

The Resonate Discipleship Experience is an opportunity for youth to spend eight to nine months being discipled, learning what it means to live out their faith in Jesus Christ as a member of the kingdom of God. It is scheduled to officially open this August.

DISCIPLESHIP TAKING FORM

It is with much excitement that I write this update. I need to say “thank you” for praying for Resonate! Please continue to pray for the development of Resonate as preparations are made for our first class of students to arrive.

We can praise God that applications are coming in. Pray that God would grant clarity in the decision making process to students considering Resonate. Also, our desire is to have 15 students for this fall class. Please pray with us for 15 students.

We can praise God for new partnerships. Resonate is officially a member of the Association of Covenant School’s of Discipleship. With that relationship we can offer college credit for our curriculum through North Park University. Please pray for the ongoing conversations with other universities and colleges.

We can praise God for generosity. Our sister program, Solid Rock, and North Park University have been incredibly generous in sharing curriculum resources.

We can praise God for excellent scholars. I am in the process of recruiting pastors and professors to be the instructors for the classroom element of Resonate. Please pray for them as they develop lectures and curriculum.

We can praise God for financial provision. A number of gifts (especially estate gifts) have been given to the help develop the Resonate program. Other smaller, regular, gifts are also a huge blessing in the development of Resonate. Please pray that God would continue to provide the necessary funds for our start up costs and for a scholarship fund.

I look forward to celebrating together the blessings poured out by God. Thank you again for your investment in the Resonate Discipleship Experience.

If you have questions additional questions about the development of the program, please feel free to give me a call our office at 402.757.3241 or email me at jim@cedars.org.

*Pastor Jim Eaton
Discipleship Director*

GIVE BIG TO CAMP

Go Big GIVE is a 24-hour, on-line giving event on May 3, 2016 to grow philanthropy. Go Big GIVE inspires communities to come together for 24 hours to give as much as possible to support the work of nonprofits in Hall, Hamilton, Howard and Merrick Counties. The minimum online donation is \$10 but every gift grows with added match pool funds and incentive prizes.

Visit gobiggive.org to donate today. All proceeds will go towards nonprofit organizations, like Covenant Cedars Bible Camp, throughout Nebraska.

COVENANT CEDARS BIBLE CAMP

CLARION

SPRING EDITION 2016

WWW.CEDARS.ORG

MARCH 2016



THE POWER OF CAMP IN A CHANGING CULTURE

Fact: NEVER IN AMERICAN HISTORY HAS THE COMPETITION FOR THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF OUR NATION’S YOUTH BEEN SO INTENSE!

The philosophy of postmodernism that dominates many public and private institutions seeks to convince our children that truth itself is simply relative. In practice, this doctrine of tolerance, usually taught as the most important value, becomes a forced acceptance that all philosophies and religions are of equal value. This new definition of tolerance is the antithesis of the Christian idea of loving the sinner while hating the sin. Christians should be the most tolerant of all people, but we should not tolerate sins that destroy people’s lives and futures. In the absence of an absolute moral anchor, a nation can become lost in shameless violence, drugs, promiscuity and perversion--.

Lee Campbell ED.D. Cumberland Univ. As the Director of Covenant Cedars Bible Camp, statements like the one

above can be very challenging to me in light of the mission before us. Our Hope however is not found in the “wisdom of the world” but in Him who is “the source of true wisdom.”

First, in most Christian camps, there is an extensive exposure to the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Bible is living and active, sharper than a two edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

There is also the opportunity for campers to observe and learn from godly mentors (counselors, speakers, and staff). As Paul encouraged others to follow his example as he emulated Christ (1Cor. 11:1), these godly mentors are able to model loving discipline and the freedom it offers.

Christian camps are typically supported by a number of local churches in prayer. God promises that the fervent prayer of a righteous man (or woman) accomplishes a great deal (James 5:16). God

in His grace, works in response to these praying saints, and it is the campers that receive the benefit of these unseen labors.

