



2019 Middle School & Combined Sessions

Groups Preview Packet

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A Message from the Youthfront Camp Staff

Dear Youth Workers,

Our camp season is now a few weeks away, and we are so excited about the content we have planned. We have chosen the theme, "Courageous: Looking at Courage Through the Life of Mary." You can read more details about the flow of the session below.

As you prepare your students for camp, we want you to know that we are your biggest fans! We believe in local church student ministry, and we want to support what you do the other 51 weeks of the year. We believe camp plays a vital role (but not the only role) in the spiritual formation of students. We hope that what we do at camp will amplify the rhythms and practices your group creates throughout the rest of the year to help youth grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Here are a few things to note in preparation for camp this summer:

Volunteer Cabin Leaders - If you are bringing more than seven boys and/or seven girls to camp, we require you provide volunteer male and/or female cabin leaders to stay with your students during your week at camp. You are responsible for providing another volunteer for every 16 additional campers of either gender: 8 - 23 kids (1 vcl); 24 - 39 kids (2 vcl's); 40 - 55 kids (3 vcl's); etc. These volunteers will stay in the cabin leader room along with the Summer Staff cabin leader. If you have questions about our volunteer cabin leader policies, please contact **Ben Snethen**, our Cabin Leader Director at Youthfront Camps. Ben or one of our Cabin Leader Supervisors will contact you a few weeks before your session at camp to finalize your volunteers for the week. If you have questions about volunteers, contact Ben at bsnethen@youthfront.com.

Hype Themes - On the first day of camp, we split up the campers into teams to compete in events throughout the session. Each night has a different theme, complete with an event or competition attached to it. We encourage you to participate by bringing costumes and joining in the fun. Here is a little preview of each night:

- **Relic Hunters** – Complete the challenges, follow the map, and find the key to unlock the legendary treasure of Youthfront Camp. Grab your brown fedora and get ready for this epic adventure!
- **Nightstrike** – A camp tradition, this game of stealth is played in the woods in the dark. Sneak through zones and past Strikers to get under the infamous Tower of Power. You could play with the campers or be one of the infamous Strikers stopping campers along the way.
- **80s Pool Party** - Comb your mullet, slip on your leg warmers, and dial back your DeLorean to 1985 for our totally tubular pool party.
- **Once Upon A HYPE** – Once upon a time, at a summer camp far, far away, a special festival was about to begin. Princes and princess, elves and ogres were gathered for this celebration of brave quests, epic tales, and the classic stories we know and love.
- **Movie Madness** – Lights, camera, action! There will be awards, dancing, and plenty of night blobbing. But first, be ready to strike a pose on the red carpet as your favorite character from screens big and small.

We are looking forward to your group's time with us at camp. If you have any questions about camp, feel free to contact our Camp West Director, Matt Saunders at mrsaunders@youthfront.com or our Camp LaCygne Director, Josh Madden at jmadden@youthfront.com.

Much love,
Youthfront Camp Staff

Youthfront Camps: Learning Theory and Practice

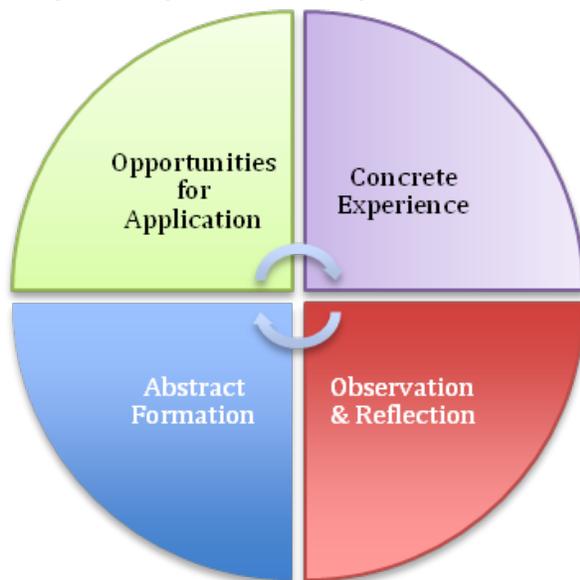
Learning takes place in all types of environments. The most effective learning, however, takes place within an environment that is intentional, authentic, transformative, and communal.

