

A STUDY ON THE OBJECTIVES AND METHODS
OF CHURCH CAMPS
WITH RELATION
TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Camp. The place parents send their children in order to earn a break from the hectic lives of parenting. Or is it a place where children wish to go to have fun and socially interact with other kids their age through games, songs, campfires, and crafts? The term camp is defined as "A place in the country that offers simple group accommodations and organized recreation or instruction, as for vacationing children."¹

The act of camping has been around for many years and has progressed into a broad range of styles which in some way creates an environment for someone to benefit from their experience. By means of organization and planning each camp usually provides objectives in which they want to accomplish through certain beliefs, methods, and principles. The question that arises from this is; are church camps accomplishing their objectives to the full potential through their personal choices of methods and principles?

My thesis will examine the concern of church camp's objectives and methods along with recommendations for possible change. Within my experience of attending as well as working at church camps I have come to see and learn a plethora of methods and objectives as well as how they have affected me in my life. My passion for faith growth and children has led me to a youth and family ministry career path. Because of my strong interest in youth ministry I have subconsciously been comparing and contrasting church camps objectives and methods and applying that knowledge to my experiences and growth. Recognizing alternative methods in church camps as well as how they have

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1999) , s.v. "Camp"

affected me leads me to believe that some church camps may not be fully aware of alternative or recently discovered methods that could improve the accomplishment of their objectives. I understand the differences in religious beliefs and practices as well as the value of originality among church camps, therefore my thesis will examine possible explanations for their differences and similarities within a camp's objectives and particular methods which may include; a camp's possible affiliation with a church or congregation, what type of crowd they aim for, general 'camping criteria', and levels and variations of emphasis put on spiritual development.

To develop my argument as fully as possible, I will use a few different methods of research. First by examining camping history through books and articles, I will analyze the reason and basis of camping and what core types of camps have been established. From this broad history, I will focus most of my attention on church camps and their ways of developing within the general camping movement. Since most church camps carry the feature of spiritual growth, I will analyze the process and possible stages of spiritual growth in youth and its correlation to possible objectives within church camps. Spirituality tends to become a focal point within a camp's achievements with their campers. I will analyze how spiritual development connects with other elements of development, the youth's involvement within the church, and how these elements can be incorporated within church camps. This will bring me to my research on camp objectives, methods and principles and their current status in the church camp community. This section will map out the similarities and differences between church camps and show the variety of objectives and methods, which I mentioned previously.

To support my research, I will use a specific church camp as my case study to either help support or deny my thesis, which means that some church camps may not be acknowledging alternative or more recent methods in order to best accomplish their camps objectives. The church camp I chose is Cathedral of the Pines Lutheran camp, run through Mt. Olivet Lutheran church, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I am a member of Mt. Olivet and have attended Cathedral of the Pines since third grade, as well as worked on their camp staff this past summer. I chose this camp as my case study because of my deep involvement within the church and camp, my knowledge of the church and camp's traditions, and the general curiosity with where my church camp compares and contrasts with the overall church camp community. This research will hopefully show whether or not church camps objectives are sufficiently comprehensive as well as whether their methods and principles are achieving those objectives adequately. And finally is there a need for recommending a change. In such a case, based on my research, my thesis will provide suggestions which may offer opportunity for church camps to benefit.

As stated above, I have grown up attending church camp most of my life. Each summer entailed the same traditions of chapel, bible study, crafts, swimming, games, and devotions. Programming had slight changes from year to year based on what age I was, but for the most part, the same objectives and expectations were present each year. Now, as I look back on my years at camp, I have come to realize the great influence it has had on me and my choices in life, which have made me the person I am today. Attending church camp has been a major part in my physical, social, mental, and spiritual growth. Any type of camp can help a child develop based on the camp's goals for the camper, but

only church camps carry that trait of spiritual development which, for me, is essential for a child's growth. As a whole people think differently about what is important to them, but when it comes to sending a child to camp, there are some basic essentials that parents and children may have in common.

In society, every parent wants what is best for their children, especially when the child's development entails being away from them and the responsibility is in someone else's hands. According to Todd Floyd's book, Camping for the Christian Youth² there are two desires which camps take into account when deciding their upon goals. The first is the child's desires; to have fun, eat good food, excitement, new experiences, and to discover friendships. The second is the parent's desire; safety of the child, health guarded with food and rest, reasonable child security, some skills achieved, getting along with others, learning some independence, and fostering of neatness. Christian parents will usually offer accomplishment of another goal, spiritual growth. Although these may not be every child or parent's desires, they try to grasp the overall concern for a parent's peace of mind as well as what a child may believe is a good time at camp. In order for any organization to become successful, it should fit the criteria that reflect what a society wants or needs. In this case what the parent and child desire. Church camps gain a very personal connection with those who attend their camp because of the added feature of spiritual growth. This by no means assumes that church camps hold higher standards than any other type of camp, but only that they offer a different type of growth within a child, making it distinct from, say, a dance camp or computer camp. These distinct

² Todd & Pauline Floyd, Camping for the Christian Youth: a guide to methods and principle for Evangelical Camps, New York: Harper and Row, 1963, pg. 44

classifications have slowly accumulated over the years, but originally camping was very basic without much direction.

Camping History

Camping began during the civil war by a man named Fredrick William Gunn known as "The Father of the American Camping Unit", who was the head of the Gunnery school for Boys in Washington. He allowed his boys to sleep out doors, fish, hike, and run drills in the year 1861. He continued this practice and his summer school training became known as the first camp to be created. Camps started evolving from then on. 1874 marked the beginning of Chautauqua's in New York, whose purpose was a Christian instruction center. This was followed by the first private camp in 1876 called the Northern Mountain school of Physical Culture, located in Luzerne, Pennsylvania. Although this camp was not successful, it inspired others to related accomplishments. The first church camp began in 1880 by Rev. George W. Hinkley in Wakefield Rhode Island. His purpose was to get to know the boys of his church better and share his knowledge of God's presence. The beginning of religious camping in American history took place in 1914 when the first permanent church camp was produced by Mr. John L. Alexander, who was employed by the International Sunday-School Association, in Blue Galilee, Wisconsin.³ Camps have evolved and grown over time due to the basic elements of social change and the needs and wants of Americans. Urbanization and industrialization, school calendars, the increase of incomes, as well as the simple factor of camping becoming popular in America were reasons for this expansion, based on the specific character of each camp. Each type of camp can be essential to one's life, but I

³Floyd, 8

am going to focus on the importance of church camps and what can be accomplished within a person's life by this experience.

Church Camps

Camps are categorized differently by many who study them. Todd Floyd classifies camps under terms such as; 1) organizational and agency operated by non-profit organizations, 2) private sponsored by private individuals to make a profit, 3) public, run by state parks and schools who rely on public support, and 4) religious which could fall under organizational camping, but has gained it's own category due to its distinctive design.⁴ Most camps provide opportunity to grow in countless ways, but church camps provide the value of spiritual growth. Although church camps vary in their ways of programming such as teaching, praying, worshiping, or counseling, many Church camp's offer similar objectives. Based on my research, church camps all around the U.S. have established a place for kids to come during the summer to be enriched through God's gifts with a wide range of activities. According to Floyd, Christian camping emphasizes spiritual possibilities and sharing responsibilities between the preacher, teacher, and the role of the camp counselor as more than just a chaperone, as a way to achieve the objectives and goals of the Christian camp.⁵ Just like any large organization, it takes more then one person to create an environment with multiple components such as large and small group activities, teaching, and general organization. In the setting of church camps, typically, the kids learn from the counselor and the counselor learns from the Pastor. With the use of counselors the camp benefits from the

^a Ibid., 45 ⁵

Ibid., 50

variety of spiritual backgrounds. Although a curriculum may be present, the unique path of a counselor's spiritual growth diversifies the possibilities of benefiting a child's discovery and growth spiritually, mentally, or emotionally. We will be looking at this key person's role later on in my analysis.

Similar purposes are prevalent across the community of church camps, but most camps also carry specific ideas which describe by and large the standards of what a church camp may entail. These characteristics include; outdoor ministry opportunities, the deep understanding of the purpose for God in our lives, Christian community living, and teachings of Jesus through the leadership of counselors. This last characteristic separates church camps apart from other types of camps by having the requirement to teach a Bible study.⁶ This can be informal or formal, depending on the how each camp decides to program it. Spiritual development is one aspect that makes each church camp so unique as well as a possible issue in society today; are church camps meeting these spiritual driven objectives with their particular choices of methods?

⁶ Lloyd Mattson, Camping Guideposts: Christian camp counselor's handbook, Chicago: Moody Press, 1962, p. 12

Chapter 2:

Spiritual Development

Within a life time, a person develops in a variety of ways: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. As a child physically grows and processes information, and learns about the value of life through influences, social change, education, trial and error, and basic instinct, to name just a few. As I stated earlier, I believe, based on my experiences, that spiritual development is fundamental in a child's growth. Therefore I will center my attention on children and their spiritual progress within development, in order to affirm the value of church camps in a child's life.

In the past three decades, advances in human development have helped researchers understand the meanings behind human experiences. Although studies of physical and intellectual developments have made the greatest progress, spiritual growth may be receiving more and more attention. Spiritual development could relate to other aspects of a human's physical, mental, and emotional growth. Although each of these can be seen and studied apart from the others, my observations have led me to believe spiritual development does associate with many forms of human development. I plan to investigate and explain how spirituality connects to physical, intellectual, and emotional development within youth. As promised earlier, I also will reflect on involvement that youth have within the church and the possible significance with church camp participation. Recognizing and showing the influence of spiritual development as related to other types of development, along with examining the levels of youth participation in the church, may perhaps help to identify with the meanings and reasons behind church

Roland Martinson, Effective Youth Ministry a Congregational Approach, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988 p.29

camp objectives and methods, which I will analyze later. In order to later connect and analyze the levels of influence on spiritual development, I first will need to describe and explain what spiritual development is, based on my research.

Many could say that spiritual development is religion-based. Not always. Others could say it is a collection of one's thoughts, inspirations, and fantasies. It could be. Some could even think spiritual development means intellectual knowledge of religious leaders. Each of these possibilities does not give a definition but are characteristics within what spiritual development may entail. It can be hard to give spiritual development an exact definition, so instead some people use characterization, explanation through characteristics, to provide a clearer concept. Benedict Groeschel's book, Spiritual Passages, the Psychology of Spiritual Development, states the best description of spiritual life as "the sum total of responses which one makes to what is perceived as the inner call of God."⁸ This characterization may not be true in all forms of spiritual growth, but my focus is on the Christian tradition, and this reference is from a Catholic viewpoint.

As stated above, spiritual development is hard to define for a few reasons. First, spiritual growth comes from personal experiences, which may always be responding to personal behavior patterns or other elements in a person's life. Each experience can be interpreted differently creating individuality and variation. My experiences of spiritual growth evolve from prayer, worship, Sunday school, confirmation, bible studies, and church camp. Each of these examples come from a church organization, where as some people may grow spiritually through independent worship or other forms of practices.

Benedict Groeschel, Spiritual Passages, The psychology of spiritual development, New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983, p. 4

Secondly, unlike other forms of development, spiritual development is more of a choice, a personal decision made to create possible growth in faith. It is not inherent in everyone, but in the one who chooses to accept it. For someone who grows up in a Christian based home it may be easier to discover and accept than for someone who may need to find and learn about spirituality on their own. Finally, there is no set box you can form around spiritual development because of the initial fact that it is not required in a person's overall development, although this thesis will argue that spiritual development perceiving the inner call of God is important in the life of a child.

Each element of development specifies individual attributes and stages. Analyzing the elements independently will help identify clearer associations with spiritual development and how spiritual growth may compliment physical, intellectual, and emotional development.

Physical Development

Physical attributes make the individual look unique from everyone around them. No one person looks like the next. Throughout life, physical changes occur constantly, a fact which can be hard for some to accept. Previous research has found the most rapid growth happens during adolescence, emphasizing the importance of physical development attribute within spirituality. In adolescence, boys and girls develop at different times, rates, and in their own way. Some of these changes occur among both boys and girls, such as acne, body odor, as well as fluctuating levels of energy. Boys and

girls also go through individual changes based on their gender. Girls usually begin these changes earlier than boys or a boy's growth is more rapid once their spurt has begun.

