**CAMP SABBATH SUMMARY**

THEME VERSE

Matthew 11:28-30 (NRSV)

28“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

SESSION 1: GRACE

**Summary:**

Often when we hear the story of creation (see Genesis 1-2:4), it is easy to assume that God’s participation with creation ended after the creation of humankind on day six. On day seven, God rested. So, what does that mean for us? We see sabbath appear again as one of God’s ten commandments: “Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy” (see Exodus 20:8), and often sabbath becomes one more thing to add to our busy lives. In fact, finding true sabbath can seem impossible and overwhelming.  When God rested on the seventh day of creation, however, it was not something God intended to do alone. Before humans did any work, we were also called to rest, and to do so in the presence of God. The good news is that God does not require anything from us in order to get the gift of rest. No amount of work must be completed before we can enjoy true sabbath. No goals must be met. No amount of faithfulness must be achieved. Because of God’s amazing grace, we are free to seek true sabbath with God throughout each moment in our lives.

**Questions:**

* How might rest and Sabbath be similar or different?
* What struggles do you face in your daily life that keep you from believing you deserve sabbath with God?
* How might you think about Sabbath differently during a time like this where you may be less busy than normal? What barriers still exist that keep you from truly accepting God’s gift of sabbath?

SESSION 2: CONNECTION

**Summary:**

To be made in the image of God means that humans exist to be in relationship with God. Therefore, the purpose of Sabbath is to foster a relationship with God—to connect with God. This means that Sabbath looks different than our culture is accustomed to thinking about it; particularly, those visions of Sabbath as being primarily about rest and self-care may be problematic. Although these certainly are important aspects of Sabbath, intentionally making space and time for God to speak can be an uncomfortable and agitating experience, but it can also be peaceful and restful. Different people feel connected with God in different ways, but it is important that “checking in” with God does not become another thing on our to-do list. Ultimately, our relationship with God is an act of amazing grace—something that we can never earn by any action on our part—because it is God who first came to us through Jesus Christ to be in relationship with us.

**Questions:**

* How do you connect with God? When do you feel that God is closest?
* What are some challenges that keep you from connecting with God? What do you do when you do not feel close to God?
* How does “social distancing” change the way you think about connection and relationship with God and others?

SESSION 3: IDENTITY

**Summary:**

We live in a world and society that often demands much of us—school, sports, music, at home, and even in church—but, the good news of God’s gift of Sabbath is that our worth and our identity is *not* found in what we do, complete, or accomplish. Yes, of course we have responsibilities and it is important that we work hard, especially in the ways that we help and serve others. However, what we do should not be the end all be all. Just like our Genesis 1 narrative, the first humans were created in God’s image, called good, and rested. In the same way, our *true* identity begins and ends with God. We do not have to prove or do anything to make that true. Our true identity begins and ends with the fact that God created us in God’s image and calls us good. And on the seventh day, God rested with us.

**Questions:**

* Where do you find your identity?
* What unique challenges are you facing in this current state that makes finding your identity and worth in God even more difficult?
* What are some practical steps you can take in order to refocus your attention on finding your identity in God, rather than what you do or accomplish?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Good and loving God

We find ourselves in a time of restlessness

Growing changes and greater uncertainty in the face of a global pandemic

Leave us weary and unsettled

God, give us rest.

In a season where connection is difficult

When social isolation is what we must do for the good of our neighbor

As our events, plans, activities and hopes are being canceled and upended

God, give us rest.

When the physical buildings of the church are being closed for now

The place where many of us find our rest in community cannot be accessed

God give us rest.

Many of us may be living in fear for our own health, or for vulnerable loved ones

Some of us fear for our employment, job security and sources of income

Or healthcare that might not available to us

God, give us rest.

God you see our fears.

Feel our anxiety.

Hear our cries.

You give us hope.

Give us strength.

Give us love.

God, give us rest.

WORSHIP SONGS:

[**Psalm 62, My Soul finds Rest, Aaron Keys**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHNEexLL3R8&feature=youtu.be)

[**Take a Moment, Will Reagan**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWxseX0a5ZY)

[**Be Still My Soul, Jason Lavik**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRlm7m38P_A)

SMALL GROUP GAMES & ACTIVITY:

[**Signs**](https://www.thegamegal.com/2019/01/03/signs/)

**Who Am I?**

Let each player secretly write down the name of a celebrity or historical figure on a sticky note, then stick it to another player’s forehead. Players will take turns asking each other questions about the person on their sticky until they can accurately guess who they are.

**Centering Activity:**

Video/ Photo Journal to a friend every day OR video/ photo journal to a future version of yourself.

Make it practical or creative! You could just talk to the camera in one take about what is new, how you are feeling, what you are eating, etc.

OR

You can cut it like a short documentary. Put music in the background, make a pretend reason about why you are all inside, etc.!