At Youthfront, we are **intentional** about the method of learning that we employ in order to maximize the **authentic** discovery, growth, and learning of each camper. Every activity we facilitate—from worship gatherings to games during free time—is carefully constructed for **transformative** learning in a **communal** context.

We are committed to creating environments for experiential learning. Experiential learning is simply learning by the process of making meaning from direct experiences. Therefore, we construct environments of learning through:

1. Concrete Experience
2. Observation and Reflection
3. Formation of Abstract Thought
4. Opportunities for Application

By intentionally crafting learning experiences using the four elements above, we are able to accommodate the learner's preferred method of learning, whether it be the **converger**, who learns by taking abstract ideas and actively experimenting with them, or the **diverger**, who prefers a concrete experience in which to observe and reflect. Experiential learning also accommodates the **assimilator**, who is able to take abstract concepts and make observations through inductive reasoning, or the **accommodator**, who learns best by *doing*, through concrete experiences and the active outworking of the concepts presented.¹



¹ <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-explrn.htm>

Youthfront is passionate about bringing youth into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. While there are many effective theories of learning, we believe that the experiential learning theory we practice is best suited for a camp environment where we can facilitate experiences for campers to engage God's story in an intentional, authentic, and transformative way.

How is Youthfront different than other camps?

Youthfront is built around the fixed hours of prayer, also known as the Daily Office or the Divine Office.

Instead of building Youthfront's sessions around chapel, free time, cabin times, the snack shop, etc., we think it best to center all of the campers' experiences on the practice of prayer. Youthfront Camp practices morning, midday, and compline prayer. Each of these prayer times consists of the reading of the Scriptures, music, silence, corporate and private prayer, and confessing the creeds.

Youthfront is interested in helping adolescents ask questions that lead to ongoing engagement.

Youthfront works hard to spark the imaginations of all campers. Our content has been developed to help adolescents think, wonder, and feel. We believe we are most successful when we allow the Holy Spirit to work and do ministry without deliberately manufacturing or manipulating the insights of humanity. If adolescents walk away from Youthfront with more questions about God and the Bible than answers, we believe it is a great thing for their ongoing learning and formation.

What does this approach look like?

Below is a simple table illustrating how Youthfront Camp is distinctly different in our approach to engaging adolescents in learning. The table found on the following page is not intended to be an either/or list of values; rather, it reflects a continuum of moving beyond a teacher-centered approach toward a learner-centered approach.

Moving from...	Moving to...
Preferences of the teacher. Most information that adolescents get is filtered through the skills and preferences of the one disseminating the information.	Needs of the adolescent. Youthfront’s content takes into consideration the needs, styles, and habits of the adolescent and creates learning opportunities with the learner in mind first.
Static in nature. Typically, most learning environments are predictable and fixed.	Always evolving. Youthfront’s content is always looking for ways to create dynamic, unpredictable, and mobile learning opportunities.
Breadth. How much information can we teach?	Depth. How deep can we help learners go in any given topic?
Rote. Memorization is good. However, memorization alone doesn’t produce a lasting effect on a learner.	Experiential. Youthfront’s content provides learners with the opportunity to learn through practice and ongoing application.
Solo. Typically, learners left on their own don’t have the necessary influence of the learning of others to help push them to think about new insights and directions.	Peer to Peer. Youthfront’s content is about learning in community—sharing common opportunities. Often in peer-to-peer models, learning is owned with greater passion and learners are pushed to think more deeply as a result of the interaction with their peers.
Product. Most learners are pushed to be complete, leaving no room for trial, error, self-discovery, etc.	Process. Youthfront’s content is about the process of learning. It recognizes that learners learn at different paces and that the passion to own something takes some longer to acquire than others.

Adapted from *A New Kind of Youth Ministry*, by Chris Folmsbee. Zondervan, 2006. Used with permission.