Adolescents typically have a hard time adjusting to these changes and may have mixed emotions on responsibilities, expectations, and needs. Their need to measure up to social standards could create a distressing environment. According to Roland Martinson's book Effective Youth Ministry,⁹ "physical development has a major impact on their self-image and self-worth". An environment that is person-oriented, with spiritual or religious qualities, such as a youth group or bible study, may give youth opportunity to hold conversations or pose concerns outside their school's health class, with trusted persons or peers. Examples could be a pastor, youth director, or confirmation teacher. Relationships that carry accepting, understanding, and affirming characteristics could be appealing to an adolescent. Later, these attributes will be addressed in accordance to counselor and staff training and the influence their role can play in a child's spiritual growth. This spiritual atmosphere does not have to teach the fundamentals of puberty to teens, but by offering concern and safe place to be able to express uncertainties and stress could increase levels of confidence and security during a time of difficult change. t t

Another attribute of physical development is active recreation and exercise. According to Carol Duerksen, youth absorb and take more from experiences in which they participate in as opposed to observing, studying, or listening.¹² An adolescent's strengths, skills, or self-expression can be shared or revealed through competitive games

⁹ Martinson, 30

¹⁰ Ibid., 31

¹¹ Ibid., 31

¹² Carol Duerksen, Building Together, developing your blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry. Scottdale, PA: Faith and Life Resources. 2001. p. 45.

or goals. Incorporating these types of activities with adolescents could present what an individual may be good at, which would play a positive role in their self-image. This idea of self-image will be discussed more in depth with emotional development. Recreational activities such as biking, skiing, and hiking can offer opportunity to not only to get in shape and build on social skills with peers, but an opportunity to recognize God's creation and appreciate a person's surroundings. Physical development seems like it is always evolving and spiritual development can be the supporting tool or another way to reach clarity in times of confusion. Although spiritual development can also be seen as constantly changing, it can always be present in physical development as a guide or opportunity to search for explanation beyond science. Spiritual development could give youth peace of mind, not only in their physical changes, but intellectual developmental changes as well.

Intellectual Development

In order to discuss intellectual development, I am going to analyze and apply the works of Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, and his research on cognitive learning. Jean Piaget's types of thought are widely used and well established with many scholars of human development.

Piaget discovered intelligence increases unevenly and develops in spurts. He called these spurts "cognitive stages." Each stage provides progress within a person's intelligence. The stages that I believe correlate best with spiritual development are Piaget's third and fourth stages. The third stage, also known as "concrete-operations," usually occurs in children between the ages of six and twelve. Children may begin to

develop the ability to think logically. They start to observe, organize and draw conclusions as well as memorize concepts. At this stage, children start to see that the world revolves less around them and they now can make distinctions between the imaginary and the practical.^o

The implications this stage may have for spiritual development correlates with the learning and internalizing of a person's faith. In any type of learning there is a beginning from which you start and upon which one continues to build. Spiritual development, follows the same format. Basic language and symbolic ideas can emerge in early childhood in Sunday school or children's programs through a religious institution. Martinson makes an important point when addressing the teachings of Christian faith. Those working in spiritual development with adolescents need to coordinate what they're educating as well as their methods with others working with children and adults¹⁴ in order to ensure positive, on going, spiritual development progress within a child's growth. By coordinating these teachings, the growth could remain consistent and strong, possibly resulting in decreasing an adolescent's time of questioning and testing of what they have heard. Although doubt is important in spiritual development, consistency of teachings becomes crucial to avoid confusion of basic principles. This concept comes within Piaget's fourth stage.

Most people begin stage four, "formal operations," between ages eleven and fifteen. Adolescents develop abstract thinking, create theories, and explore complex ideas. As I mentioned above, in this stage youth could question accepted truths and

is Jean Piaget, Intellectual Evolution from Adolescence to Adulthood, *Human Development* 15, 1972:1-12 as summarized in R. Martinson, Effective Youth Ministry A Congregational Approach, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988 p32

¹⁴ Ibid., 32

search beneath the appearance of things. Piaget believes some youth may never develop this type of thought.¹⁵

Spiritual development occurs in this stage through building and creating a personal belief system based on what they're taught. A Christian life can be taken in any possible direction depending on the choices of the Christian, for example, attending seminary, mentoring in a church or school, or changing your lifestyle by putting others before yourself, or a stronger focus on morals and values. In the early stages, a person's guardians usually make the spiritual decisions for them, including the choices of baptism, Sunday school, and attending church. This is not always the case. The beginning of spiritual development may not occur until the child discovers it on their own especially if raised in an environment without, or with few, spiritual growth opportunities. In either case, faith is a discovery and a journey. Just like any other form of development, spiritual presence, and its development vary with each person.

Duerksen's focus on Christian faith becomes supported with an emphasis on personal experience and understanding in order for spiritual growth to hold meaning.¹⁶ The individual who explores many aspects of faith, reshapes ideas and concepts, and fits it into their own life-style will come to "own" their faith, as opposed to someone who accepts all facts, never internalizes any information, or looks for new or different ways to grow. Opportunities for children to spiritually internalize what they are taught, through experiences and decision making, is one of a few concepts church camps strive for in their objectives and methods. This concept will be explained in the next chapter. The connection between intellectual and spiritual development can be difficult to determine

¹⁵ Ibid., 33

¹⁶ Duerksen, 54

based on the multiple rates and methods people internalize information. A stronger connection is made in the next section with emotional development.

Emotional Development

Emotional development has a lot to do with self image which was discussed earlier in this chapter. The images and society's standards of what is accepted can change anyone's views on themselves or other people. Adolescents are judged and are judging more than any other age group, according to Carol Gilligan, a contemporary developmentalist. Gilligan touches on many aspects that foster children to justify their place in American culture. Some of these aspects include: the values of their independence, importance of decision making, along with finding their purpose in life. Gilligan believes that religion could play an important role in fulfilling these needs with prayer, promoting faith, and developing basic trust. Each of these suggestions helps to explain the importance of the spiritual role in the development of emotion.¹⁷

Christian traditions commonly emphasize the importance of being one of a kind, that God created each child with their own talents and features that set them apart from all the rest. Many may view being different as a negative term like being an outsider or not belonging. So much of the media influences youth to dress, look, and act alike. The trends are cool based on what others think of an individual, not on the individual's own views. Youth are always told to be unique, but yet so much of who they are is how others view them. This dynamic of self-image can be a constant battle between being

¹⁷

Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice, New York: Harper and Row, 1983 as summarized in R. Martinson, Effective Youth Ministry A Congregational Approach, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988, p.40-42

you and being accepted, a real time of confusion. Finding a sense of personal identity could lead a child into a positive state of mind and higher self-esteem. Personal identity can be directly influenced by faith. Song lyrics can be inspiring as are affirmations from a friend or mentor, relations to movie storylines, or the simple act of being acknowledged. Within a Christian community, youth can be provided with support to create or discover an individual faith life and worldview. Knowing they are not alone can give them a sense of reassurance leading to an independent and stronger state of mind. Institutions like a church or church camp usually provide an environment of forgiveness and acceptance for youth, who are often confused, some having been abused, misled, or for many just making mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes.

Offering a safe, reliable, and accepting atmosphere at any stage in a child's life could result in more involvement in the church or church camp which could lead to a larger Christian youth community inspiring their peers and younger generations to a new way of living a Christian life.

Church Involvement

As stated earlier, guardians are usually the ones who begin to establish a spiritual aspect in their children's life. Whether it is through Sunday school, story telling, or church camp, above all they create the opportunity. Other influences are also present throughout life, such as peers, God-parents, or media. The church is an out-reaching institution, generally open for ministry and spiritual growth. At any given age, the church offers wide varieties of opportunity to get, or stay involved in, the Christian community. Based on my observations, besides the Sunday services, possible

opportunities such as church committees, choirs, Sunday school, confirmation, youth groups, bible studies, book clubs, and ushering can be presented depending on your church and its specific traditions. Addressing programs for all ages only better the chances to keep a consistent flow of interest within a congregation, remembering to keep in mind the location of the church and its surrounding community, for each church attracts differing people.

Spiritual growth usually is offered in institutions such as a church, school, or church camp, although there could be privately owned organizations I am unaware of. I am not ruling the opportunity of individual spiritual practice, but it becomes irrelevant at this point in time to my proposal of church involvement in youth and its correlation to the importance of spiritual development in a child's life. But it does pose the question; does church involvement provide a more enhanced spiritual development? This will be looked at in further detail when analyzing counselor training methods within a church camp.

A church probably provides the most opportunities for spiritual growth. The church provides the central beliefs from which Christians usually develop. The Christian church offers common ground for unity and conversation with a core set of beliefs through word and sacrament. According to Groeschel, "Christ by his redemption and grace"¹⁸ is the foundation of Christian spirituality. Being a member of the church and accepting the beliefs becomes the first step of involvement. The steps to follow can be the key contributors for spiritual growth. I have previously mentioned the possibilities of Sunday school, confirmation, choirs, bible study, and worship, aimed for all ages. This is just a few of many possible methods some churches suggest, not including the opportunities of conversation with a Pastor or a fellow church member. Church

¹⁸ Groeschel, 18

involvement can also inspire families, adults, and youth to discover and expand their faith through a church camp.

Church camps are organizations or institutions that usually practice what is commonly called, out-door ministry. As stated in the beginning of my thesis, church camps are distinctive in their design by acknowledging the value of spirituality as well as the idea of bible study. Through games, bible studies, worship, and song, youth are offered spiritual growth opportunity outside the traditional church setting. It gives youth a chance to experiment with what they have already learned or gives them a chance to experiment with new concepts and view points.

Over the course of this chapter, my research has provided an explanation of spiritual development's possible characteristics and how they relate to the physical, intellectual, and emotional elements of child development. Analyzing each element and providing examples for each helped recognize how much a child can benefit and be supported thru a conscious goal of spiritual development. An out-reaching environment gives youth a chance to talk, share, and understand issues and challenges in their daily lives. Offering a place for youth to question their beliefs and test new ideas only can benefit a child in their spiritual growth. The church gives opportunity to grow and discover by means of contributing toward church involvement. Another resource besides the church is a church camp. With similar values but difference in setting, church camps create a place for youth to realize where they are in their faith journey, while developing physically, intellectually, and emotionally.

Church camps should take into account the elements of child development in order to enhance the opportunity for spiritual growth, as well as reflect on what is best for

the children when determining their camp's objectives. Objectives are met through sources and methods usually chosen by the camp administration. Typically methods are generally chosen when they will sufficiently achieve the objective. Naturally this could then be a successful camp; when the objectives are met by the methods chosen. Which methods and which objectives? Implemented by whom?

The next chapter will analyze church camps' objectives and methods and their value within a church camp setting, first exploring the objectives, and then the methods. My research will investigate the similarities and differences within objectives and methods as well as take into account the important influence spiritual growth has on objectives and methods and how it is incorporated in a church camp setting. To this point, my investigation of spiritual development and its connection to three types of child development, along with methods of church involvement has provided a list of potential criteria in which church camps should consider when determining what standards need to be met in camp objectives. The first criterion is the acknowledgment of each development's stages with relation to age. Although is needed in order to make objectives achievable by everyone, it is more crucial when determining the methods.

The second criterion suggests guidance and support from Christian leaders, mentors, and peers. This correlates with possible confusion throughout physical development, the emotional concept of self image, and the spiritual growth through church involvement. Third, to provide hands on and inclusive opportunities for youth to explore, question, and react to new ideas and concepts. This idea stems from the need for physical activity, intellectual growth, and a parent's desires to getting along with others, learn new skills, in addition to independence.

Lastly, to create a Christian environment incorporating some type of Christian teachings, such as Bible study, devotions, chapel, or spiritual reflection. Physical, intellectual, and emotional development relate by ways of providing further explanation or understanding in times of confusion, opportunity for expression, and influence toward Christian values . By assessing church camp objectives and methods I will examine if they are meeting the criteria my research as provided, to its greatest potential.

Chapter 3:

Objectives and Methods

Within a life time, many people are taught to set goals they wish to achieve in order to feel a sense of satisfaction or accomplishment throughout their life perhaps associated to school, occupation, family, self-image, or personal growth. There is such an emphasis put on setting and accomplishing goals, some may wonder why goal setting is so important.

Duerken's book Building Together, Developing your Blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry¹⁹ provides an excellent example showing the importance of goal setting.

