



P.O. Box 128 • Altamont, TN 37301 • (931) 692-3999 • www.mountain-top.org

YOUTH MINISTRIES • YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES • ADULT MINISTRIES

Pastor Packet

Dear Pastor,

I would like to thank you for partnering with Mountain T.O.P. as your church joins us this summer for another incredible year of ministry and service to the families of the Cumberland Mountains.

I have found that pastors can support their youth leaders and the trip better if they have the pertinent information about the mission experience. As the pastor, I know you are excited for these youth as they strive to learn more about putting their faith into action. I also know you want your youth leader to be successful in planning and preparations, because this will provide the best possible experience for the mission team attending camp.

Like many other youth ministries and organizations, we are concerned about reducing the risk for youth and children in missions. Mountain T.O.P. is committed to maintaining a safe environment in which children and youth are protected from the possibility of abuse. We will do everything within our power to provide a safe, wholesome environment for your youth. As senior pastor of a participating group, you can help by being confident that the adults from your church will not pose any risk to youth or children. Your signature on each adult self-screening form will indicate your endorsement of these individuals.

Another important role you can play in your group's preparation is to ensure that they are ready to come to camp. A key to that preparation is that the contact person is prepared to fulfill his or her role and uphold their responsibilities in preparing for the mission experience. This means that they:

- Have budgeted properly
- Understand and accept all policies, philosophies, and guidelines for participation (including age requirements for students and drivers, and appropriate vehicles for the trip)
- Ensure that all youth and adults participating have completed all required training sessions required before they attend camp.
- Understand the timelines and importance of the paperwork to be returned to us. Final paperwork must be postmarked by May 15th in order to avoid a late fee of \$15 for every participant attending camp.

In our many years of ministry, we have found that the more prepared a group is, the more they have to give of themselves and the more they receive from the mission experience.

Your contact person has been provided with important information through a number of the preparation materials. Any questions you might have concerning this mission experience are addressed in that material. We hope this information will be helpful in your church's efforts to support and aid in the preparations for camp. We also hope that you will join us in empowering each youth and adult who will be coming in the vision of being a missionary for Christ in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee. Please feel free to call our office with any questions or concerns about your trip. Our prayers are with you as you aid in the preparations for a life-changing week for your adults and youth.

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Simmons', written in a cursive style.

Rev. Ed Simmons
Executive Director

www.mountain-top.org

PS If you are in the area this summer, please feel free to come visit and see the difference your team is making!

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Expectations for Participation

The following are some of the basic expectations we hold for all youth and adults who participate at Mountain T.O.P.

The Mountain T.O.P. Summer Staff has overall responsibility for all activities. Therefore, camp directions and expectations given by the staff are to be followed.

Camp Attendance and Participation - Arriving late or leaving early from the camp week is NOT an option. Leaving at any time during the week and coming back to camp is also NOT AN OPTION. We design our program very carefully to ensure that all participants receive the maximum benefit from their experience. On Sunday our staffs will be breaking the community into work teams and on Saturday morning the community will have its final closure experience; missing either of these would hinder the experience for a person and the community. If there is an extreme situation, we are willing to address special cases. Everyone (youth and adults) is expected to attend and participate in all structured activities, recreation, programs, and worships. Please do not ask us for any exceptions to this camp participation expectation. We want everyone to gain the most they can while at camp together.

Dress Code - Shirts are to be worn at all times. Shirts with beer, liquor or other possibly offensive subject matter should not be brought to camp. Additionally, halter or spaghetti-strap tops, bathing suit tops, sports bras, shorts with an inseam less than 4" and jeans with offensive holes are not appropriate and should not be brought to camp. For safety reasons, the youth and adults with Service Project are to wear long pants, closed-toe shoes and shirts with at least short sleeves during the workday. Youth and adults with Day Camp can wear shorts instead of pants. Shorts are fine at camp in the evening.

Alcohol & Drugs - Do not bring any alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs to camp. Those who bring such items can be sent home at their parent's expense.

