?
Is it possible to become your music?
How does music fit into your life? How does it fit into the life of the church?
Do you think that music connects us to each other? To God?
What music would you choose to express yourself in worship?
How would that help you sing your life to God?

Play the Story:

1. Musical Eruption---(all campers)

Each camper should choose a simple item (rocks, sticks, etc.) that can easily be found near the unit. If the child prefers, they can make a sound with their mouths, hands or feet instead. Designate one camper to begin a simple rhythm with his or her sound. Little by little add sounds until everyone is participating. After continuing the rhythm for a while, campers can stop their sound until the music eventually fades out.

2. Nature's Instruments---(all campers)

Ask campers to lie on their backs in the meadow and then close their eyes if they feel comfortable to do so. When everyone is silent, ask them to listen carefully and try to identify the different kinds of natural music at camp. After a few moments, ask them to share what they heard. Do we usually get to hear the music around us in nature? (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 115)

3. Thunderstorm---(younger campers)

The unit forms a circle with the counselor in the middle to act as the leader. Beginning with one part of the circle, the counselor begins the first sound of the "thunderstorm" by snapping his or her fingers together in an alternating pattern. The counselor moves around the circle until everyone is doing that motion. Then the counselor starts the second sound with the first section of the circle by rubbing the palms of his or her hands quickly back and forth against one another. This is continued around until the rest of the circle is doing the same. The counselor then begins the third sound with the first part of the circle by slapping the palms of the hands alternately on the thighs. The leader continues it around the circle. The last sound is made by alternately stamping feet on the ground. Again the counselor starts with the first part of the circle. The counselor can mix sounds by giving different parts of the circle different sounds at the same time. Gradually, the storm subsides by taking the parts of the circle backward from noisy to quiet sounds until the storm is over.

4. Action!---(younger campers)

Sing a favorite action camp song OR choose a song and make up actions for it.

5. Create a Psalm---(older campers)

(Things needed: Bibles, paper, pens or pencils)

Ask campers to take a few minutes to individually read several psalms from their Bibles. Explain to them that the Psalms are actually songs that the Israelites are believed to have sung. God's people wrote the songs to express how they were feeling about God. They express many human emotions about life and about God. Ask each camper to take some time to write a psalm that expresses how he or she is feeling at the present time. (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 116)

5. Feelings---(older campers)

(Things needed: A sheet of paper large enough to hold about 60 circular labels, circular labels, pens)

Ask campers to come up with five different emotions that music can express. Divide the paper into five areas with the emotion written in that space. Ask the campers to write the name of a song on each of their stickers and then place it under the emotion it expresses. Talk about their choices and how their feelings influence what music they choose to listen to.

Sing the Story: “Now Let Us Sing” (Author Unknown, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 224)

Join the Story: “Marion Anderson” (story) (based on the life of singer, Marion Anderson)
Gabriella’s Song by Candace Fleming (book) (Atheneum Books for Young Readers: New York, NY, 1997)

Write Your Story: Now that we’ve talked about Music, take a few minutes to think about your own story. Where has music been important in your life? Write some of your thoughts in your book.

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today’s Practice:

Quotes to reflect on: “Words make you think a thought. Music makes you feel a feeling. A song makes you feel a thought.” E.Y. Harburg (Edgar Yipsel)

“There is always music amongst the trees in the garden, but our hearts must be very quiet to hear it.” M. Aumonier

“Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent.” Victor Hugo

“Where words fail, music speaks.” Hans Christian Andersen

“Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between the notes and curl my back to loneliness.” Maya Angelou

“It is only by introducing the young to great literature, drama and music, and to the excitement of great science that we open to them the possibilities that lie within the human spirit---enable them to see visions and dream dreams.” Eric Anderson

Songs: “Clap Your Hands” (Words and Music by Charlie LeBlanc, Integrity’s Hosanna! Music, 1988, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, pp. 49-50)

“Sing a New Song” (Words and Music by Kinley Lange, 1987, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 285)

“Lord of the Dance” (Words by Sydney Carter, Hope Publishing, 1963, Traditional Shaker tune, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, pp. 199-200)

Scripture: I Chronicles 13:5-8 (Good News Bible) “So David assembled the people of Israel from all over the country, from the Egyptian border in the south to Hamath Pass in the north, in order to bring the Covenant Box from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem. David and the people went to the city of Baalah, that is, to Kiriath Jearim, in the territory of Judah, to get the Covenant Box of God, which bears the name of the Lord

enthroned above the winged creatures. At Abinadab's house they brought out the Covenant Box and put it on a new cart. Uzzah and Ahio guided the cart while David and all the people danced with all their might to honor God. They sang and played musical instruments---harps, drums, cymbals, and trumpets.”