Another beneficial factor is what is commonly absent at a Christian camp. Technology serves to busy the mind and keep young people from focusing on the deeper questions of life. Campers have the time to ponder the Word in a much deeper way and find themselves surrounded by God’s creation, an environment that turns their minds to Him.

Another major blessing is that Christian camping allows the broadening on one’s circle of fellowship. For many campers, new friends they meet at camp, they continue to see year by year, becoming lifelong friends that they care for, pray for, and encourage in Christ for decades. God has greatly used Christian camping in calling those serve Him as Lord.

*Dan Buhr
Executive Director*

CAMP PLAYS INFLUENTIAL ROLE FOR SUMMER STAFF-

Relationships are an important part of our summer staff, none greater than our developing relationship with God the Father.

Our summer staff is eager to carry out the Gospel with others, including one another. Connor Anderson, a college student in Omaha, NE, has worked on summer staff for three summers on activities crew, lifeguarding and facilitating the tower. But it is more than just a summer job for him, it is an opportunity to point others towards the power of Christ. He has grown him in his ability to see Christ's love for others and even for himself.

"I wanted to work here, because it was a place where I found that I could be myself and I would be accepted for who I was," Anderson said. "I wanted to be in a positive and enthusiastic environment where I would be surrounded by other Christians."



Above: Connor Anderson and Shep Haynes wear identical Superman shirts. Below: Taylor Ostrom (left) hugs her friend, Laiken Hein, at camp.

He first began coming to camp in 2003 in the second grade, connecting through Community Covenant Church in Omaha, NE. Throughout the years, he continued coming to camp and making new friends, eventually deciding at camp to begin his greatest relationship – his genuine relationship with Christ. Years later, Anderson decided to continue following his passion for the Gospel by volunteer counseling, leading to his joining summer staff in 2013. Now only months away before his fourth year on summer staff, Anderson is prepared to serve others with a love for Christ.

"By working in an environment where others are encouraging and push you to serve God in the midst of the summer is a helpful tool to learn in work ethic," he said. "I am able to change my attitude in how I work and to do it for the glory of God."

THROUGH THE EYES OF A CAMPER

Like many campers, she came to camp afraid of her first time away from home. But she left that week coming away with something even deeper, a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Taylor Ostrom, now a sophomore in high school, first came to Covenant Cedars Bible Camp several years ago when she started attending the Evangelical Covenant Church in Stromsburg, NE. Family friends from the church invited her and her younger sister, Austyn, to join them for a week of camp. Although her mother thought it would be a great experience for her, Ostrom had no idea what awaited her at camp.

"I didn't know what to expect," she said. "But after I realized that I wanted to dive in and get to know more about Jesus and how He could influence my life."

Christ was only beginning to start a work in her. Over the next year, she was slowly shown the struggles in her life that made her feel isolated from the redeeming grace of God. But it was at her

Until then, he is keeping busy at home. He is sharing the skills he has learned while serving at camp to carry out the Gospel in his daily life. Anderson is eagerly pursuing his passions at home by getting involved with his life groups and discipleship group within his college community while also attending school full-time and working two part-time jobs. With the summer months just ahead, Anderson knows that camp has played a significant part in his walk with Christ.

"Camp is a place where not only do you experience God's beauty and divine qualities, but you also experience longlasting friendships," he said.

To get involved with serving on summer staff or to find out more information on this summer opportunity, find out more at www.cedars.org. An opportunity awaits you today!

second summer at camp that she released many of her heart struggles and accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior. With the help of her counselor to walk through and share the experience with her, Ostrom was able to make the most important decision of her life.

"I now realize that Jesus is here for me and I can confide in Him about my struggles and lean on Him for my support," she said. "Through camp, I have come to realize my influence on others and how important it is to be a good example to others like my counselor was for me."