Imagine that you decide to take a family vacation, everyone's thrilled. You pack your suitcases, stuff the car, fill it up with gas, and hit the road. After several days of captivating travel games, rousing songs, heartwarming conversation, snacks, naps, and bathroom breaks, someone in the backseat finally asks, "Are we there yet?" Then it hits you. You realize that you never decided on a destination, nor on a way to get there." After a few anxious moments, you shrug your shoulders and chuckle, "Who cares! We're having a blast, aren't we?"

This metaphor emphasizes the need for goals. In setting goals, one is providing a destination to reach, answering the questions "where am I going?" and "am I doing what I agreed on doing?", as well as supplying motivation to reach their goals.²⁰ Just as individuals set goals, companies set goals to achieve and succeed. Goals within a company provide organization to a large number of employees. Company goals keep everyone focused and striving for the same goals which should help the company grow

Carol Duerksen, Building Together, Developing your Blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry. Scottdale, PA, Faith and Life Resources, 2001 50-51 ²⁰ Duerksen, 50

and do well. Some companies have a mission statement or statements, other have objectives, purposes, or principles. All these terms are used interchangeably because of the common idea of accomplishment.

In order for companies to set their goals, they typically establish an audience they choose to target. By taking into consideration the general needs and wants of their audience, company administration form their goals broad enough to reach the criteria of a larger audience but still with specific and unique purpose and direction. To be more specific, church camp administrations generally will balance the criteria of Christian traditions, desires of parents and children, and church camping when determining their objectives.²¹ Over all, church camps typically attract youth as their target audience. Although church camps have a similar target, objectives may vary based on a church camp's specific beliefs or traditions. For instance, a church camp may put more emphasis on the New Testament instead of the Old Testament. If a church camp was founded and run by one specific church, such as Lutheran or Baptist, the registration process could give first priority to members and second priority to non-members, so the camp could direct more emphasis to the home church's traditions. Lastly, a church camp could be for Christians in general, and focus on the universal concepts of Christianity. In any case, any type of objective gives the church camp direction and unique purpose.

Duerksen says that there are three key concepts that objectives should reflect. The first is purpose which explains the question of what. The second is values, determining the individual focuses, and third, is strategy, answering the question of how

²¹ Todd & Pauline Floyd, Camping for the Christian Youth: a guide to methods and principle for Evangelical Camps. New York: Harper and Row, 1963, p.44

these are achieved.²² This chapter will look at church camp objectives and analyze their purposes, values, and strategies (also known as methods). Examining these concepts along side of the four points of criteria I mentioned earlier should help me to discover if, according to my research, the universal methods are achieving the universal objectives.

Church Camp Objectives

As I previously discussed, companies usually establish a target audience before setting their goals. This seems to be an efficient idea because companies can then narrow their goals to fit the desires of their audience. For church camps it may be a little more complicated than that. Unlike cheer camp, language camp, or a YMCA camp, church camps include the element of spiritual growth, by means of requiring a form of Christian teachings. This leads church camps to keep their objectives broad enough for the possibility of interest from Christians families, questioning individuals, new parents, or curious youth. Church camps also could attract people at any given stage in their spiritual growth, whether they are discovering it, doubting it, or believe they have a firm grasp of it. In any case, church camp administration needs to be aware of the implications of what the campers learn and discover, and how their interpretations can help in their spiritual growth. According to a manual on standards and objectives, Hedley Dimock, the dean of American Camp Directors, noted,

That the effectiveness of any camp depends on the specificity of its goals and objectives. Developing worthwhile goals and objectives for camping ministry is perhaps the *most* important task of the camp committee and director²³

²² Duerksen, 50

²³ Ted Witt, Toward Excellence in Church Camping, a manual on standards and objectives, Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1974, revised 1981, p.10

There is no possible way to find and examine every church camp and its objectives. Individual concepts, purposes, beliefs, traditions, or values, is what creates the variety of different church camps and what each of them has to offer. Because of variations, Floyd separates camp objectives into three groups 1) secular camping, also known as non-Christian oriented 2) more liberal church camping, pertaining to broad concepts of mostly Christianity, but may include other religious traditions, and 3) evangelical camping, tailoring their objectives and methods to evangelical church beliefs and traditions.²⁴ My focus is more with the traditions of evangelical camping, but some of my research may include thoughts and concepts which could also be categorized under liberal church camping traditions. I can base my research purely from books, articles and personal experience in Christian camping. The next chapter will then provide a more specific type of a Christian camp and where it is placed in essence to Christian camps over all.

Church camps can work as a connector helping youth take what they have learned and associate it to their personal life. This is one universal concept among the Church camp community, based on my findings of multiple Christian camps' mission statements²⁵. A universal concept is usually the broadest form of an objective, one that the majority follows because it states the obvious and is typically looked at as a standard. Universal concepts include, providing a Christian environment where campers understand Christian principles and bible studies, offering experiences and skills with or in the out doors, contribute to the camper's physical, mental, and spiritual growth, and to

²⁴ Floyd, 45

²⁵ Camp mission statements, see Appendix 1

have fun. From these basic concepts, church camps create further developed and more directed objectives.

According to Floyd, camp objectives are divided into categories from universal to specific. The major objectives consist of spiritual, physical, social, and educational. Each of these is broken down into more specific objectives such as Evangelism, Christian nurture, physical needs of the camper, help each camper become well-adjusted, and finally, to develop new knowledge, skills, and values in various fields.²⁶ Each of these objectives provides enough detail to recognize its possible achievements in a camp environment in comparison to a church setting. Based on common knowledge, church institutions and church camps styles tend to be represented differently. Floyd states that "camping offers a unique opportunity to achieve objectives that can be accomplished better at camp than in any other part of church life."²⁷ There are some things that are better taught in a camp setting, such as learning outdoor skills, and some that are better taught in a church setting, like doctrinal teaching.²⁸ I recognize this is just one opinion among many who hold views of how a setting can influence development. For Floyd and Martinson, Church services, Sunday school, and confirmation's objectives are to provide the Christian teachings and education. Church camps objectives incorporate Christian teachings, but only a fraction to what else they wish to offer.

The first universal objective is to provide a safe Christian environment.²⁹ One would think this would be a universal concept, an assumption that all Christian church camps are safe, but because it was not clearly stated in the multiple church camp mission

²⁶ Floyd, 52-53

²⁷ Ibid., 50

²⁸ Ibid., 50

²⁹ Floyd 24-26 Witt 4 Mattson 12

statements I researched and read, I chose to mention it as a general church camp objective due to the fact it is referenced in more than one source, as an objective all camps strive to accomplish.

The second universal objective for church camps is to provide Christian leadership in order to watch over and guide the campers each week.³⁰ Due to the large number of campers, the ratio between leaders and campers needs to be adequate so campers are safe and have a leader or counselor they can rely on. Not only counselors but, other staff members, peers, or pastors are typically included. This objective relates directly to physical development according to my discovery on confusion youth may experience during adolescence which also connects to the influence self image has on emotional development. As a universal objective, it emphasizes the importance of Christian leaders at camp by not only providing leadership, and taking on responsibility, but being a good Christian role model by offering themselves to the campers as listeners who bring support and acceptance in a Christian environment. Campers can express their questions with puberty, stress, personal goals, or doubts. In doing this, their spiritual growth builds from relationships, just like with church involvement, opportunities offered at church assist in spiritual growth through the relationships created within them. According to David Burrow's book, Mastering leadership, the idea of offering Christian leadership and how much it can influence a person's spiritual growth is an essential goal for youth ministry.³¹ In Witt's manual on standards and objectives, one of the goals is to

³⁰ Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 4, Mattson, 12

³¹ David Burrow, Mastering Leadership in the Christian Camp and Related Ministries, Shirley, MA: McElroy Publishing, 1996, p. 15

provide guidance from trained and experienced, Christian leaders to campers and their needs.³²

The third and fourth universal objectives are closely connected. The third objective is to provide participation in Christian practices such as worship, bible study, devotions, or reflection. The fourth objective is to help campers appreciate Christianity through understanding their personal experiences.³³ Spiritual development seems to be strongly signified with each of these specific objectives. Providing these opportunities are what places church camps in their own category in the first place. Commonly seen, this objective, with methods provided, help youth reveal or communicate with other Christians on possible matters such as, further explanations beyond scientific belief, personal experiences or doubts, and express on individual reflections. Providing large group worships, or small group bible studies brings the quality of unity. When youth discuss, reflect, and share their personal experiences while learning concepts of Christian beliefs and traditions, appreciation evolves from it, usually automatically. An example is displayed in Duerksen's book; youth ministry nurtures spiritual disciplines such as prayer, bible study, and devotions toward youth in order for them to practice and understand these values.³⁴ Floyd's section of evangelical camp objectives states that camp will help establish good habits of Christian living such as prayer, bible study, and personal devotions.³⁵

³² Witt, 4

³³ Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 4, Mattson, 12

³⁴ Duerksen, 81

³⁵ Floyd, 51

The fifth universal objective is the opportunity to participate in creative and recreational activities, both in and outdoors.³⁶ Within this objective there exists the element of development in social and intellectual skills. By being involved youth learn to interact with their peers and are taught new skills and techniques. Opportunities with hands on and inclusive interaction assists in intellectual development by offering new concepts for campers to internalize and understand, physical development, because youth need physical activity and movement for sufficient growth, and specifically meets a parent's desires for their child at camp, including meeting new people, independence, and learning new skills. This objective in particular has direct ties to the first point of criteria I previously mentioned, to acknowledge the development stages with relation to age. The next section on methods will provide more detail on why.

Our final universal objective for church camps overall is to provide the camper with leadership training.³⁷ Campers slowly become intellectually aware of the importance of leadership over time, typically through the influence of the counselor or staff member. Recognizing and witnessing the importance of leadership usually leads to becoming a leader. In David Burrow's book, _____ Mastering Leadership,³⁸ the influence Christian leaders have on campers is essential, so teaching those qualities in light of Christianity at camp could create the next generation of Christian leaders.

After analyzing church camp's universal objectives, I have discovered some close similarities between the objectives for youth ministry in the church and objectives for church camp out-door ministry. The first is the importance of Christian leadership, and appreciating Christianity by understanding personal experiences are key attributes youth

³⁶ Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 4, Mattson, 13

³⁷ Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 4, Mattson, 14

³⁸ Burrow, 9

ministry acknowledge when deciding what they want youth to get out of their church involvement. These similarities have led me to believe church camping objectives could have stemmed from youth ministry objectives. Youth who participate in youth ministry at their church, can have a higher interest to attend a church camp to further explore their spiritual growth. This goes to show that church involvement can quite possibly play a key role in spiritual growth, and now, may give more emphasis to the importance of church camp involvement to assist youth in their spiritual development.

Even though these are the six most common objectives among church camps from my research, does not mean they are required or are present at every single church camp, or even labeled as the best objectives, but were only discovered as the most common. It is important at this time to recognize the objectives in relation to criteria presented earlier. After analyzing each objective, my research leads me to conclude that the each of the four criteria; 1) acknowledge development stages with relation to age, 2) guidance and support from other Christian leaders, mentors, and peers, 3) hands on and inclusive activities for youth to explore, question, and react to new ideas and concepts, and 4) create a Christian environment incorporating Christian teachings have been integrated in the six general objectives. Each point of criteria facilitated how my research on child development is relevant to the universal camp objectives. I plan to do the same within the next section on methods, but first I will discover and explain the universal methods that typically achieve the six general objectives just given.

Church Camp Methods

Now that we have examined the importance of objectives for a church camp, it is only fair to explore and explain the importance methodology has on church camps as well as their objectives.

Methodology is the way in which information is found or something is done. The methodology includes the methods, procedures, and techniques used to collect and analyze information.³⁹ Duerksen uses the term strategy to explain how the purposes and values are determined.⁴⁰ In either case methods exist so they can essentially accomplish the objectives, hopefully in the most sufficient ways.

Just like objectives, it is even more difficult to research every method church camps use to accomplish their goals, therefore, I will find and create a list of the most common methods used to accomplish the six common objectives I previously examined. This final analysis will hopefully prepare me with enough information to explore my case study in relation to my research on church camp objectives and methods and possibly discover the need to recommend change either in objectives and/or methods.