Books: *I Wonder As I Wander* by Gwenyth Swain (Eerdmans Books for Young Readers: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003)

Related camp activity: In Arts and Crafts, play music on a CD player and encourage campers to express themselves by drawing a picture or design inspired by the music.

Wednesday Story Time --- **Work and Play**

Background on Work and Play: Allow extra time to discuss the two practices for today. This Story Time may be done in one longer period or two shorter ones. For example, try the “Work” piece earlier in the day and the “Play” piece before dinner. Help campers to explore the balance we need in our lives and what that might look like in each of their age groups.

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: God takes delight in the way we are created as unique individuals and calls us through our work to use our gifts, talents and life experiences to meet the needs of the world. God invites us to balance our lives with playfulness, allowing an opportunity for our minds, bodies and souls to be re-created.

Read the Story: Work---Mark 6:7-13 (NIV) “Calling the twelve to him, Jesus sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. These were his instructions: ‘Take nothing for the journey except a staff---no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra tunic. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them.’ They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.”

Play---Mark 10:13-16 (NIV) “People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”

Explore the Story:

Questions for all --

What is work?

Do you have a job? Why?

Is it something you’d want to do for a long time? Why or why not?

What do you like to do best?

What do you love to do?

How do you feel when you’re doing work that you love?

What don’t you like to do?

How do you avoid it?

What do you do to make a job easier?

What are some of the jobs that people had in the Bible?

What kind of work did Jesus do on earth?

What kind of work does God do?

How can we be a part of God's work?
What does play look like?
What makes play cooperative or competitive? Which do you enjoy more?
Do adults play? How?
How is play different for children and adults?
How do you feel when you play?
What are your memories of your favorite childhood toys?
Do you need toys to play?
How would you spend a day off from school?
What does it mean to be bored?
If you could create any kind of game, what would it be?
What lessons about play do we see in creation?
What can we learn from animals about play?
What do you think Jesus would play?

Questions for older campers and staff --

At this point in your life is work something you are looking forward to?
Why do we work?
What is your dream job?
Do we tend to view different jobs through different lenses? What makes a job meaningful vs. meaningless? What gives a job value?
Do you think God calls us to do certain work?
What was Jesus asking the disciples to do when he told them to not take anything with them for their work?
What do you think your gifts are?
Can we use our gifts to serve God?
How do our will and gifts match up with God's will?
What things do you do in life that make you feel really alive?
Does God approve of play? How do we know?
Is there a way to be playful with God?
What kind of coach would Jesus be?
What do you think it means that Jesus wants us to be like a child?

Play the Story:

1. Guess the Animal---(younger campers)

Have each camper think of an animal without telling his or her idea to anyone else. One by one, have each child act out their animal until the rest of the unit guesses what they are. Talk about how animals play and what we can learn from them.

2. Pillow (or Towel) Game---(all campers)

(Things needed: a pillow or a towel)

Pass a pillow or towel around the circle. Each camper must do an action using the pillow or towel for a prop. Ex. Using it as a football by running with it under your arm.

Continue until everyone has had a turn. Talk about play that requires little or no

equipment. Is it still fun? (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 59)

3. When I was five...---(older campers)

Ask campers to remember back to their early childhood years and talk about what they wanted to be when they grew up. What influenced that choice? How have their ideas changed since then and what would affect their decisions now? (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p.52)

4. What is Work?---(older campers)

Designate two areas for "Work" and "Not Work" with the campers standing somewhere between the two. Read the following list and ask campers to move one way or another as they think about whether each choice represents "Work" or "Not Work". Talk about why perspectives on this might vary within the group. (painting the house, playing soccer, collecting wood, visiting older people who are ill, picking up trash, decorating for a party, making posters for a concert, writing thank you notes, writing a story for a school newspaper, doing the laundry, walking the dog, wrapping Christmas gifts, hiking in the desert, reading to a child, going on a date, baking cookies, building a bookshelf, praying) (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 53)

Sing the Story: "Lord, Be Glorified" (Words and Music by Bob Kilpatrick, Bob Kilpatrick Music, 1978, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2nd edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 195)

Join the Story: "Parable of the Cathedral Builders" (story) (*Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 55)

The Clown of God an old story told by Tomie dePaola (book) (Voyager Books, Harcourt Brace and Company: New York, NY, 1978)

Write Your Story: Now that we've talked about Work and Play, take a few minutes to think about your own story. Do you remember a time when your work seemed like play? Write some of your thoughts in your book.

