



Camp Washington Day—Sunday, June 2nd, 2024
Preaching Resources & Ideas
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The readings assigned for this Sunday are a rich collection to draw upon as we consider ways to weave themes related to the ministry of Camp Washington into our liturgy. The Track 1 Old Testament lesson recalls the boy Samuel ministering to Eli, with Samuel listening and hearing the voice of God calling him by name. The Track 2 Old Testament lessons reflects on the importance of sabbath rest, retreat, and recreation. 2 Corinthians speaks about a “treasure in clay jars,” which is exactly what we have in Camp Washington—jars that must be cracked open and shared with others! And in our gospel lesson from Mark, we are again given the theme of sabbath rest to reflect on.

As you craft your sermon, and plan your liturgies, we invite you to consider how these scriptural themes might tie in with the ministry of Camp Washington, including summer camp and children & youth programs throughout the year. We also invite you to consider how these themes tie into the other side of Camp's ministry, as a retreat space, hosting adult programming and parish retreats throughout the year. Camp is a resource for all ages, for all people, and is an incredible tool for our ministry as the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Thank you for participating in Camp Washington Day, and for all that you do to support Camp Washington!

Track 1--Old Testament (1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20))

- The voice of the Lord speaks to the young Samuel, not to the elder Eli; do we have ears to hear the prophetic words spoken by our young people today?
- God calls all of us, the young and the old, and everyone in between, to be a part of God's work on earth. How might your work as a parish, and the work of Camp Washington, tie together to create a world where all people know that they are seen, loved, and cared for by God, and by God's people?
- The voice of the Lord doesn't only come to us during structured worship or prayer. Sometimes it is in the middle of the night, or at the most unexpected moment in a crowded downtown, and so often, in the quietness of our hearts.
- Like Samuel, how might we intentionally be listening for the voice of the Lord, and the voice of the Lord's people? Perhaps our busy lives need a bit of quietness, stillness and solitude to hear the voice of God? How might a space like Camp Washington facilitate that?

Track 2--Old Testament (Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

- We are invited over and over again in scripture to rest from our labors, and to observe the sabbath. A component of this is of course Sunday worship in our parishes. And yet, so often, our busy lives and busy world keep us from much more than that.

- Camp Washington is a place of God’s beauty and peace, a place “far enough” away, but “not too far,” a place where we can find whatever it is we are looking for.
- Sabbath rest includes resting from our excessive consumption of the earth’s resources, resting from the burden we place on the environment, and resting from our exploitation of other people. Camp Washington is not only a place to learn about these things through programming, but it is also a place to embody these practices.

New Testament (2 Corinthians 4:5-12)

“But we have this treasure in clay jars...”

- Much like we have the knowledge of the love and glory of God, and are not meant to keep it to ourselves, so too does ECCT have a treasure in Camp Washington.
- Camp is a place where all of God’s children are welcomed and celebrated, and where there is always room at the table.
- Camp is a safe space where all of God’s children are free to express themselves fully; nobody needs to hide their treasure in a clay jar at Camp.
- Camp Washington’s values are something worth sharing with as many people as possible, for in today’s world, we are all seeking connection, belonging, and brave spaces where we can fully be who we are. In living out these values, God’s love is revealed in and among us—let us share this good news with as many people as we can!

Gospel (Mark 2:23-3:6)

- We again see the theme of sabbath rest, echoing themes of the first lesson in Deuteronomy.
- Sabbath rest can look like many different things. For many, summer provides time to get away, to explore the outdoors and God’s beauty—Camp provides these opportunities all year long.
- Rest and re-creation are part of the summer camp experience. We rest from our daily routines, we rest from all of our electronic devices and distractions, and we create and re-create authentic new relationships around the dinner table and campfire.
- At Camp, we are able to rest from, and resist, the pressures of our culture—the pressure to be productive, to always be busy, to rush, to have to cook and clean and barely have a free moment in the day. Instead, we can simply show up, and be.
- In this sabbath rest, this slowing down, this setting aside of the pressures of the world, the small whispers of God can be heard, experienced, and shared.
- In this sabbath rest, we are reminded that by God’s incarnation in Jesus, our bodies are sacred. They are not merely tools, or things to be escaped or transcended. Our bodies are places where God dwells—in us, and in the other.
- As the gospel lesson demonstrates, the sabbath is meant to give life to humanity; it is not meant to be a burden or a restriction. The sabbath should involve the taking away of things that drain us of life, and the adding things that give us life.