How does a church camp achieve the goal of providing guidance or counseling from a trained and experienced Christian leader? First things first, a church camp must hire a staff and provide adequate training so they can participate in helping the camp achieve their objectives. According to my sources, the most common methods mentioned lie within the training of the counselor or leader.⁴¹ In order to become an experienced counselor, one must have experience and training. The training process may include first aid and CPR, preparation in leading bible studies, song, or games, knowledge of

³⁹ Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1999) , s.v. "methodology"

⁴⁰ Duerksen, 50

⁴¹ Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 5, Mattson, 15

leadership qualities, group dynamics, along with how to handle emergency situations. Having a staff that is well prepared and trusted will only benefit a church camp more. The method of training counselors and staff usually prepares them to be a leader in most situations, for example, confused campers with questions, issues on image, faith, and personal beliefs and experiences, relationships, and homesickness. Specific counselor training methods will be provided and analyzed in the next chapter.

The second objective is providing participation in worship, prayer, bible study, and devotions. The most common methods used to achieve this goal are to include chapel, evening devotions, prayer at meals, personal reflection, and a class curriculum in the camp schedule.⁴² Giving campers' direction with chapel and cabin devotions provides a starting place or opportunity for group conversation to express feelings and doubt with their spiritual and intellectual growth. Setting aside some time in the schedule for campers to personally reflect gives the option to personalize and explore their spiritual development and where a camper may be in that development. A balance of both is seen as the most common method when achieving the goal of participation in Christian traditions and practices.

How does a church camp provide opportunity to come to know, understand, and appreciate the value of Christianity in relation to personal experiences? This objective correlates with the two previous objectives and their methods. First, by providing a class curriculum, campers become aware of the Christian concepts and traditions and can start or build on their knowledge and associate it with their life. Second, as in the first objective, counselors influence the campers in what they say and do. By seeing and imitating, campers are appreciating their counselors, even without knowing it. Third,

⁴² Floyd, 24-26, Witt, 5, Mattson, 16

related to my second objective, providing personal reflection time gives campers the freedom to discover their personal values within Christianity. Individual attention as well from a leader, mentor, or pastor could help a camper see the Christian works in others and want to understand why. These methods meet the criteria of Christian education by providing a class curriculum and structured time for worship and providing support of Christian leaders through the influence they have on campers to become Christian leaders.

The fourth objective is providing creative and recreational activities both in and outdoors. This objective probably has the most methods available to achieve this goal. The most common of these methods are large and small group games, crafts, swimming, sports, hiking, fishing, and archery.⁴³ Incorporating games in a camp schedule add the element of active participation, opposed to a church setting which is not known for that. In the use of these methods, hands on inclusive opportunities meet the one point of the given criteria but the methods above do not apply every age. Camp administration must keep in mind the different levels of development youth are in when deciding what method or in this objective, game, is most appropriate. Counselors and staff usually are trained and aware of where a certain age group is intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually so they can approach any situation appropriately. This concept applies to all the universal objectives and methods, but seems to be most prevalent to the methods achieving the recreational activities objective since it plays a significant role in church camp schedules.

How do you teach and train leadership? This final objective had limited method options but includes strong realistic techniques. The first of these is to give each camper a

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Flovd. 24-26. Witt. 6. Mattson. 16

leadership position once throughout their time at camp. This emphasizes the importance of participating and teaching, since children remember 90% of what they teach, opposed to 40% of what they discuss, and 15% of what they see.⁴⁴ Other common methods include providing a counselor in training program, as well as give high priority to the counselor training so counselors are setting a good example of Christian leadership. These methods of study meet the given criteria by using inclusive activities, emphasize the importance of support and guidance from Christian leaders, and participate in the creation of a Christian environment.

In conclusion, I have explored and researched church camp methods and created a list of the most common methods used to achieve the most common objectives I previously assessed. I also explained how each objective and method I provided met or refused to meet any of the four given criteria. Based on this research I will now evaluate Mt. Olivet's Cathedral of the Pines Lutheran Bible Camp's history, traditions, objectives, and methods. I will collect my information through research, interviews, counselor surveys, as well as my own personal experiences as a camper, work staffer, counselor, and staff member. Understanding Cathedral of the Pines and their individual traditions and choices will provide specific examples which later, will be evaluated against my research on church camp objectives and methods, and based on my findings, may lead me to the outcome in recommending change to their choices of objectives, methods, or the possibility of both.

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Duerksen, 45

Chapter 4:

Case Study:

Cathedral of the Pines Lutheran Camp

Cathedral of the Pines Camp is located on the shores of Lake Caribou in Lutsen, Minnesota. I chose this camp for my case study because of my involvement as a camper, work staffer, counselor, and staff member. Cathedral of the Pines (from now on referred to as COP), is run and directed by Mt. Olivet Lutheran church alone. Since I am a member of this church, I was given the opportunity to become a work staffer and counselor volunteer after I became too old to be a camper. This last summer I was asked to be on the COP staff, which is only offered to a limited amount of Mt. Olivet members usually between the ages of 20-27. Since COP is run exclusively through Mt. Olivet the camp's traditions and guidelines somewhat differ compared to church camps open to multiple congregations. Before I analyze Cathedral of the Pines objectives and methods, I need to give the history and explain the traditions and guidelines in order to help distinguish possible reasons behind their objectives and methods. To develop my observations I will apply information from interviews, surveys, and public knowledge from my own experiences. From there, I will proceed to the objectives and methods, which will include an in depth examination of their methods of counselor training in accordance to the camp's objectives and methods. This will result in discovering where Cathedral of the Pines associates to the universal objectives and methods and whether or not there is a need to recommend change for improvement.

History

Cathedral of the Pines Lutheran Camp was founded and built in 1948 by Dr. Rueben Youngdahl a pastor at Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The camp was built in Lutsen, Minnesota on the shores of Lake Caribou. The first camping period began in 1949. It lasted two weeks and included twenty five Mt. Olivet youth and twenty five youth from Bethlehem Lutheran. By 1960 camper weeks filled the whole summer season and 1,300 campers were attending. Between the years 1961 and 1967, senior high youth started counseling the younger children. While attendance grew each summer so did the size of the camp. Buildings were built and the property expanded.

In the month of March, 1968, Rueben Youngdahl, the founder and director of Cathedral of the Pines, passed away and in the following year, camp was rededicated to him, to honor his leadership and dedication to this camp. Since Ruben's death, his son, the senior pastor at Mt. Olivet, Rev. Paul Youngdahl took on the challenge of directing Cathedral of the Pines, now with 2,168 campers logged as of 1973.⁴⁵

To this day, there are 16 camping sessions in 10 weeks with an average of 132 campers per week. Cathedral of the Pines has grown into a thriving Lutheran camp whose mission statement is "to serve children and young people by enhancing their spiritual and emotional development. The summer camping experience in the natural beauty of Caribou Lake in Lutsen, Minnesota helps the youth grow in their relationship with God."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ COP 25th anniversary

⁴⁶ www.mtolivet.org

Traditions and guidelines

Cathedral of the Pines begins the summer around May 26th and ends around August 20^h. The camping sessions are divided up between camper weeks and special weekend retreats, such as family work week, young married's, and singles/20 something, to name a few. The camper weeks are divided by age giving two five day sessions of third and fourth graders combined, two weeks of fifth and sixth graders combined, two weeks of seventh and eighth graders combined, and one five day session for Mt. Olivet's confirmation class. On top of all that there are two five day sessions for high school students called summer starter and hi-league retreat.

The Cathedral of the Pines administrative staff primarily includes Pastor Paul Youngdahl, camp director, Kristi Youngdahl, associate director, Karen Blomberg, camp manager, and Ron Lynne, head cook and lodge manager. The camp staff is made up of about 20 college age Mt. Olivet members, nine men, nine women who are individually asked by Kristi Youngdahl or Pastor Youngdahl. The paid staff remains up at camp all summer, fulfilling their responsibilities for their one specific job. The jobs include: Mr. and Mrs. Fun, responsible for games, themed meals, cabin clean up, and activities such dances or carnivals; the waterfront duo, responsible for life guarding during swim time, pastor's boat, paddleboats, and keeping the shoreline clean; the crafty lady, who directs craft time in the craft shop; Mr. Rumpus, in charge of the rumpus room, keeping it clean and usually host tournaments in ping pong or jenga; workstaff/laundry coordinator, responsible for any camp laundry and directs the girls workstaff in their cleaning jobs for the week; Pastor's assistant/pianist, provides music in the chapel services, retrieves and sends the mail, and helps Karen Blomberg in the camp office with camper lists and

organization; camp manager's assistant, responsible for the canteen by ordering and stocking it, and also assists Karen Blomberg in the camp office; four outside guys, who maintain the camp grounds and guide the boys workstaff in mowing, painting, building, and fixing the camp; and four inside staff members, responsible for the lodge by means of leading the workstaff in setting and cleaning each meal and assisting the head cook Ron with anything he may need. In between the administrative staff and camp staff are four positions which are usually filled by previous camp staff members. The positions are two pastor's assistants, camper mentor, and counselor mentor. Camp counselors and workstaff are volunteer high school students who are assigned to council or workstaff a week or two during the summer. Counselors are responsible for six campers for that camping session. On average, there are twenty-two counselors (twenty-two cabins) a week with about 132 campers. The sixteen workstaff are responsible for setting and clearing meals, cleaning camp facilities such as the showers, toilets, and washstands, mowing, painting and watering. In the kitchen, there is a new set of about eight volunteer cooks each camping session. The cooks usually are members of the church who used to attend COP, have relatives attending, or previous staff members. In total, according to an interview with Karen Blomberg,⁴⁷ camp manager, on average, 70 volunteers per week. Over all that would amount to 190-200 people a week.

Registration for camp is another attribute that differs among most church camps. Members of Mt. Olivet receive first priority to register for camp. They have two months to sign up their childlchildren to the camping session based on what grade they will be attending the following school year. Registration is then opened up to non-members,

⁴⁷ K. Blomberg, interview held during a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2005

who usually start to line up outside the church door at 10:00pm the night before! Waiting lists are available in order to try and accommodate the high demand.

Cathedral of the Pines' daily schedule does not differ from the universal church camps. The one distinction is that COP's schedule has not changed in over 50 years.

"Parents who haven't attended camp in a while can still look at their watch and know what or where their child is doing," Kristi Youngdahl, youth director at church, stated in an interview, "Cathedral of the Pines is the most successful, because of its long standing traditions."⁴⁸ Camp days consist of morning chapel, breakfast, cabin clean up, bible study, 11 o'clock activity, lunch, rest time, swimming, canteen, softball, 4 o'clock activity, dinner, activity, chapel, large group activity, wash-up, devotions, lights out. Counselors are advised to be present and participate in most activities, with a few times each day for a break.

General rules and guidelines are enforced at camp, typically similar to other church camp's rules and regulations. Be punctual, respect your counselors and staff and peers, no swearing, no boys in girl's cabins and vice versa, no hitting, spitting, etc. COP just recently declared no electronics at camp. This includes cell phone, CD player, ipod, games, or computers. This rule is printed in the camper handbook to inform campers and parents, and counselors and workstaff must sign a waiver agreeing to follow this rule, along with refraining from drug/alcohol use. Consequences for counselors and workstaff are dealt with through the three strike policy. First strike is a warning, second is a call home, and on your third strike, they are sent home. Strikes are accumulated all summer, not each week. Just recently there are certain cases in which the counselor or workstaffer is directly sent home. The rules and regulations are available for anyone to view in the

as K. Youngdahl, interview held during a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2005

camper handbook, and are stated and the arrival of each camping session, and at staff/counselor/workstaff training.

After explaining the traditions and guidelines of Cathedral of the Pines camp, I will now look at the possible objectives COP wishes to achieve followed by the methods. Within this analysis I will explore the emphasis Mt. Olivet puts on counselor training by researching their specific objectives and methods for it with research, interviews, surveys, and my experience.