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today's Practice:

Quotes to reflect on: "Those who know how to play can easily leap over the adversaries of life. And one who knows how to sing and laugh never brews mischief. Proverb, Iglulik

"Choose those pursuits which give you the greatest joy; you will do them much better. Do not let somebody prescribe for you what should be your life. Wait and see; weigh and feel the flow. Then you will be fulfilled, and you will perform much better. Gene Keluche, Wintu, 1992.

"A person's vocation can be found in the place where his or her deep gladness meets the world's deep hunger." Frederick Buechner

"My father said, 'Try many things. When you find what you love, do that. Then figure out how to make a living with it.' What wisdom!" Jose Hobday, OSF, Seneca-Iroquois

"You may or may not be paid to do your work." Alice Koller in *The Stations of Solitude*

“Notice the playfulness of nature: gurgling streams, dancing light, humming birds, fluttering leaves, twinkling stars. All creation wants to play with you.” Michael Joseph in *Play Therapy*

“Let the snows fall deep, the rain drive down, and the wind buffet my cloak. I care not, for I’ve a road worth walking.” R.A. Salvatore in *The Thousand Orcs*

“It takes a lot of devotion and work, or maybe I should say play, because if you love it, that’s what it amounts to. I haven’t found any shortcuts, and I’ve been looking for a long time.” Chet Atkins

Thursday Story Time --- Truth

Background on Truth: Be accepting of where people are at in their understanding of the truth. This practice could open up some emotional response related to how campers have been affected by lying, cheating, etc. For older campers, discussion may center around why people aren't truthful (pressure to succeed, fear of losing relationships, overwhelming situations (*Way to Live*, Edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 155)) and how confession and forgiveness help us to move forward. Younger campers may comprehend this on a much simpler level.

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: God's desire is for us to live our lives truthfully by bringing our actions, words and values together with one another. When we do this we live a more abundant life that brings us closer to our true self, to others and to God.

Read the Story: Mark 14:66-72 (Good News Bible) "Peter was still down in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant girls came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and said, 'You, too, were with Jesus of Nazareth.' But he denied it. 'I don't know...I don't understand what you are talking about,' he answered, and went out into the passageway. Just then a rooster crowed. The servant girl saw him there and began to repeat to the bystanders, 'He is one of them!' But Peter denied it again. A little while later the bystanders accused Peter again, 'You can't deny that you are one of them, because you, too, are from Galilee.' Then Peter said, 'I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know the man you are talking about!' Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows two times, you will say three times that you do not know me.' And he broke down and cried."

Explore the Story:

Questions for all --

What is the truth?

Have you ever not told the truth?

How does it feel to tell the truth? How does it feel to not tell the truth?

Why do we not tell the truth?

Have you ever told the truth and lost a friend because of it? How did that make you feel? Which is better---having a friend or telling the truth?

How do you feel when you don't tell the whole truth to a parent/friend? How does the hidden truth change the relationship?

How do we feel when someone is not truthful with us? How does that change a relationship?

Could you forgive someone who was not truthful with you?

Why does Peter lie about Jesus?

Do you think Jesus forgave Peter? Would you?

Questions for older campers and staff --

How does truth manifest itself to you?

Is truth just not telling a lie?

What truth are you connected to?

How do we live truthfully?

What would happen if the things that hold you back from telling the truth weren't there?

Have you ever been afraid to stick up for someone you love?

Is it ever okay to lie?

How does God help us to live truthfully?

How can we be truthful with how we feel about God and the way we live?

What kind of truth are you yearning for this summer/this week?

Play the Story:

1. Peter's Denial---(all campers)

Act out today's scripture passage about Peter's denial of Christ. Why would Jesus' good friend tell people he didn't know Jesus?

2. Jesus' Forgiveness---(older campers)

Begin by acting out Peter's Denial but then read John 21:15-19, the story of how Jesus forgives Peter. Talk about why Jesus might have forgiven Peter. How do we know when we've been forgiven?