And she actively searches for ways to positively impact others with the truth of the Gospel that has deeply impacted her. Like her own counselor, Ostrom wants to help campers grow in their walk with Christ and share the same experience with others that she first had at camp. Last summer, she began counseling a young group of girls.

"[Camp] will help change your perspective on life, or at least it did for me," she said. "You start to see things in your life in a different way."

AT-RISK YOUTH FIND THE POWER OF GOSPEL AT CAMP

The power of camp is far greater than the walls of our churches, it can touch the lives of kids even from within our very own communities.

Covenant Cedars Bible Camp has had a heart for hosting a wide selection of local guest groups that are designed to reach at-risk teens from across Nebraska. For the past eight years, Scott and his wife, Sara, have been lead facilitators at one such group, leading campers through a variety of games and challenges to develop trust, sharing, and commitment to one another. Our staff plays a role in serving them by helping campers overcome their fear of heights at the zipline or persevering through exhaustion at the climbing wall. During their time at camp, kids have opportunities to deepen their relationships by sharing and processing their own life stories in relationship to the Gospel.

"The love of Christ is contagious," Scott said. "I see the love and grace of Jesus Christ in our camp as well as Covenant Cedars."

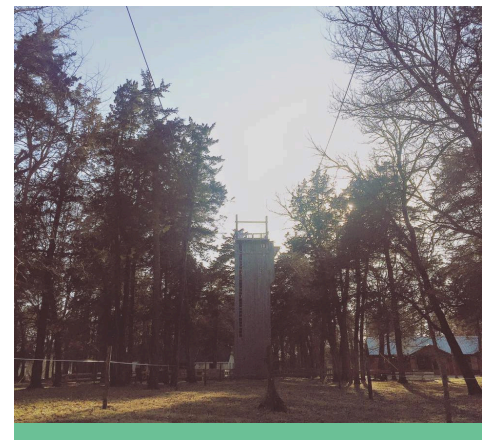
Scott and Sara have experienced firsthand the power that camp serves for today's youth – even

youth within the foster care system. In the past eight years of their serving in the mission field together, they have seen God working not only in the lives of their campers but also at the heart of their own lives. By reaching outside of each of their own comfort levels, Scott takes joy in seeing his campers doing the same.

"I probably get the most joy at camp when I see a camper grow. They might grow spiritually or emotionally. They might grow in self-confidence or grow in their physical ability to achieve something. [But] the best is when a camper grows and they recognize it," he said.

As the summer months draw near, Scott and Sara prepare for another summer of sharing God's love to teens. Just as they prepare for the campers, Covenant Cedars prepares to serve our guests just the same. It is an opportunity for us to love others we wouldn't normally get the chance to meet.

"I would recommend Covenant Cedars without any hesitation," Scott said. "Without a doubt, God has anointed [them] and I sense it the moment I drive into camp. I absolutely



The zipline and climbing wall have been vital to camps for at-risk teens.

NURSE REFLECTION

Great love is poured out even through the gentle care of a Band-Aid.

This has been the mission of many of our volunteer camp nurses, including Marilyn Rickley. For over 17 years, Rickley has been demonstrating her love for the Gospel and the campers by dedicating weeks of her summer to be a nurse here at camp. From treating bug bites to sun burns, she enjoys "recharging" her batteries by visiting with each camper and serving the Lord through helping others.

"My mom wanted to be a nurse and became a school teacher in her day," Rickley said. "She instilled a desire [in me] to help others."

Although much of her work is behind-the-scenes, she is persistent in meeting the needs of our campers and building genuine relationship through her care. Throughout her time at camp, she has witnessed her granddaughter accept Christ at camp. This summer, she will be bringing her fourth grandchild to camp, passing the tradition onto the next generation. However, time hasn't changed her passion for the ministry.

"I tell everyone I know to go to camp, volunteer, spend a night, grow in your experiences. trust God more, go out of your comfort zone," she said. "Get involved."



Rickley is retired from full-time nursing, but she spends much of her time with her grandkids or substitute