Like most organizations, Cathedral of the Pines clearly states their overall objectives in a mission statement, which reads,

The Mission of Cathedral of the Pines camp is to serve children and young people by enhancing their spiritual and emotional development. The summer camping experience in the natural beauty of Caribou Lake in Lutsen, Minnesota helps the youth grow in their relationship with God.⁴⁹

This mission statement serves as the purpose to inform all who are interested in Cathedral of the Pines of their overall intentions. Usually derived from the mission statement are more general objectives in relation to the camper, counselor, or staff member. This is not the case for Cathedral of the Pines, based on my research there are no written objectives specifically for camp. Kristi Youngdahl's personal goals for camp in general are to help the campers feel supported, encouraged, build healthy relationships, and be able to feel like a kid.⁵⁰ On the other hand the camp website includes a typical daily schedule along with "the best

⁴⁹ www.mtolivet.org

⁵⁰ K. Youngdahl, interview held during a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2005

⁵¹ www.mtolivet.org

Lutheran church therefore; COP applies the same objectives as Mt. Olivet.⁵² Mt. Olivet's objectives at large are stated in a mission statement;

Believing in Jesus Christ through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Belonging to the community of Jesus Christ. Becoming like Jesus Christ through servanthood.⁵³

Besides COP's individual mission statement, all other traditions, beliefs, procedures, and practices stem from Mt. Olivet's teachings of the church. For example, Cathedral of the Pines is a part of the ELCA camping network-region three. Karen Blomberg mentioned although Cathedral of the Pines is one of the many camps in the ELCA camping network, Mt. Olivet rarely attends the region gatherings, workshops, and conferences because they never use what is offered because of COP's successful long lasting traditions, they feel there is no need for change.⁵⁴ What determines successful? A pleased congregation? More church involvement? Minimal concern? Camp is Mt. Olivet's largest recruiter, according to Kristi Youngdahl. Youth attend COP and enjoy it so much they begin to come to church events to further their spiritual growth through building on their camp relationships.⁵⁵ As a youth director, Kristi Youngdahl oversees and plans, with the other youth leaders, youth group events almost every Sunday, also known as hi-league in addition to many youth programs, for instance, senior squared, kid's cafe, circle of friends. These programs emphasize Kristi Youngdahl's idea on the importance of building healthy Christian relationships outside the environment of camp. Kristi Youngdahl believes when youth choose to participate in camp or church youth programs, they are building

⁵² K. Blomberg, interview held during a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2005 '³
www.mtolivet.org

K. Youngdahl, interview held during a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2005 "
K. Youngdahl, interview

wrong!"⁵⁶ Karen Blomberg agrees and views Mt. Olivet as a social development and interaction that is intergenerational, Cathedral of the Pines simply has become its summer location.⁵⁷ Forming relationships is a key element within the church and camp, therefore it is emphasized within the training for camp staff and counselors.

Counselor Training

One of the universal objectives are to provide Christian leadership in order to watch over and guide the campers each week. The influence counselors have on campers is clearly expressed within my research, and leads most to believe training is crucial. Kristi Youngdahl considers counselor training "helps counselors understand the importance of the job and how hard it is. I want them to know they are supported and don't have to do it on their own."⁵⁸ Camps rely a great deal on counselors and how they're viewed. The relationships counselors have with the campers and each other could reflect on a camp achieving their objectives. In such a case, training objectives are crucial when determining what knowledge is needed to become a sufficient counselor, but more importantly, the methods help establish what are the best ways to present that information.

Mt. Olivet counselor training takes place mid-spring and is divided into two sections, general and devotions. Two dates are offered for the general training and only one for devotions training. It is required to attend both sections of training in order to be assigned a week to counsel. Parents are asked to come for the first half for a parent/counselor informational meeting on general safety, emergencies, and forms of

⁵⁶ K. Youngdahl, interview
⁵⁷ K. Blomberg, interview
⁵⁸ K. Youngdahl, interview

child abuse.⁵⁹ The Mt. Olivet youth staff also requires attendance at five COP hi-league credits. These take place on sporadic Sunday nights throughout the school year. Some hi-league (Sunday youth group activities) credit nights consist of a worship service, motivational speaker, or small group meetings, also referred to as share groups. The reason for these required credits is for the youth staff to be in relation with the potential counselors, see what they are going through, and to help seek out possible conflicts with counselor qualifications, based on Kristi Youngdahl's views.⁶⁰

Objectives and Methods

The over all objective for COP's counselor training is to help make camp a good experience for the campers, the staff, and the counselors because counselors will know what is to be expected of them, and what they can expect from the staff.⁶¹ More specifically, there are three more objectives, besides the large group information meeting on safety procedures, emergencies, and child abuse Mt. Olivet's youth staff likes to see achieved from the high school volunteer counselors. The topics consist of role models and attitudes, knowledge of the camp rules, discipline training, and camper behavior. Each topic was lead by youth leaders of Mt. Olivet. Counselors were broken into small groups and rotated about every 40 minutes.

The first objective provides knowledge of role models, attitudes, and how to have a successful week at camp. This objective provides the idea of being supportive and offering leadership in the best way in times of stress, doubt, confusion, or celebration. All of these are possible recognized feelings throughout physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development. Providing an accepting, outreaching environment can be

⁵⁹ COP Counselor Training, May 1st, 2005, unpublished document. See Appendix 2 ⁶⁰ K. Youngdahl, interview

⁶¹ See Appendix 2

appealing to a child in need.⁶² Being a positive role model and obtaining a positive attitude may create this type of environment.

The methods that were used this past year for this objective includes the following:

1) a group discussion on characteristics of a good role model, 2) an influential Bible passage from Philippians 2:7-8, 3) a group activity in which groups must rank characteristics on order based on importance for a good counselor and why, 4), form a letter indicating their own personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to counseling, 5) group quiz remembering the personal impacts role models hold opposed to impersonal big shots who will be remembered through fame alone.⁶³

The second objective provides information on discipline training. This portion of the training gives more detailed situations such as gossiping, bullying, cabin unity, and enforcement of the camp rules I listed earlier. This specific objective displays a possible connection with the universal objective of leadership training. This is more clearly presented in the methods.⁶⁴

The methods used to achieve this objective are mainly situation based. On the other hand Erik Telleen, a youth leader at Mt. Olivet, who led it this year made sure to include a wide variety of methods to keep it unpredictable. The basic outline of this workshop includes: quotes on leadership, "dear counselor" letters, movie clips from "Anchorman" and "Wet hot American Summer", camp director scenarios in small groups, suggested successful strategies, counselor personal stories with campers who may have been aggressive or a problem, and suggested alternative punishments. Each

⁶² Role Models and Attitude, May 1st, 2005, unpublished document. See Appendix 3

⁶³ See Appendix 3. The "dear counselor" letters include concerns of appropriate language at camp and adequate counselor attentiveness. The camp director scenarios give counselors the leadership role of a camp director in making tough decisions in specific problematic situations.

⁶⁴ C.O.P discipline training, May 1st, 2005, unpublished document. See Appendix 4

counselor received a handout providing suggested strategies to deal with campers successfully.⁶⁵

The third and final objective addressed in the training workshops includes informing the counselors of camper behavior and possible solutions with individual situations. This previous year, Zac Schnedler, the camper mentor during summer of 2005, led this workshop. Each aspect of this section focuses on individuality of the camper and how a counselor may address each circumstance differently. When analyzing this section I observed the emphasis put on noticing the strengths in campers as part of the techniques in solving child behavior.⁶⁶

The methods here are again, mostly situational based in order for counselors to understand the reality and possible chance of some possible problems happening to them. The methods consist of three sections. The first directs discussion toward uniqueness in family, life history, abilities, and gifts. Examples of each are encouraged to be suggested. The second is emphasizing counselors need to notice the good things their campers are doing, and to look for strengths in each individual camper. They finish with discussion on possible situations which are provided for them to read and analyze. Possible solutions are listed if the counselors need some successful suggestions.⁶⁷

Over all it is apparent that counselor training is primarily situation based. Counselors share their own experiences on top of possible situations that could have happened in the past, or are likely to happen. This approach helps counselors to analyze how they assessed their situation and gives other counselors or first year counselors a peek and what is to be expected. When using this type of method, counselor training will then

⁶⁵ See Appendix 4

⁶⁶ Camper behavior session, May 1st 2005, unpublished document, See Appendix 5

⁶⁷ See Appendix 5

vary from year to year, based on what personal experiences counselors have had. Kristi Youngdahl did mention they make sure not to use the same specific techniques each year because they want to provide different ways to give the same information. Along with that, Kristi believes everyone learns differently and experiences vary with each person.⁶⁸ Each year they try to bring in new outside speakers and use new added features, such as Erik Telleen did with movie clips. Kristi Youngdahl also believes by having flexibility with the training methods each year, they have the freedom to adapt to the social changes and new developments, although the objectives will probably stay the same.⁶⁹ **Surveys**

To better support and analyze counselor training in relation to church camp objectives and methods, I produced a survey directed toward first year counselors. Given that I was on staff and remained up there all summer, I had access to all the first year counselors that came up each week. This survey was only given to first year counselors who volunteered to participate. The survey was distributed as early into the week as possible so first year counselors could provide their expectations of a counselor prior to their experiences and their feedback of counselor training.

The survey questions were based on counselor training methods and what was liked and disliked, as well as reasons for becoming a counselor, and personal opinions of camp goals.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ K. Youngdahl, interview

⁶⁹ K. Youngdahl, interview

⁷⁰ COP Counselor Experience Survey, unpublished document, see Appendix 6.

Results

I received a total of seventeen completed surveys from first year counselors. The majority were going to be attending their third year in high school. After tallying the numbers for each question's response, the results are as followed:

1. When asked what the primary goals of a good camping experience for youth were, the majority thought all the options were important, with the exception of to get away from the city and relax. Education on faith, enhancing campers' spiritual development, and to grow in their relationship with God was all evenly important, according to the surveys.
2. A positive previous experience was the number one reason for why they chose to become a counselor at COP. Close in second was the desire to work with youth, leading to further career development. No one felt pressured into it.
3. The biggest need to counsel, according to the ones surveyed, was time for group discussion/devotion and prayer followed by alone quiet time to reflect and to be in relations and conversations with the staff. There was not a high demand for a written form of the rules and expectations.
4. The most common expectation for the week among the counselors was to grow and learn more about their faith through the youth. The second was to just have fun and use the time for leisure, followed by to become a better leader in the church and to gain experience for further career exploration.
5. According the survey responses, the aspects most helpful in counselor training were the discussions on situations and qualities that make a good counselor. The lecture on discipline was ranked the least helpful. This may be due to the format on how the information was presented, but that will be discussed within the conclusion.
6. The majority of the counselors believed the training best prepared them for their work responsibilities, emergency situations, and the camp's regulations. Interpersonal communication and discovering where you are in your faith life were the least accounted for.

My observations of the survey results did not seem too out of the ordinary from what I was expecting. Positive previous experience as the number one reason why counselors chose to counsel brings back Kristi Youngdahl's idea of the importance of tradition. Keeping it the same can help counselors have more knowledge of what to expect in a counselor role because they may remember the positive experiences with their counselor at camp, and now wish to do the same for others. Secondly, using the method of situations and discussions seems to be more appreciated, opposed to a lecture type setting. This result is a perfect display in relation to Duerken's idea of youth retaining more information when participating in conversation over visual learning.⁷¹ The survey results also included recommendations for change, which will be discussed in the next and final chapter.

This survey is crucial for the youth staff at Mt. Olivet to take into consideration so they can assess the feedback of what the youth in the training liked and disliked when reformatting the counselor training in the upcoming years. These results also serve as great support in my research of church camps, especially when determining the status of Cathedral of the Pines within the church camp community.

My final chapter will present the analysis of COP's objectives and methods of counselor training in accordance to the possible affiliations with the universal objectives and methods, as well as to the four given points of criteria. These observations may result in the potential need to recommend improvement or change for the present traditions of counselor training.

Carol Duerksen, Building Together, developing your blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry. Scottdale, PA, Faith and Life Resources, 2001 p.45.

Chapter 5:

Conclusion

After assessing Cathedral of the Pines Bible camp with a focus on their objectives and methods of counselor training, it is now essential to explore if these specific goals and methods correlate to any aspects of the universal objectives and methods for church camps. Evaluating each objective and its methods individually may provide more exclusive discoveries, positive and negative.

First it should be noted that church camp's universal objectives and methods encourage camps to acknowledge what it is they want to see their camp accomplish. Mt. Olivet's Cathedral of the Pines offers a mission statement explaining what they want to see happen, but no other clear objectives are provided, that I am aware of. Based on my observations, the reason is because COP is directly owned and run by Mt. Olivet Lutheran church and the majority of the campers are members, which leads the camp to use the traditions and guidelines of the church's goals and mission statement instead of creating their own. In essence, counselor training goals and methods typically format around the camps overall goals; therefore that will be my central point when correlating it to the universal objectives and methods.