Middle School Session Daily Schedule

(Sessions 1W, 2W, 3L, 3W, 4L, 7W, 8W, and 9W)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1:00pm Registration Begins 2:00pm Camp Kickoff 3:00pm Cabin Time 4:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm HYPE - Relic Hunters 8:30pm Evening Gathering The Favored One 9:30pm Cabin Reflection 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Morning Gathering The Favored One 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Experiences 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The Courageous One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - Night Strike 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Morning Gathering The Courageous One 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Experiences 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The Following One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - 80s Pool Party 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out
Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Morning Gathering The Following One 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Experiences 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 4:00pm Talent Show 6:00pm HYPE - Once Upon a HYPE (dinner is during HYPE) 8:30pm Evening Gathering The Grieving One 9:30pm Cabin Reflection 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Morning Gathering The Grieving One 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Experiences 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 2:15pm Something to Eat™ Party 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:40pm HYPE - Movie Madness 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Breakfast 9:00am Cabin Clean & Pack 9:15am Camp Finale / Parent Meeting 10:00am Open Time 11:00am Close Camp

Combined Session Daily Schedule

(Sessions 6L & 9L)

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p>1:00pm Registration Begins 2:00pm Camp Kickoff 3:00pm Cabin Time 4:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The Courageous One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - Nightstrike 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out</p>	<p>7:00am <i>HS: Coffee Shop</i> 7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am MS: Morning Gathering <i>HS: Breakout Sessions</i> 10:00am MS: Reflection <i>HS: Cabin Time</i> 10:30am MS: Cabin Experiences 11:00am <i>HS: Storyteller Gathering</i> 11:30am <i>HS: Reflection</i> 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm HYPE - Relic Hunters 8:30pm Evening Gathering The Following One 9:30pm Cabin Reflection 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out</p>	<p>7:00am <i>HS: Coffee Shop</i> 7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am MS: Morning Gathering <i>HS: Breakout Sessions</i> 10:00am MS: Reflection <i>HS: Cabin Time</i> 10:30am MS: Cabin Experiences 11:00am <i>HS: Storyteller Gathering</i> 11:30am <i>HS: Reflection</i> 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The Grieving One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - 80s Pool Party 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out</p>
Friday	Saturday	
<p>7:00am <i>HS: Coffee Shop</i> 7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am MS: Morning Gathering <i>HS: Breakout Sessions</i> 10:00am MS: Reflection <i>HS: Cabin Time</i> 10:30am MS: Cabin Experiences 11:00am <i>HS: Storyteller Gathering</i> 11:30am <i>HS: Reflection</i> 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Evening Gathering The One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - Movie Madness 10:45pm Compline/Lights Out</p>	<p>7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Breakfast 9:00am Cabin Clean & Pack 9:15am Camp Finale / Parent Meeting 10:00am Open Time 11:00am Close Camp</p>	

Session 10 Daily Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9:00am Registration 10:00am Camp Kickoff 11:00am Cabin Time 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Gathering - Favored 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - Night Strike 10:45pm Compline/LO	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Gathering - Courageous 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Exps. 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm HYPE - Relic Hunters 8:30pm Gathering - Following 9:30pm Cabin Exps. 10:45pm Compline/LO	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Morning Prayer 8:30am Breakfast 9:00am Gathering Grieving 10:00am Reflection 10:30am Cabin Exps. 12:00pm Midday 12:30pm Lunch 1:00pm Free Time 6:00pm Dinner 6:45pm Gathering The One 7:45pm Cabin Reflection 8:45pm HYPE - 80s Pool Party 10:45pm Compline/LO	7:30am Wake Up 8:15am Breakfast 9:00am Clean & Pack 9:15am Camp Finale / Parent Meeting 10:00am Open Time 11:00am Close Camp

Courageous

Looking at Courage through the Life of Mary

Middle School Camp Content 2019

Our goal for this session is to take a closer look at one of the understated heroes of our faith: Mary, Christ's mother. When we compile our lists of Biblical heroes, we often leave her out. We usually think of Mary only in terms of the Christmas story. While this is an important part of her story, it isn't her whole story. We want to spend some time exploring the entirety of Mary's story, exploring other exciting ways that it relates to Jesus. We want to listen to what she says and watch what she does as she witnesses the entirety of Jesus' life on Earth. Mary's story will become for us a lens through which we look to see Jesus.

Not only was she the mother of Jesus, but we can also authentically state that she was one of Jesus' closest followers. Maybe she wasn't one of the "twelve;" however, the book of Acts list her along with other women who were gathering with Jesus' group of followers in the early days of the Church. No other person witnessed the entirety of Jesus' life as she did. She was there for his birth, his life and teachings, his death, his resurrection, and the beginning of his Church. Mary's life was witness to both blessing and bitterness.