Prescription Drugs - Sharing of prescription drugs is strictly prohibited. Those who do can be sent home at their parents' expense.

Fireworks - Do not bring fireworks into camp – these are dangerous items, especially in wooded areas.

Lights Out Policy - Your camp staff will set times for "lights out" each night, and they typically set a slightly later time on Friday night. The staff will take responsibility for the initial bed check at the designated lights out. Our expectation is that everyone will stay in his or her cabins after this time. We do not intend for the staff (nor are they able) to stay up for hours putting people back to bed and/or chasing them around camp. We ask for your group's understanding and cooperation in this matter. We depend on the leadership and maturity of the adults present in camp for assistance. If campers are found out of

their cabins, the staff will find the youth group leader and have the camper call their parents. If there is a second incident of them sneaking out, the policy is to send the camper home at their parent's expense.

Tobacco - The use of tobacco is discouraged and prohibited in some cases due to camp regulations, sensitivity and fire hazards. Our tobacco policy follows the guidelines of the United Methodist Social Principles. Anyone under the age of 18 is prohibited from smoking, using or possessing tobacco in any form during a Mountain T.O.P. camp week. Mountain T.O.P. recognizes the need to establish a designated tobacco area for those who use tobacco. This designated area is to be in a private and discreet area of camp. This is due to our desire to discourage the use of tobacco products and the need to not promote the use of tobacco as a social activity or as a part of the community process.

Electronic Devices - The use of cell phones, iPods, radios and headsets is prohibited at the work sites. We want to encourage socializing and visiting with each other and the Cumberland Mountain families. Also, we want to be sensitive to one another's musical tastes. The use of these items in camp is strongly discouraged for the same reasons. Therefore, Mountain T.O.P. asks the following as a minimum:

- No cell phone or music player usage at any work site other than the YRG driver and only in emergencies.
- No cell phone or music player usage during any Mountain T.O.P. programs, including, but not limited to limited to Daybreak, all meals, sharing, and worship.
- Cell phone or music player usage in camp should be limited to cabin areas only.

Camp Visitation Policy - All our Partners, family, and former staff members are welcome to visit our camps during program periods with prior notification and approval of the camp director. In your desire to come visit please acknowledge that part of the Mountain T.O.P. participant experience is to get away from the norms and expectations of their every day life. Mountain T.O.P. values providing this environment to its participants and discourages visitation to a point that it becomes distracting to the individual or community. For this reason, the number of visitors will be limited each evening and will be handled on a first come first serve, case by case basis. If you want to visit, please let us know as far ahead of time as possible so that we can make appropriate accommodations. Call the administrative office (931)692-3999 to schedule your visit.

Youth Abuse Prevention Policy

“Safe Sanctuary” for Mountain T.O.P., Inc.

Introduction: Mountain T.O.P. (MTO) is an ecumenical faith-based Christian organization, affiliated with The United Methodist Church and holds a covenant relationship with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church. The ministry agrees with the following statements of the General Conference and the policies and procedures that it recommends. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in April 1996 adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of children and youth in the church. This would include sexual, emotional, physical, and ritual abuse, and neglect. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes a child...welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our futures, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones...,it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church state “...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse” (Paragraph 161C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (“ritual abuse” refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church, and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.

(From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 2000*; pp. 180-181.
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Thus, in covenant with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church, and in commitment to the church universal and to God Almighty, Mountain T.O.P. adopts this policy for the prevention of abuse of youth at our camp locations, worksites, and en route to and from our worksites. The purpose and intent for establishing this Youth Abuse Prevention Policy (including the Mountain T.O.P. Operating Procedures) is to demonstrate the absolute and unwavering commitment of MTO to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of youth participants.

Statement of Covenant: Therefore, as a Christian ministry of faith and service to God and others, we, Mountain T.O.P. pledge to conduct the ministry of the Gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our youth participants, summer staff, administration, and people for whom we provide home repairs. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of staff; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our staff and administration regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs. We will strongly encourage each church participating in the ministry of Mountain T.O.P. to establish its own “Safe Sanctuary” policy and procedures.