The first universal objective previously analyzed was to provide a safe Christian environment. This objective appears to be common sense because the methods used to achieve this objective come with providing further objectives in more detail. In relation to COP, the importance of safety is directed as the highest priority, based on its high placement within the list of types of information given at counselor training. Kristi Youngdahl addresses the rules and regulations at COP, followed by emergency

procedures, and what constitutes child abuse.⁷² Directing this not only to the counselors but the parents at the beginning of the training reinforces the idea that the camp views this as a main concern. Kristi Youngdahl provides personal experiences of injuries she has seen at camp to make evident that they are to be expected even though camp activities aren't meant to be harmful.⁷³ Having the counselors be aware of such situations could help prevent it from happening. Therefore I believe COP is sufficiently providing for a safe environment for the campers and there is no need to recommend any changes.

The second universal objective wants church camps to provide guidance and counseling with experienced and trained leaders. The suggested universal method to accomplish this goal is a strong training session for leaders to go through in order to assist the camp in leading and taking responsibility for the campers. Counselors with adequate training may be more prepared for circumstances dealing with a child's needs or understandings of their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development. Counselor training helps create the safe environment for youth to come, explore, and develop by asking questions, expressing emotions, or becoming more aware of their personal stages of their development, which is one of the given criteria, acknowledging development stages with relation to age when determining what is appropriate.

It is evident from the previous chapter that Mt. Olivet offers counselor training sessions to prepare high school volunteers for counseling up at COP. The training session, based on my observations, focused a lot on leadership qualities through methods of role model discussion, suggestions on handling possible camper behavior, and appropriate relationship characteristics. Although these methods prepared the counselors,

⁷² COP Counselor Training, May 1st, 2005, unpublished document. See Appendix 2
See Appendix 2

the technique of counselor training does not specifically meet the first criterion, acknowledging development stages in relation to age. Counselor training is a large group session, broken into smaller workshops discussing certain leadership attributes for successful counseling. The counselors are not yet assigned their week, so are not aware of what age group they will be counseling. All the workshops provide general information and situations, not directed at a certain age group, although some situations may be more obvious than others. Kristi Youngdahl did say, once the counselors were at camp, they typically have counselor meetings periodically to discuss more specific guidelines and techniques.⁷⁴ Not to have more directed age group material may lead counselors to feel less connected with the training and more questioning when it comes to counseling a specific age group.

The third and fourth universal objectives provide participation in Christian practices and help campers appreciate Christianity by understanding their personal experiences. Previously stated, these objectives can offer opportunity for youth to explore, express, and acknowledge the Christian influences on their physical, emotional, and intellectual development. Methods typically used to achieve these goals include Bible studies, worship services, personal reflection, and a class curriculum.

In the case of COP, through their daily schedule and mission statement, both of these universal objectives are addressed. The daily schedule includes morning and evening chapel, which everyone is to attend, a class curriculum with daily bible study groups led by camp staff and youth directors, rest time (for campers and counselors to reflect), as well as cabin devotions led by the counselors. Each of these provides an opportunity for campers and the counselors to acknowledge the Christian concepts,

⁷⁴ K. Youngdahl, interview held at a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November, 2005

internalize them, and relate it to past memories, camp memories, or personal experiences. COP offers large group discussion for the ones who wish to express feelings, questions, or doubt. It also offers individual time, such as rest time or chapel for individual exploration.

As part of counselor training, counselors are given a devotions packet to help guide them through nightly devotions with their campers. The devotions training focuses on appropriate conversation topics and techniques for specific age groups. According to this study, because of the large amount of influence counselors have on campers, they are just another resource in helping campers to understand and participate in Christian teachings and understandings. Being in faith conversation, with one another, as in devotions, only benefits the overall camp environment when striving for Christian participation and spiritual growth. Having age directed devotional training properly prepares counselors for expectations of possible faith related circumstances. My observations show counselors who are prepared for specific expectations become more confident in their leadership skills. Devotion training usually does that because of age appropriate specifics.

The fifth universal objective entails recreational activity, in and out doors. Physical activity is typically needed for healthy physical development. The idea of recreational activity is a key attribute when recognizing the difference between church and church camp. Church camps do emphasize Christian teachings, and in COP's case, teachings directly from Mt. Olivet's traditions, but includes fun games, activities, and skill development. Hands-on involvement helps youth develop intellectually by means of

socially interacting with others in understanding concepts and learning new skills and alternative methods.

Recreational games and hands on opportunities are mostly directed by the camp staff. Mr. and Miss Fun are trained to direct and create games that are age appropriate. Larger group games with less strategy are planned for younger age groups, like ships across the ocean and kick ball. For the older generations, games such as capture the flag and softball are offered. Eleven o'clock activities will vary based on the age group attending that week. For instance, archery is only an option for seventh and eighth graders and older. A second example would be after dinner activities. Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders have a carnival with games run by the counselors, who offer prizes. On the other hand, seventh, eighth, ninth, and high school sessions are offered a dance. By having the staff in charge of recreational activities they are more aware of the different levels of development and can strategically provide appropriate games. The requirement of counselor participation in the majority of camp activities helps them understand what is appropriate and what is not. Using the camp staff as role models benefits counselors in their leadership roles which then influence the campers.

The final universal objective is providing leadership training to the campers. Being surrounded by Christian leaders who have been properly trained, campers typically will slowly become intellectually aware of the importance of leadership and the influence it may have on them. Not only is it important for the counselors to be properly trained in leadership, but the campers as well. Typical methods offered to campers include providing a leadership role to each camper throughout their camp session. This idea lets

the camper participate and learn from their experience. This can also relate to the concept of hands on and inclusive opportunities.

My observations have helped me to recognize the difficulty in giving this leadership opportunity to the camper. Kristi Youngdahl discussed the relationships and influences that are created at camp. The camp staff is trained and usually influences the counselors with their roles and responsibilities at camp. The counselors then influence the campers by means of their relationships with the staff and how that has possibly created a better Christian environment for campers.⁷⁵ In theory, with the camp administrative staff, camp staff, and counselors, and the large number of campers each week, it is hard to provide opportunities for camper leadership in a large group. Counselors are encouraged to provide opportunities in small group games, devotions, or bible study. One example is during cabin clean up. Counselors can delegate individual tasks in which the campers could accomplish. This helps counselors to see individual strengths in their campers and provides a perfect opportunity to express them to each camper's specific task. Personal and individual connection is then created between the counselor and his/her six campers. Leadership is not all about authority and delegating, but about being responsive and aware of your camper's needs and desires. Based on my observations, leadership is a balancing act of needs and wants and what is morally right.

Overall, each of COP's objectives and methods generally correlate to my previous research of objectives, methods, and criteria of universal church camps. Some are stronger than others. There are two points of reference in my case study on COP that could suggest possible need for improvement. These ideas will be explained in accordance to COP's relation to the universal objectives and methods of church camps.

⁷⁵ K. Youngdahl, interview help at a personal meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November, 2005

Recommendations for change

My first recommendation entails counselor training methods. The training is aimed at camper situations as a whole with general ideas and concepts. Some situations that are discussed may be more directed at a specific age group by common sense and camp history. Since the majority of COP's traditions have stayed the same, expectations typically stay the same as well. Although this may be true and consistency may be beneficial to the expectations of parents, campers, and the Mt. Olivet congregation, my observations have led me to suggest an addition to the counselor training methods.

Each of the methods I have observed and analyzed are sufficient in providing general information to become a successful Christian leader. What needs to be included is more age specific training so counselors are better prepared for the age group they will be counseling. My research has shown the multiple types of development and the many stages within each. It is only beneficial at camp when counselors are aware of youth development levels so they can provide the best accommodations to better a child's development, physically, emotionally, intellectually, or spiritually. Once counselors are assigned their week(s) at camp, Mt. Olivet should offer separate training sessions for each age specific camp session in addition to the general training program that already exists. This age specific training could include better directed situations, information on age-specific stages of child development, and suggestions for age appropriate games, solutions, and leadership. Providing this type of training may give counselors a better understanding of their role as a counselor and be able to become more confident in their responsibilities. Campers could benefit from this program from their counselor's knowledge and ability to adapt to their camper's needs and responses. Since the staff

training provides age specific training, adding it to the counselor training will provide more knowledgeable, improved, and prepared Christian leaders. The only issue I see with this suggestion is time. It is so hard to get every counselor to the counselor training in general as well as keeping track who has enough COP hi-league credits. My suggestion to this issue is to offer this as a Sunday night hi-league event. The counselors usually attend Sunday night hi-league anyway, so by offering it on a night they usually attend, takes away from the hassle of an extra day of training on top of prior requirements.

My second recommendation applies to COP. I observed earlier that COP provides a mission statement which entails the broad objective of what they wish to accomplish. Although they aren't clearly stated, COP is basically accomplishing the universal objectives and methods of church camps. Universal objectives are displayed to the public so families and youth can see what camp may be best suitable based on certain desires and viewpoints. Mission statements are a type of this display, but COP is formatted through Mt. Olivet's traditions and objectives, which are summed up in a mission statement. Although COP does include a separate mission statement, my observations suggest COP provide specific goals derived from the atmosphere of COP alone. First, people who are not affiliated with Mt. Olivet can explore COP and what it offers to Christian youth in addition to personal stories and experiences they could hear from members of Mt. Olivet who have grown up with COP. Second, by providing clear specific goals, it is easier to reflect back on the summers and see if the goals were accomplished and what changes are needed if any. Finally, providing and displaying objectives of the camp or training may become useful in situations addressing liability. Being able to refer back to the objectives and methods of counselor training prevents

reasons to doubt if the training included proper information that could have prevented a serious encounter.

Objectives are created for organization, success, and motivation within an institution. They help see where you're going and where you have been. Cathedral of the Pines provides an amazing mission statement but including more specific objectives can benefit Christian's knowledge of COP and assist the camp's motivation throughout their success.

Finally, the survey first year counselors filled out offered room for recommending change or improvements on the training. I chose to offer these suggestions as a resource to possible changes in future counselor trainings.

Each of these recommendations associated to the training as a whole. The results are as follows:

1. Longer discussions
2. Hand outs provided prior to the training
3. Provide overheads
4. Training should be a shorter length
5. Offer interviews with a pastor
6. provide time for smaller group discussions

It is with these recommendations that Cathedral of the Pines could benefit from.

Clearly stating church camp objectives and recognizing the relevance of the different stages in a child's development to those objectives will provide church camps with the best knowledge to create an environment for sufficient growth.

Appendix 1

Appendix one includes mission statements from six different church camps around the United States.

Church Camp Mission Statements

Camp Shalom

Mission Statement:

A Christ-Centered outdoor ministry that inspires people of all ages to live fully in the Spirit.

Vision Statement:

An ecumenical outdoor ministry that nurtures the Christian faith in a time and place apart.

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries on Ohio

Mission statement

"We create places apart where lives are changed through spiritual growth as people experience the love and joy of Jesus Christ."

Sugar Creek bible camp

"To serve as a vehicle for the Spirit of God who encourages people through scriptures, the sacred surrounding, and the witness of all who share in the Christian camping ministry."

Luther Crest Bible camp

Our Mission:

Luther Crest is called and committed to a Christ-centered

Ministry through creation and community.

Rainbow Trail Bible camp

RTLCL Mission Statement:

Through the ministries of Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp, God **claims** us, Christ **transforms** us, and the Holy Spirit **sends** us for faithful service.

LUTHER HEIGHTS Bible camp

Luther Heights Bible Camp is nestled in the grandeur of the Sawtooth Mountains. This setting provides an excellent opportunity for physical and spiritual renewal as we live together as God's chosen people discovering the depth of God's Love.