Throughout this session of camp, we will journey along with her story. Starting with the beginning as **the favored one**, being chosen by God to bear Jesus into the world, we will imagine how Mary became **the courageous one**, who, along with Joseph, fled to Egypt to protect Jesus from the horrors of Herod's child-massacre. We'll lead campers to see Mary's transformation and growth to become **the following one**, not ever giving up her motherly role, but taking on the additional role of becoming one of Jesus' followers. We'll journey through Mary's pain as she became **the grieving one**, as she witnessed her son dying on the cross while making sure she and John would take care of each other. Similar to previous years when our camp content has looked deeply into the story of a character in the Bible, the reason we highlight Mary's story isn't to draw exclusive attention to her alone. Throughout the session, we will look to Jesus and point to him as **the one** whose life and teachings we trust and follow.

The Favored One

Scripture: Luke 1:26-56, Matthew 1:23, Luke 2:10, 14

Big Idea: We want campers to notice that God favored Mary, and she was willing to risk everything to participate in God's redemptive plan. Campers will be invited to recognize that the same favor extended to Mary is also extended to them.

Evening Gathering General Direction: We want to begin the session by introducing Mary as a central figure in the story about Jesus. As we go through Mary's story, we'll notice how the things that are true about Mary are also true about Jesus. Mary's life appeared to be anything but favorable. She was young, unmarried, and not in any position of power. The Jewish people, to which Mary belonged, were also not in a place of influence or power at this point in history. This "favor" would now make her an outcast among her people. What Mary discovered is that being favored by God means much more than having everything go your way. Favor is about God's presence and affection, which we'll talk about more in the morning.

Morning Gathering General Direction: In Mary's story, what was favorable was God's closeness and God's affection. The favor shown to Mary, which was also shown to Jesus (in the story of his baptism), is also extended to the whole world. This doesn't mean that life will always go in the way we want it to, but it does mean that God's presence and affection are for us.

Cabin Experience Ideas:

Campers will get to participate in a "hot seat" experience where they will get to have 2 or 3 minutes in the spotlight to share their story. Cabin leaders will focus on using this time to show favor to each camper in the cabin. The activity will conclude with a benediction of God's favor for each camper.

The Courageous One

Scripture: Luke 2:15-35, Matthew 2:13-23, John 15:12-13

Big Idea: We want campers to see Mary as a courageous mother. Campers will be invited to live courageously, caring for others in the face of injustices.

Evening Gathering General Direction: Tonight's gathering focuses on the end of the Christmas story and what happened soon after Jesus was born. A newborn king would have been a threat to the power structures of the day, and Mary was surely aware of the dangers present with caring for and raising her newborn son. This point was emphasized when Mary and Joseph presented Jesus at the temple. They met a peculiar individual, Simeon, who told Mary that Jesus would cause the rising and falling of many and that a sword will pierce her own soul (v. 34-35). These words foreshadowed the difficult road ahead for Jesus, and Mary would have to courageously walk through it with him. Luke's words paint a picture of Mary as a courageous mother, who would witness Jesus in the highs and lows of his ministry. She held steadfastly to her role and did all that she could to ensure that Jesus was taken care of in spite of the uncertainty ahead of them.

Morning Gathering General Direction: The theme of courage continues as we turn our attention to the story found in Matthew's version of the Christmas story. Here Joseph, along with Mary, courageously escaped to Egypt in order to protect Jesus from Herod's massacre of baby boys. This type of courage was self-sacrificing, choosing to take care of others in the face of injustices. It puts the needs of others at the center of action.

Cabin Experience:

Bodyguard/Secret Service: Campers will play a variation of dodgeball that illustrates what it means to have courage and to risk oneself while protecting someone else.

The Following One

Scripture: Luke 2:39-52, John 2:1-11, Mark 3:20-35

Big Idea: We want campers to see how Mary's relationship as a mother to Jesus grew to include becoming a faithful disciple. Similarly, we want to invite campers to grow in their relationship with Jesus to become a follower of his without losing admiration for him.