Conclusion: In ministry to and with youth, Mountain T.O.P. is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each youth will be “...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and

confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (From “Congregational Pledge ,”
“Baptismal Covenant II,” The United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44).

Endorsed by:

Mountain T.O.P. Board of Directors

Adapted from Youth Abuse Prevention Policy, Safe Sanctuaries for Youth; Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Youth Ministries by Joy Thornburg Melton, Discipleship Resources 2003.

Adult Self-Screening Form

Camp week _____ Camp _____

Church _____

Last Name _____ First _____ MI _____

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

Occupation and Employer _____

*Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Driver's License number _____ Issuing State _____

If you will be driving during the camp week, you must fill out the following two lines:

Car Insurance Company _____

Policy # _____ Phone _____

Circle One

1. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? **Yes** **No**
2. Have you ever been convicted or formally accused of any sex related or child abuse offense? **Yes** **No**
3. Have you had a background check completed within the past 3 years to verify the responses to the above questions? **Yes** **No**
- Have you participated in Safe Sanctuary or a similar youth protection training program? **Yes** **No**

- If you answered YES to questions #1 and/or #2, please fully explain on back of form.
- If you answered YES to question #3, what was the date of your background check?

Date of check / ____ / ____ **Your background check MUST be on file at your church.**

- If you answered NO to question #3, you must have a background check completed before arrival to camp. If your church does not offer this service, Mountain T.O.P. will have one processed. You will need to reimburse Mountain T.O.P. for this cost; fees vary by state.
 YES, we need Mountain T.O.P. to process a background check for me. *SSN only needed if Mountain T.O.P. is completing background check.

I fully support Mountain T.O.P.'s effort to increase the probability of having a safe environment in our camp week for youth to perform mission work without fear of irresponsible adults who may take advantage of them or put them at risk of being hurt. I certify, to the best of my knowledge, the information that I have provided on this form is true and accurate. I authorize any investigation, including a background check, of any or all statements made on this form.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Contact Person Signature _____ Date _____

Senior Pastor Signature _____ Date _____

Frequently Asked Questions

What am I getting into?

You are getting yourself into an incredible experience of serving others and experiencing Christian community. Monday through Friday you will go out with a small team of people to complete minor home repair projects (Service Project) or to build relationships with children through a day camp (Day Camp). We mix up all the churches that come and as a result the community builds quickly. One of the most unique characteristics of a Mountain T.O.P. camp is this deep sense of a community.

What is provided in the cost?

- Lodging in cabins with bunks
- Meals from Sunday lunch through Saturday breakfast are provided
- Materials and project coordination
- All programming, including nightly worship
- Camp staffing

What is the size of a camp community?

Usually anywhere from 100-150 people, with about 5-8 different church groups.

How long is a workday?

A workday is from 9AM – 4:30PM

Do you eat lunch at the worksite?

Yes, when the groups gather their tools in the morning before leaving, they will also pick up a food and water cooler. They eat lunch at the family's house and invite them to join in for food and/or conversation.

How old does a participant have to be?

He or she must have finished the 7th grade or be at least 13 years old.

Why is there an age requirement to be a participant?

The type of work being done requires a certain level of maturity and physical stamina. The YRG is comprised mostly of youth that are empowered to take ownership in the work and direction of the team. A certain level of physical and emotional maturity is necessary to help these teams function in the most effective way possible. The experience as a whole is best understood at this age.

Where exactly will we be going?

Mountain T.O.P. serves 7 counties in Tennessee out of two camp facilities in middle Tennessee. Camp Baker Mountain is in Spencer, TN and Camp Cumberland Pines is in Altamont, TN.

What are the accommodations like?

The camps are in wooded areas on top of the Cumberland Plateau. There is a dining hall, pavilion, cabins, worship center, tool shed, infirmary room, snack shop, basketball court,

sand volleyball court and grassy field. The cabins have wooden bunks with foam mattresses. Participants bring their own bedding. Some of our cabins have bathrooms inside and some are in bathhouses a short distance from the cabin. There are no private rooms or married housing; men and women sleep in separate areas.