Appendix 2

Appendix two is the outline of the large group introductory session for the counselor training at Mt. Olivet, led by Kristi Youngdahl, youth director at Mt. Olivet

C.O.P Counselor Training

May 1, 2005

I. Welcome

- A. Glad that you can be here tonight, parents and hi-leaguers
- B. Very appreciative that you will be counseling for COP this summer
- C. Training really helps make camp a good experience for the campers, the staff, and hopefully makes the experience better for you as well because you know what is expected of you, and what you can expect from the staff

II. General safety

- A. This is a huge concern for the camp staff. COP has total responsibility for the health and safety of its campers for up to a week at a time. We need to take this very seriously
- B. As you know, the beach has strict rules for the safety of everyone, please obey them without question
- C. When I spent my summers at COP, one of my jobs was to watch over health and safety issues. Let me tell you about some of the things that happened, that might have been prevented
 - 1. Running on the rocks.
 - a. Scraped knees from running on the rocks. These are not fun to have cleaned since gravel must be picked out of the wound
 - b. Sprained ankles from running on the rocks
 - c. One child ruptured his spleen by falling flat on a rock. He is fine, but surgery was required
 - 2. Bare feet at camp. The ground is just too rough for it to be safe to walk without shoes. Bad cuts on feet that are painful and hard to heal have resulted
 - 3. Broken teeth from falls
 - 4. Falling out of the top bunk. Usually happens when campers are fooling around
 - 5. Eye injuries from sticks brandished about
 - 6. Injuries from throwing stones, even when not aimed at someone
 - 7. Back injuries caused from giving campers "piggy back rides"

D. These are all things that kids just do, and are not meant to be harmful. As a counselor you can keep your eyes open for any danger, not to spoil the fun of campers and yourselves, but for safety sake

III. Emergencies

A. These are the big things that could happen, and we pray that *they* don't

B. If it is something affecting the whole camp, multiple bells ringing at once will alert you to danger

1. Fire

- < Lead the campers outside to the edge of the ball field farthest from the fire or smoke
- < Count your campers and immediately inform a staff person if someone is missing. Do not go after a missing person
- < Stay with your campers and keep them calm by playing games, singing, etc.
- < Stay put until told what to do next or until informed all is clear

2. Bad weather

- < Bring your campers to the Lodge basement
- < Count your campers and immediately inform a staff person if someone is missing. Do not go after a missing person
- < Stay with your campers and keep them calm by playing games, singing, etc.
- < Stay put until told what to do next or until informed all is clear

C. Major injury

- < Stay calm, and try to calm the injured person
- < Send one counselor to find an adult
- < Ask another counselor to take charge of the rest of your campers
- < Wait with the injured person until help comes

D. Minor first aid

- < Take your camper to the First Aid Station

In any emergency, your responsibility is to notify a staff person, and then to manage the other campers to avoid panic

E. Remember that any staff person can be asked for help anytime you need it

IV. Child abuse

A. This is a bit harder to talk about because it is very serious and we would like

to think that in could never happen at COP

- B. By law every facility that takes care of children needs to have a clear child abuse policy that everyone knows about and agrees to follow
- C. Mount Olivet and Cathedral of the Pines is committed to provide safeguards against all forms of abuse, and wants to be sure that everyone can feel safe in our programs

V What is child abuse?

- A. Anyone under the age of 18 is considered a child
- B. A child abuser can be an adult, an adolescent, or another child older by four years or more (most of you will fall in that category while counseling)
- C. There are numerous forms of child abuse, all of which may result in terrible emotional or physical scars that impair psychological growth and development
 - 1. Physical Abuse
 - < Inflicting bodily harm on another
 - < The injury may or may not be visible
 - < It would include shaking, hitting, beating, burning and anything else that hurts
 - 2. Sexual abuse
 - < Is a criminal behavior
 - < Touching abuse includes fondling, as well as any oral, genital or anal penetration
 - < Sexual abuse can also occur without touching
 - ← Exhibitionism
 - ← Allowing children to witness sexual activity
 - ← Verbal descriptions of sexual behavior (pay particular attention to this one. Campers love to hear stories about the private lives of their counselors and will be quite attentive to real or imagined stories)
 - 3. Emotional abuse
 - < Belittling
 - < Irrational criticism
 - < Insults
 - < Humiliation
 - < Put downs
 - < Off color jokes
 - < Profanity
 - < Emotional abuse is the most likely kind of abuse to happen at camp. Remember, it is considered abuse, not having fun or being funny
 - 4. Neglect is a form of abuse caused by failing to provide basic needs for a child

D. If you have any reason to suspect that a child is being abused here or at home, or if a child tells you that he or she is being abused, the law requires you to report that to a staff person in this program immediately

- < Give the adult all the information you have, but do not ask a lot of questions of the camper
- < Talk only to staff members, do not gossip among yourselves
- < Mount Olivet will protect your anonymity and will be sure you are not harassed for giving us this important information

E. If you have ever been abused yourself in any of the ways I have mentioned I would urge you to talk to a trusted adult about your experience. It is important that your own wounds are healed so that no one else is negatively affected

VI Bottom line

- A. Being a counselor or on the work staff is hard work
- B. And it carries a lot of responsibility
- C. It is also very rewarding and lots of fun
- D. I hope and pray that because you do a good job and pay attention to the camp rules, the rewards and fun will be what you and the campers will remember from your experience this summer

Appendix 3

Appendix three consists of an outline for one of the smaller group workshops of counselor training, led by Kristi Youngdahl, the youth director at Mt. Olivet.

Role Models and Attitude

Intro: Group Quiz, "Who our worlds Role Models?"

10min

- < Who has been your model...?
- < Who in this room sees themselves as a role model...?
- < What are the main characteristics that make for a good role model...?

Bible Passage: Philippians 2:7-8... "Don't just seek after fame and fortune; Keep in mind that the most revered person in history came not to get fame or fortune for himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross."

Group Activity:

20min

Put these twelve characteristics in order in matter of importance to have as a counselor

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Compassion | Outgoing |
| Open to Diversity | Sense of Humor |
| Good Listener | Loving |
| Patient | Responsibility Promptness |
| Assertive | Self Awareness |
| Problem Solver | Creative |
| Fun | |

- < Have groups share their top three, compare ask for reasons
- < There is no true order all are important...think about which ones you possess, which ones you could work on

Form Letter to Self:

15min

Pass out letters, have counselors reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses for the remainder of time.

Dear

The youth staff wants you to know that we value the time and energy that you give to C.O.P. We want you to also value the person you are and the counselor you can be up at camp. Reflect on who you are as a role model through the following questions:

The three strongest characteristics I possess as a counselor are:

1.

2.

3.

A challenge that I may face being a counselor is:

I can face this challenge by:

Three things I am looking forward to doing w/my campers are:

1.

2.

3.

Group Quizzes: #1

Raise your hand if you can ...

- < Name the MVP of the last World Series?
- < Name the winner of the Heisman trophy?
- < Name the winner for Best New Artist @ the Grammys
- < Name the winner of the last Daytona 500?
- < Name the #1 Song on the top 20 this week?
- < Name the Winner for best Actor 2004?...best Actress?

#2

- < Name a teacher who has helped you grow as an individual?
- < A friend who has helped you through bad days?
- < Name three adults who have been good roles models for you?
- < Name two people who pray for you?
- < Name someone who makes you laugh?
- < Name some one who challenges you to be a better person?
- < Name someone who has given you something of value?
- < Name someone whose life story has inspired you?
- < Name someone who has helped you in a difficult time?

Appendix 4

Appendix four includes an outline for the second smaller group workshops, led by Erik Telleen, one of the youth staff at Mt. Olivet.

C.O.P discipline Training

Introduction

- a. Talk about Telleen's quote..."We are not leaders if we leave the camper where we find him/her or if we allow the camper to chart the course for us."
- b. Talk about Sarah's two tips
 1. No 2 children are the same. What works for some might not work for others.
 2. Keep your energy level high and positive.
- c. Stress that appropriate language is very important and to be an attentive counselor.

II. Letters and Movie Clips

- a. Dear Counselor letter regarding appropriate language
- b. "Anchorman" clip
- c. "Dear Counselor" letter regarding attentive counselors
- d. Wet Hot American Summer clip

III. Camp Director Scenarios (break into 8 small groups of 5 Hi-Leaguers)-You have just been assigned the job of a summer camp director. While the counselors and camp staff have significant responsibilities, you have ultimate authority. Read the following scenario and decide how you would handle the situation in the best interest of all those involved.

- a. Profanity
- b. Bullying
- c. Gossip
- d. Use of electronics
- e. Cabin unity
- f. Enforcement of the one bell rule
- g. Functional devotions
- h. Guys/girls cabins

W. 'Strategies to Deal with Campers Successfully

- a. Have clear rules
- b. Give direct requests
 1. Ex. It's time to clean up. We need to go to chapel now.
 2. When giving requests; get up close and at eye level, make eye contact, use a soft but firm voice. Make the same request only twice.
- c. Tell campers what they CAN do, instead of what they CANT do
 1. Ex. You can talk quietly at rest time---instead of---stop yelling, you're too loud.
 - Ex. You can walk or skip to chapel---instead of---stop running.

d. Give choices

1. Ex. You could say, "You can make your bed now and I'll help you, or you can make it yourself."
2. Even if the camper counters with, "But I don't want to make my bed at all," the counselor can respond with, "That is not one of the choices. Let me tell you again what the choices are."

e. Re-direct behavior

1. When campers begin to argue, you can divert their energy into a more acceptable activity that absorbs their energy.

f. Give positive consequences and positive feedback

1. This strategy works best with children between 8 and 11 years old. One example is to say, "If you clean up on time, I'll play a special game with you."
2. State an observable fact, something you actually witnessed. For example, "Eric, I noticed you really helped Jason clean his bunk during cabin clean-up."
3. Mention one or two details of what you saw. For example, "You were really following directions today. You all cleaned up without being asked."
4. State what is significant or meaningful about the event. For example, "You were really working hard to catch balls during softball."

g. Guide positive behavior

1. Ex. When you're quiet, we can begin our story.
2. Ex. "If everyone leaves on time, we can be first in line."

h. Knowing how to deal with kids who have trouble with transitions to new activities; 5-10 minute warning technique

1. Many kids have trouble with transitions. Giving them a 10 minute warning before something new will start and then 5 minute warning may help.

i. Think about your intentions when campers push your buttons.

1. Take a deep breath. What is my intention with this camper? How do you want to come across? Sometimes it is easy to get angry or vindictive. How you come across to campers will have tremendous effect on what results you get.
2. Ask yourself if you are trying to get even, show the kid who's the boss, punish the kid or get to the bottom of things.
3. Stay calm. If you are taking the campers actions personally, you will react out of anger or frustration and be less effective.
4. Find out what the child is trying to get from his behavior. When kids act in such a way that they either get into trouble or push other children, help them by saying, "I understand what I think you are trying to do, let's see if we can do it in a way that doesn't get you in trouble or cause you to lose friends."

V Problem Campers (ask former counselors to share stories)

a. Camper who withdraws

1. Homesickness
2. The lonesome camper who is timid and shy.
3. The camper who fears bugs, snakes, animals, the dark, and appearing before others.

4. The one who gives up.
5. The one who pretends to be sick.
6. The one who steals.
7. The one who is extremely nervous.
8. The bed wetter
9. The delicate child, often labeled "sissy".
10. The solitary, reclusive type.
11. The daydreamer
12. The liar
13. The spoiled child
14. The over-dependent child
15. The sullen and sulky child

b. Camper who is aggressive

1. The bully
2. The bullheaded and obstinate
3. The one who teases others
4. The show-off
5. The one who will not go along with group decisions
6. The one who exhibits temper tantrums
7. The profane and vulgar camper
8. The selfish camper
9. The over-critical, fault-finding camper
10. The one who needs to learn cooperation with others
11. The "know-it-all"
12. The one who wants his/her own way all of the time
13. The limelight seeker
14. The mischief-maker
15. The irresponsible camper

VI. Alternative to Punishment (In a cabin clean-up scenario)

- a. Express your feeling without attacking character
 1. "I am angry that every time we clean the cabin, I seem to be doing it alone."
- b. State your expectations
 1. I expect everyone to help.
- c. Show the child how to make amends
 1. "I need someone to do the sweeping and carry out the garbage."
- d. Give the child a choice

1. "Which job would you like to do?"

- e. Problem solve
 1. "What are we going to do tomorrow so that we don't have this kind of problem again?"
- f. Take action

Please read the following outline for tips and strategies of how to deal with your campers successfully, how to deal with "problem campers" and alternatives to punishment. Thank you for your time and talent!