3. "Blindman"---(all campers)

Sing the song together. Why does Jesus say, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life"?

(Author Unknown, *New Song: Leader's Guide*, 2nd edition, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, pp. 20-21)

4. Uncovering the Truth---(younger campers)

(Things needed: several small brown paper bags, miscellaneous objects that will fit into each bag)

The counselor should place one object in each bag so that the campers have not seen them ahead of time. Pass the bags among the unit and have campers try to guess what is in each of them. Then open the bags to see what is there. Did campers guess accurately? Talk about how we sometimes need to look deeper in order to uncover the truth. Is it easier to make assumptions than taking time to look deeper?

5. Serving a Higher Standard of Truth---(older campers)

Read Exodus 1:15-21, the story of Shiprah and Puah. How were these women serving a "higher standard of truth"? Can you think of others who showed courage by their examples? (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 70)

6. Barriers to Truthful Living---(older campers)

Divide the unit into three groups. Have each group identify a case that illustrates one of the following barriers to living truthfully: pressure to succeed, fear of losing relationships, finding ourselves in overwhelming situations. How do we cope with these situations in our lives? (Adapted from *Way to Live Leader's Guide*, Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p. 71)

Sing the Story: “You Will Know the Truth” (Words and Music by Jeff Peterson-Davis, 1992, *New Song: Leader’s Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council---PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 356)

Join the Story: “The Truthful Peasant” (story) (from *I Love to Tell the Story: Storytelling in Children’s Stories*, Jeffrey L. Maison, Chalice Press, 1998)
Old Turtle and the Broken Truth by Douglas Wood (book) (Scholastic Press: New York, 2003)

Write Your Story: Now that we’ve talked about Truth, take a few minutes to think about your own story. Do you remember a time when it was hard for you to tell the truth? Write some of your thoughts in your book.

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today’s Practice:

Quotes to reflect on: “It does not require many words to speak the truth.” Chief Joseph, Nez Perce.

“Jesus said, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life.’” John 14:6

“Living truthfully also means revising what you believe as more truth comes to be known.” *Way to Live* (Edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Don C. Richter, Upper Room Books: Nashville, TN, 2002, p.168)

“Children say that people are hung sometimes for speaking the truth.” Joan of Arc

“Believe nothing just because a so-called wise person said it. Believe nothing just because a belief is generally held. Believe nothing just because it is said in ancient books. Believe nothing just because it is said to be of divine origin. Believe nothing just because someone else believes it. Believe only what you yourself test and judge to be true.” Buddha

“Truths emerge from the facts, but they dip forward into facts again and add to them; which facts again create or reveal new truth (the word is indifferent) and so on indefinitely. The ‘facts’ themselves meanwhile are not true. They simply are. Truth is the function of the beliefs that start and terminate among them.” William James

Friday Story Time --- Creativity

Background on Creativity: This is the day to invite your unit to have fun and celebrate. Be open to how each child's creativity is unique. Think of it as dancing with God. Expect creativity to be messy. Did you ever see an artist paint a picture or a chef create a meal in a clean studio or immaculate kitchen? God is in the messes, so give yourself the freedom to explore what your own gifts and the gifts of your campers might be. God invites us to "get out of the box." Talk to campers about how creativity rises out of our pain as well as our joy. (Ex. African-American spirituals).

Open the Story: (Take a few minutes of prayer or silence to begin this time together and to set it apart from the rest of the day.)

Introduce the Story: Creativity is our response to God's creation around us and to God's spirit within us. It is our unique way of continuing what God began and offering this gift to the world.

Read the Story: John 6:1-13 (The Message) "After this, Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (some call it Tiberias). A huge crowd followed him, attracted by the miracles they had seen him do among the sick. When he got to the other side, he climbed a hill and sat down, surrounded by his disciples. It was nearly time for the Feast of the Passover, kept annually by the Jews. When Jesus looked out and saw that a large crowd had arrived, he said to Philip, 'Where can we buy bread to feed these people?' He said this to stretch Philip's faith. He already knew what he was going to do. Philip answered, 'Two hundred silver pieces wouldn't be enough to buy bread for each person to get a piece.' One of the disciples---it was Andrew, brother to Simon Peter---said, 'There's a little boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But that's a drop in the bucket for a crowd like this.' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' There was a nice carpet of green grass in this place. They sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the bread and, having given thanks, gave it to those who were seated. He did the same with the fish. All ate as much as they wanted. When the people had eaten their fill, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the leftovers so nothing is wasted.' They went to work and filled twelve large baskets with leftovers from the five barley loaves."