Who provides the tools for service project and the materials for day camp?

Each youth group will be asked to bring the appropriate amount of tools/materials prorated by group size. It is critical that groups understand that they are the ones providing a portion of the tools needed to do the work. For service project, the materials (lumber, paint, nails, etc.) will already be at your project site.

Can I come late on Sunday or leave early if I have other plans?

Arriving late or leaving early from the camp week is NOT an option. Leaving at any time during the week and coming back to camp is also NOT AN OPTION. We design our program very carefully to ensure that all participants receive the maximum benefit from their experience. On Sunday our staffs will be breaking the community into work teams and on Saturday morning the community will have its final closure experience; missing either of these would hinder the experience for a person and the community. If there is an extreme situation, we are willing to address special cases.

What do we do at night?

The evenings are designed to promote community development within the camp. All youth and adults are expected to participate in the structured activities each night. There will be a time for community fun and recreation, community sharing, worship and some free time. These activities will be with the whole camp community and focus on the "whole" rather than individual groups.

Will we be able to have meetings to process as a group during the week?

Because of the way we mix up and build community throughout the week, we prefer if you do not hold any meetings exclusive to your youth group. We recognize that it is very important for you to be able build relationships with the youth based on your experiences together. We have provided a resource to you for debriefing the experience as a group that many groups have found to fit perfect as a break when traveling home. Of course, if an emergency comes up and you need to communicate to all of your youth, we will work with you to make time in the schedule for this. Please ask us if you have any questions.

What do the adults do?

The program is designed so that all campers, youth and adults, will participate in 100% of the camp activities. The role of the adults at camp is one of support and partnership with the staff. The camp director will be responsible for behavioral situations and will need the adults to act as role models of appropriate behavior. Many adults will serve as drivers to the various work projects and day camp sites. Within the work team, YRG (Youth Renewal Group), the adult serves as a team player, encouraging the youth to develop their leadership and relationship building skills. The adult brings a level of maturity to the YRG that Mountain T.O.P. and the people of the Cumberland Mountains appreciate and expect.

Special Interview “From the T.O.P.”

with Rev. Ed Simmons, Executive Director of Mountain T.O.P.

Introduction: This printed interview has been included in an attempt to convey a personal message to the participating adults. Experience has shown that the key to an effective week of ministry is the preparation level of both the youth and adults. This interview will hopefully add to the preparation level.

QUESTION: Why is adult preparation so important to the success of the camp week?

ANSWER: The Mountain T.O.P. journey has involved many adults who have consistently provided their counsel and support. Without them, this “laboratory” of putting faith into action could not exist. Sadly there have been some adults who have come not understanding their role or their purpose. The behavior of the contributing adult is significantly more positive than the adult who is more focused on their personal comfort or being in control-- not willing to be a responsible follower. Based on discussions with both, the major problem is lack of preparation, understanding, and willingness to partner with other adults and the Mountain T.O.P. summer staff.

QUESTION: Why is it so difficult to influence adults to prepare?

ANSWER: I think the secret is in the recruitment of the adults chosen to come with the group by the Youth Director or the contact person. The adults-to-youth ratio requirement is difficult to obtain, especially for groups that are adult-poor in their normal youth program throughout the year. I think in order to sign-up the required number the prospect is told, “All you have to do is drive a car-I’ll take care of the rest.” This is only partially true. Without the whole truth, adults are signed-on without the necessary understanding. They are set up to fail! They never realize the importance of preparing until it is too late. When our staff gets confronted with “I’m not going to work in this dirty place!” or “I’m in charge of the work team - what is this YRG stuff?” there is little doubt that they are not prepared. The youth members of the YRG are crippled, and more than likely, they will have a bad experience on the site and in camp – which becomes a missed opportunity to help youth grow in faith and maturity.

QUESTION: So what advice do you have for selecting adults?