Strategies to Deal with Campers Successfully

- a. Have clear rules
- b. Give direct requests
 1. Ex. Its time to clean up. We need to go to chapel now.
 2. When giving requests; get up close and at eye level, make eye contact, use a soft but firm voice. Make the same request only twice.
- c. Tell campers what they CAN do, instead of what they CANT do
 1. Ex. You can talk quietly at rest time---instead of---stop yelling, you're too loud.
 2. Ex. You can walk or skip to chapel---instead of---stop running.
- d. Give choices
 1. Ex. You could say," You can make your bed now and I'll help you, or you can make it yourself."
 2. Even if the camper counters with, "But I don't want to make my bed at all," the counselor can respond with, "That is not one of the choices. Let me tell you again what the choices are."
- e. Re-direct behavior
 1. When campers begin to argue, you can divert their energy into a more acceptable activity that absorbs their energy.
- f. Give positive consequences and positive feedback
 1. This strategy works best with children between 8 and 11 years old. One example is to say, If you clean up on time, Ill play a special game with you.
 2. State an observable fact, something you actually witnessed. For example, "Eric, I noticed you really helped Jason clean his bunk during cabin clean-up."
 3. Mention one or two details of what you saw. For example, "You were really following directions today. You all cleaned up without being asked."
 4. State what is significant or meaningful about the event. For example, "You were really working hard to catch balls during softball."
- g. Guide positive behavior
 1. Ex. When you re quiet, we can begin our story.
 2. Ex. "If everyone leaves on time, we can be first in line."

Knowing how to deal with kids who have trouble with transitions to

new activities; 5-10 minute warning technique

1. Many kids have trouble with transitions. Giving them a 10 minute warning before something new will start and then 5 minute warning may help.

i. Think about your intentions when campers push your buttons.

1. Take a deep breath. What is my intention with this camper? How do you want to come across? Sometimes it is easy to get angry or vindictive. How you come across to campers will have tremendous effect on what results you get.
2. Ask yourself if you are trying to get even, show the kid who's the boss, punish the kid or get to the bottom of things.
3. Stay calm. If you are taking the camper's actions personally, you will react out of anger or frustration and be less effective.
4. Find out what the child is trying to get from his behavior. When kids act in such a way that they either get into trouble or push other children, help them by saying, "I understand what I think you are trying to do, let's see if we can do it in a way that doesn't get you in trouble or cause you to lose friends."

II. Problem Campers

a. Camper who withdraws

1. Homesickness
2. The lonesome camper who is timid and shy.
3. The camper who fears bugs, snakes, animals, the dark, and appearing before others.
4. The one who gives up.
5. The one who pretends to be sick.
6. The one who steals.
7. The one who is extremely nervous.
8. The bedwetter
9. The delicate child, often labeled "sissy".
10. The solitary, reclusive type.
11. The daydreamer
12. The liar
13. The spoiled child
14. The over-dependent child
15. The sullen and sulky child

b. Camper who is aggressive

1. The bully
2. The bullheaded and obstinate
3. The one who teases others
4. The show-off
5. The one who will not go along with group decisions
6. The one who exhibits temper tantrums
7. The profane and vulgar camper

8. The selfish camper
9. The over-critical, fault-finding camper
10. The one who needs to learn cooperation with others
11. The "know-it-all"
12. The one who wants his/her own way all of the time
13. The limelight seeker
14. The mischief-maker
15. The irresponsible camper

III. Alternative to Punishment (In a cabin clean-up scenario)

- a. Express your feeling without attacking character
 1. "I am angry that every time we clean the cabin, I seem to be doing it alone."
- b. State your expectations
 1. I expect everyone to help.
- c. Show the child how to make amends
 1. "I need someone to do the sweeping and carry out the garbage."
- d. Give the child a choice
 1. "Which job would you like to do?"
- e. Problem solve
 1. "What are we going to do tomorrow so that we don't have this kind of problem again?"

Take action

Please read the following outline for tips and strategies of how to deal with your campers successfully, how to deal with "problem campers" and alternatives to punishment. Thank you for your time and talent!

Problem Campers

- a. Camper who withdraws
 1. Homesickness
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- II. Alternative to Punishment (In a cabin clean-up scenario)
- a. Express your feeling without attacking character
 1. "I am angry that every time we clean the cabin, I seem to be doing it alone."
 - b. State your expectations
 1. "I expect everyone to help."
 - c. Show the child how to make amends

Appendix 5

Appendix five incorporates an outline of camper behavior situations and suggestions, the last of the three small group workshops, led by Zac Schnedler, camper mentor at Cathedral of the Pines.

Camper Behavior Session

Welcome and Introduction. Introduce Zac as Camper Mentor. Personally I am so happy Zac is going to be on staff because I know what kind of counselor he was. He cares about kids.

II. Each camper is unique. Each comes from a unique family. We can't assume their family is like ours. They come to you as a product of their own unique past.

Maybe there's been: A divorce

A new baby

A grandparent that has died

A move

A brother or sister in trouble

Consider the possibilities.

Each camper also has unique abilities and gifts. You have:

Athletes

Musicians

Intellectuals

Artists

Scientists

You have confident kids and kids who don't trust their own abilities at all. You need to look for strengths in each, and name those strengths. For some kids just being away from home is a challenge that should be noticed.

Always notice the good things your campers are doing.

Being a counselor is a tough job. For the remainder of the time we want to discuss some possible situations you could run into.

Homesick Hannah

The day has just ended. It is getting dark. The whole camp is heading toward their cabins. "it" suddenly strikes Hannah as she begins to think of her usual routine at home. Darkness, cabin, trees, sounds, no dog, no mamma..... Panic!...Tears!

Discuss as a group how you can best work with a homesick camper

Disrespectful Danny

Danny won't listen, he talks back, and generally seems to have no respect for authority. Danny talks during one bell, laughs at other campers while they are praying, belches at inappropriate times, and isn't afraid to throw goldfish across the table at lunch. You've asked him time and again to stop, but the response is always, "whatever, your not my mom."

Discuss as a group how you can best work with a homesick camper

Billy the bully

Billy is big for his age. It's the second day of the week and you've started to notice that he's been making fun of others on the ball field and in your cabin. He's also pretty rough with the other kids, pushing them around and knocking them down.

Discuss as a group how you can best work with a homesick camper

Lazy Lisa

Lisa doesn't want to help during cabin clean-up. She may sweep for a second or two and then wonder out to play tetherball. You ask her to help and her response is "it's not my mess."

Discuss as a group how you can best work with a homesick camper

Suggestions

Homesick Hannah

Let staff know – get help early

Ok to talk about home – let them share

Keep mind occupied – moving and thinking

Dispel fears by talking about what will happen next/what's coming up

Nightly rituals – high 5's – see you in a little while

Don't - tell them they can call home – run to the nurse every night

Disrespectful Danny

Ask for help

Work with not against

Give clear rules and expectations

Reset appropriate behavior

Consequences – have to talk to pastor's asst. or to other staff

Don't take on by yourself – don't take personally

Billy the Bully

Get help

Work with not against

Separate to discuss

Help see the results of his actions

Clear rules and expectations Be
protector of others

Keep in your site

Lazy Lisa

Clear expectations - jobs

Cleaning is required

Give choices – empower

Encourage teamwork

Make it fun

Teach how

Be positive – excited

Appendix 6

Appendix six consists of the survey questions that were given to first year counselors at the beginning of their counseling session up at camp. Results are in the parentheses.

COP Counselor Experience Survey!

School ID Number:

Age:

Gender:

Educational Back round:

Previous experience :(Ex: youth group, MOB, choir...)

1. Why did you choose to take a position as a counselor at COP?
 - ☐ Positive previous camp experience (12)
 - ☐ Desire to work with youth, leading to further a career development (5)
 - ☐ Felt Pressured into it (0)
 - ☐ Wanted to try something new (3)
 - ☐ Other (please use space below to briefly explain) (2)
Never done it-always wanted to

2. What aspects of staff training were most helpful? Rank the options below 1-5. 1 being most helpful, 5 being the least.
 - Situations (discussion)
 - Safety/camp rules (handouts)
 - Discipline (lecture)
 - Qualities that make a good counselor (discussion)
 - Other

3. How would you improve those aspects of training that were ranked the least helpful above?

4. In what ways did your training prepare you?
 - ☐ Emergency situations (9)
 - ☐ Interpersonal communication (being social with other counselors) 5
 - ☐ Work responsibilities (12)
 - ☐ Camp regulations (11)
 - ☐ Discovering where you are in your faith life (4)

5. Are there aspects of your job for which you feel the need for further training?
- ☐ Emergency Situations (4)
 - ☐ Interpersonal communication (being social with other counselors) (3)
 - ☐ Work responsibilities (1)
 - ☐ Camp regulations (1)
 - ☐ Discovering where you are in your faith life **(6)**
 - ☐ Other (2)
6. What would you change/add?
7. What are your expectations for the week? Rank from 1 through 5 with 1 being strongest expectation and 5 being the weakest.
- It is a good outdoor summer job
 - I want to gain experience for further work/career
 - I expect to grow and learn more about my faith through youth
 - Help in becoming a better leader in the church
 - Just to have fun and use this time for leisure
 - Other
8. What are your needs for counseling up at camp this summer?
- ☐ Mentoring by more experienced staff member (2)
 - ☐ Clear knowledge in written form of expectations and rules (1)
 - ☐ Time for group discussions/devotions/prayer **(10)**
 - ☐ Alone quiet time/reflection **(6)**
 - ☐ Relationship/conversation with the staff **(5)**
 - ☐ Other (4)
9. Please describe the most important aspects of your faith life.
10. What do you see as the primary goals of a camping experience for youth?
- ☐ To enhance their spiritual and emotional development **(10)**
 - ☐ Grow in their relationship with God (14)
 - ☐ Get away from the city and relax (5)
 - ☐ To educate them on their faith, religion, and culture (11)
 - Other (please explain below) (2) **-have a good time**

Appendix 7

This appendix displays the school's approval of my request for research. The form explains my methods and purpose of the survey and possible information I hoped to receive.

Research Request Application

Your application has been submitted successfully. Please print out the summary below for your records.

May 11, 2005

Review Type: EXEMPT

E-mail address of principal investigator:

mpeters42gac.edu

Telephone: 612396233 8

Project Title: Camp history of training with faith growth experiences

This project is being concluded as: STUDENT PROJECT

Faculty Supervisor e-mail address: gpaul@gac.edu

Telephone: 933-7471

Course Title: Senior

Seminar

Department: Religion Course No: 399

Funded by:

- 1.) What is the purpose of the study? Please provide a brief description of the hypothesis and issues under consideration.

The purpose of the study is to see if the staff/counselor/workstaff training prepares the people enough for the expectations of working at Cathedral of the Pines Camp. In essence to this, examining their faith growth while in the leadership positions. finally to study church Lutheran history of camps.

- 2.) What subject group(s) will you work with, and how will you recruit them?

The subjects are the college level camp staff, high school workstaff and

counselors. I will be recruiting them since I am working at this camp this summer.

3.) What information will you offer subjects about your study before they participate? (E.g., how will the study be described, what incentives will be offered?) Except in special circumstances (which you must describe and justify), potential subjects should be given enough information about the project to ' make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. Subjects should not be coerced or pressured, and should be told that they are free to withdraw from participation at any time.

The surveys will be confidential, for my thesis, anonymous, and simply for thesis purpose and nothing more. They will be offered a copy of my thesis if the chose. No one will be forced to participate, all by personal choice.

4.) Does the study involve children or others for whom additional consent will be necessary? If so, how will you obtain this consent? (Note: Research involving children normally requires written permission from parents or guardians, in addition to written permission from a school principal or other institutional director, if applicable. Describe how you will seek this permission, attaching copies of proposed permission/consent forms where appropriate.

The study will be high school and college age people. I have received consent from the camp director and manager to give these surveys. Since the surveys will be anonymous, everything is set.

5.) How will you plan to protect the privacy and/or anonymity of your subjects, and the anonymity of the data at the conclusion of the study? Please specify how you will destroy the data. If you do not intend to destroy the data, how will it be stored and protected?

I plan to protect the subjects by being the only one to look at the information. All filled out surveys will be locked up in my personal staff cabin, and then once at school in my room or advisors office. Once I am

finished the surveys will be shredded or burned.

6.) Does the study involve deception? If so, explain why deception is necessary and how you will address any potentially harmful consequences. no

7.) What are your experimental procedures? Are there any potentially harmful effects that might occur in your study? If so, what are they, and how will you guard against them or seek to minimize them?

no harmful effects....all procedures will be surveys or questioners.

8.) If appropriate, how will you debrief your subjects after their work is completed?

9.) Please attach a copy of any survey, questionnaire and/or consent form(s) you plan to use.

Questions will be as follows: Why did you choose to be a counselor/workstaffer? Did you enjoy staff training? Did it prepare you? Favorite part? Worst part? What would you like to change? What are your expectations for counseling/workstaffing? What are your needs for workstaffing/workstaffing? Was it what you expected? Has your faith changed after this leadership position? if so? More/less? Favorite part of the week? Least favorite part of the week?

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