Explore the Story:

Questions for all --

What does it mean to be creative?

Do you have times when you feel creative? What does that feel like for you?

How was Jesus creative in our story?

How is God creative?

Think of a time when you were doing something and you just lost track of time.

What were you doing? How did you feel afterwards?

How can God be a part of those moments?

How do you express how you are feeling?

What creative gifts has God given to you? How do you use these talents for yourself and for others?

Questions for older campers and staff --

How can we open ourselves to the creativity in ourselves and others?

How can we appreciate the feelings of ourselves and others and the ways we express it?

Have you ever felt like a disciple who asks Jesus how he is going to do something? How did that feel? What happened afterwards?

Do we limit God's movement in our lives?

Play the Story:

1. Cloud Pictures---(younger campers)

(Things needed: Clouds)

Invite campers to lie on their backs in the meadow and gaze up at the clouds. What do they see? Wait a few minutes. Does the picture change?

2. Clay Companions---(all campers)

Have campers work in pairs. Have one camper be the sculptor while the other one acts as the clay. As the sculptor "sculpts", the "clay" allows himself or herself to be moved into different positions. When the "works of art" are finished, have the rest of the sculptors guess each other's artwork. Then have the campers change places. How did it feel to be the sculptor? How did it feel to be the clay and not know what was going on?

3. Charades---(all campers)

You may have to remind your campers of how this works, but it's a great way for all of us to be creative. Don't forget to play along with the campers!

4. Creative cookouts---(all campers)

If you're signed up for a cook-out or pack-out today, invite the campers to think about new ways to make the meal. Ex. Cut the carrots and celery in different shapes, make fruit kabobs instead of fruit salad

5. Cardboard inventions---(all campers)

Borrow some cardboard from the recycling center and use it to construct inventions in the meadow. P.S. Remember to return all of the cardboard to where you got it before moving on to your next activity.

Sing the Story: "Come Fly" (Words and Music by Kelly S. Moor, 1991, *New Song: Leader's Guide, 2nd edition*, Congregational Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council--PC(USA): Louisville, KY, 2002, p. 52)

Join the Story: "The Little Girl and the Piano" (story) (from *Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice, Youth Specialties: El Cajon, CA, 1994, p. 143-144)

Frida by Jonah Winter (book) (Arthur A. Levine Books: New York, NY, 2002)

Write Your Story: Now that we've talked about Creativity, take a few minutes to think about your own story. When do you feel unique and creative? Write some of your thoughts in your book.

Pray the Story: (A counselor, a camper, or the whole group can close this time together with some form of prayer.)

Additional Material for Today's Practice:

Quotes to reflect on: "With every sunrise we are presented a fresh, blank page in our life's journal. The Lord is a God of new beginnings, and gives us the freedom to fill each page with whatever we choose." (A. Jeanne Mott *God's Abundance*)

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." Helen Keller

"I uniquely, lovingly, embrace every image I have made out of the earth's clay." Hildegard of Bingen

"This is salvation: When we marvel at the beauty of created things and praise the beautiful providence of their Creator." Meister Eckhart

"I believe that each work of art, whether it is a work of great genius, or something very small, comes to the artist and says, "Here I am. Enflesh me. Give birth to me."

Madeleine L'Engle from *Walking on Water: Reflections on Faith and Art*

"Creativity is a type of learning process where the teacher and pupil are located in the same individual." Arthur Koestler

"A painter told me that nobody could draw a tree without in some sort becoming a tree; or draw a child by studying the outlines of its form merely...but by watching for a time his motions and plays, the painter enters into his nature and can then draw him at every attitude." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"While we have the gift of life, it seems to me the only tragedy is to allow part of us to die whether it is our spirit, our creativity or our glorious uniqueness." Gilda Radner

"Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words." St. Francis of Assisi

"As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world...as in being able to remake ourselves." Mahatma Gandhi

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which is to look out Christ's compassion to the world. Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now." Teresa of Avila

* For further information or to discuss this curriculum, please contact Lorelei Oelschlager at lorelei@campjburg.org, Johnsonburg Way to Live chaplain, or Harry Zweckbronner at harry@campjburg.org, Johnsonburg Program Director – or visit our website at www.campjburg.org and click on "Contact Us."