ANSWER: Adults should have the ability and willingness to interact with youth and model values of servanthood. Parents are good sources if the parent and child have a clear understanding of their roles, especially for the youth's sake. Young adults with small children make good candidates due to their desire to relate to teenagers in preparation for their own growing child. The YRG concept is powerful because of the opportunity for renewal and throwing away old labels. Adults that enjoy “participation” rather than “observation” are excellent camper

prospects. I have made myself available to talk with many of the “difficult” adults. In most every case, the individual was frustrated and embarrassed at not being prepared. It is important that all participants become “partners” with the staff and the camp community at-large. This requires conscientious leadership on everyone's part.

QUESTION: Does this concept ever fail?

ANSWER: Sure! This is especially true when certain adults are acting “childlike” themselves. Taking charge of the situation becomes impossible. There is a difference in having fun and acting stupid. The youth should never forget that the adult is a responsible adult. This means exercising multiple roles based on the situation so that everyone has the opportunity to have a great experience. Another personal philosophy that has served me well is “It is fun to be a Christian!” Enjoyment and fellowship in worship, work and play become the mortar of building a focused and lasting community experience. This is quite different than allowing youth to be disruptive, take life-threatening risks, or attacking anyone's self-worth. A desire to be liked can override an adult taking the responsibility to stop or correct a disruptive situation.

The Youth Renewal Group (YRG) is a very powerful, spirit -led model. The YRG allows youth to become renewed in their spiritual walk through new friendships and adult modeling. It works, if youth are allowed to experience self-discovery rather than a continual bossing and directing.

QUESTION: What is the relationship between the adults and the staff?

ANSWER: Typically, it is very healthy. However, if adults come to camp either not understanding their role or not willing to assume the appropriate role when needed, their lives, the staff's lives and the youth's lives will be miserable. This is both a preparation issue and an issue of not accepting the staff as the primary leadership for the week. The 7 to 8 young adults on staff at your camp have been intensively trained. They are committed young Christians wanting to be excellent. This staff experience has led many of our former staff into becoming ministers, youth directors, Christian educators, social workers, teachers, physicians, nurses, and attorneys. They return to Mountain T.O.P. with youth groups as they assume leadership positions in their local church. They are a powerful force for our church at-large. This is a rare opportunity for all of us!

We have an obligation to be enablers for these young adults to succeed. They not only need our camp cooperation, but they need our counsel - they deserve it! They spend many long hours trying to ensure that your camp week will be life-changing in a Christ-like way. The staff deserves the benefit of the doubt!

QUESTION: What will be important for adults to do in order to be in partnership?

ANSWER: It means joining the staff in setting the tone for Christian community by participating with enthusiasm and accepting the guidelines for the week. I am not suggesting “blind” agreement, which is difficult with so many different “frames of reference” coming together for such a short time. I do believe that acceptance with mutual understanding is important as long as what is being asked is not life-threatening or contrary to our Christian beliefs and faith.

Our staff will be expecting and asking for feedback from each participating adult. Hopefully, each adult will be expecting and asking for their feedback. Without timely mutual feedback, the community will break down through discomfort, disagreement, and misunderstanding. Everybody loses! The worst thing is that the youth lose! Another missed opportunity!

QUESTION: It sounds like adults do all the giving and no taking. Is there anything that adults should expect to gain?

ANSWER: Most adults will give testimony to getting much more than they gave. What a joy to be a part of offering young people the opportunity to put their faith into action. I have a special place in my heart for each adult participant because of their sacrifice - time away from family, use of vacation time, living in rustic conditions, and carrying responsibility. Why in the world would they do this? I know they love the Lord and they believe in their young people. They want for them the “good” life. The adults that come prepared and demonstrate a good understanding of their roles always feel they received more than they gave. It is in the giving that one receives.

QUESTION: Speak to the adults in terms of forming relationships with young men and women, based on society's heightened awareness of sexual harassment, abuse, and other types of misconduct.

ANSWER: Seasoned youth workers know the fine line that one must walk in forming a nurturing relationship versus a misunderstood sexual relationship. Sometimes people, young and old, misunderstand the true intent of being kidded, telling off-color jokes, hugging and touching. In most recent years we have had more reported cases of young women being harassed by an unsuspecting adult camper. There was no wrongdoing in any of the cases legally. All parties were scarred emotionally, however.