Evening Gathering General Direction: In this gathering, we will explore two stories that illustrate how Mary's relationship with Jesus took on some interesting dynamics. While maintaining a motherly role throughout Jesus' life and ministry, she also grew to become a faithful disciple. Jesus accidentally got left behind after the Passover festival. When his parents found him, Mary asked, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you" (v. 48). Jesus' response about being in his father's house must have confused them, but scripture says that Jesus obediently followed them home.

The second story records Jesus' first miracle that took place at a wedding in Cana. Mary took action when it's discovered that the wine has run out. She informed Jesus of the problem, implying that he do something about it. His response to her was puzzling. On the surface, it seemed like he didn't want her to involve him, but then he gave instructions to the servants, which set up the miracle of changing water into wine. Both of these stories illustrate how Mary always remained in a motherly role with Jesus, but she began to add on the role of being a disciple. She shifted from thinking of Jesus as "this is my son" to embracing Jesus as "this is my Lord."

Morning Gathering General Direction: Apparently, the way Jesus was conducting his ministry wasn't living up to the expectations of his mother and brothers. The patterns of Jesus' ministry up until that point had likely given Mary great doubt about him. When Jesus heard of their desire to speak to him (as recorded in Mark 3), he offered a puzzling response. He asked, "Who are my mother and brothers?" He then answered the rhetorical question, "Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:34-35). Jesus' response wasn't necessarily about denying or devaluing Mary's maternal relationship with him; rather, he was challenging her preconceptions of him that were causing her doubt. Mary had to learn to trust Jesus' upside down way of ushering in the Kingdom of God. We too are invited into a deeper relationship with Jesus that calls us to follow Jesus without losing our first-love admiration for him.

Cabin Experience:

In the camper journal is a color by number picture that campers will color in as they move through the six stations that illustrate different dimensions of Jesus' ministry. The final product won't be visible until all of the hexagons are colored.

The Grieving One

Scripture: John 19:25-27, John 11:1-44

Big Idea: We want campers to see that Mary's grief is an important part of her discipleship and that it doesn't destroy the hope offered by Jesus. Campers will be invited to consider how Jesus is always with them in their grief while also offering hope for new life.

Evening Gathering General Direction: Mary, closest follower, grieving mother, and recipient of the grace of the cross, was present during this tragic moment of Jesus' story. As Jesus suffered on the cross, he had an interesting exchange with Mary and one of his disciples, John. As we consider Mary's grief, we will wrestle with what place grief has in the Kingdom. Sometimes we treat grief as if it's a bad thing that we have to get over as quickly as possible. There is space for grief in the Kingdom. Jesus himself experienced grief when his friend Lazarus died (John 11:35). We want to show that grief may be experienced with many forms of loss including death, loss of a friendship, and loss of a stage of life. What Jesus show us in this story is that being present with each other while we grieve is ultimately important.

Morning Gathering General Direction: Because Jesus' death may be hard for campers to understand, it might be helpful to briefly explain that Jesus not only died to pay for our sins, but that he also showed that God's love is more powerful than violence, sin, or even death itself. We know this to be true because of the resurrection. In Mary's story, even after the resurrection, there could still have been an element of grief, because her relationship with Jesus drastically changed from that point forward. In some ways, Mary never got back her son like he used to be, and there's a gap in Mary's story in the Bible from the crucifixion story until after the ascension. So while Jesus was indeed risen, things were new and different. Resurrection doesn't erase the reality or the pain of the crucifixion, but it allows for new life. Resurrection shows us that the worst thing that can happen is never the last thing.

Cabin Experience:

Campers will choose individual Lego pieces that represent something that feels like loss or brokenness in their lives. They will build a structure using these pieces. After viewing the Lego structure from the right angle using lights and shadows, they will see that resurrection is more complex and beautiful than we originally realized.

Day Five - The One

Scripture: Acts 1:12-14

Big Idea: Mary is the lens through which we look to see Jesus Christ as the one to follow. Campers will be invited to trust Jesus and let Jesus guide their lives.

Evening Gathering General Direction: Mary has been a lens for us to look through to see Jesus. Jesus is the Favored One. He is the Courageous One. He is Following One--following the will of God, and he is One who knows our Grief. Lead by reminding campers that we too are favored by God, and we are invited to be courageous and love others the way Jesus loves others. And finally, we are invited to trust and follow Jesus while never losing our admiration of him.