Society is quick to judge! Youth are more aware, as they should be, of conduct that is suggestive of violating their personal being. There is a difference in a Christian hug and a sexual hug. My message is to all adults, especially males, is to please be careful where and how you show Christian affection. It can be misunderstood. Many times perception is the defended truth. Please note what we tell our young adult staff: “Never put yourself in a potentially compromising

situation.” Perception may be stronger than truth. These young adult staff members are placed on a pedestal and sexual attractions by younger campers is natural. Demonstrations of those feelings have no place in our community.

As Jesus charged his disciples in the garden in Matthew 26:38 “...keep watch with me...” and then in verse 40, “And He came to His disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “so you could not keep the watch with me for one hour?” We are all asked to watch and pray - to keep the watch.

QUESTION: Well, anything else?

ANSWER: I do have one other comment. In reviewing the interview questions and answers I am struck that these same answers continue to ring true year after year. The need for the answers continues to exist. A few adults who return still seem clueless about the importance of their role and of preparing for the experience. I am continually amazed at the number of adults who gather for the adult meeting on Sunday each camp week and have not had the opportunity to read this interview. Some are still surprised at what is expected. Their leader has been very unfair to them, to the staff and to the mission. It is a perfect set-up for failure. I plead with the leadership of each group to prepare everyone, especially the adults. It is the single most contributing factor to a poor experience.

As we enter this 2006 summer of ministry, I pray with thanksgiving and for wisdom as there will be opportunities available to either be missed or captured to touch a young life and make a positive difference. I ask everyone to join me in that prayer. Keep the watch!

The Week at A Glance

ARRIVE ON SUNDAY MORNING

8:30am Gates Open
 9:00am Registration, unload
 and move-in
 10:15 Adult Meeting
 with the Director
 11:15 Orientation:
 What is this week
 going to look like?
 12:00pm Lunch
 1:30 Worship
 Field and Program
 Orientation
 Major Group Division
 YRG Division
 6:00 Dinner
 YRG Development
 Time
 Community Moment
 10:00 Lights Out

FRIDAY SCHEDULE

7:30am Breakfast
 8:00 Daybreak
 8:30 Major Group meetings
 and then load up
 tools/coolers
 9:00 Go to site for the day
Work, work, work
 12:00pm Lunch at site
 1:00 YRG Celebration in
 county
 3:30 Return to camp –
 church load up
 6:00 Dinner
 Campfire
 Fishhook worship
 service

MON - THUR SCHEDULE

7:30am Breakfast
 8:00 Daybreak
 8:30 Major Group meetings
 and then load up
 tools/coolers
 9:00 Go to site for the day
Work, work, work
 4:30pm Return to camp
 unload tools/coolers
 6:00 Dinner
 7:00 *Evening Community
 Program (for
 everyone)
 Recreation
 Sharing
 Worship

SATURDAY SCHEDULE

7:00am Breakfast
 Camp Evaluations
 7:30 Daybreak
 8:00 Camp Cleanup
 Closing Circle
 10:00 Departure

*The evening activities vary from night to night: Tuesday evening the Camp Director will lead a brief Adult Huddle, Wednesday evening all adults will be honored by the Mountain T.O.P. support staff, Thursday evening the Camp Director will lead a Prospective Staff meeting for those interested in serving on the Mountain T.O.P. summer staff.

Special Characteristics of a Mountain T.O.P. Camp Week

DAYBREAK

In order to be intentional about our time with God while on His holy mountain, we provide each participant with the opportunity to begin their day with the Lord. Daybreak is a 15 - 20 minute time after breakfast when campers sit alone for study, reflection and prayer. Campers will need to bring their Bibles, journals or any other items desired for this time to breakfast. Mountain T.O.P. will provide materials to guide this time that relates to the focus for each day as it pertains to programming. We pray this helps participants grow closer in their relationship with God.

YRG (YOUTH RENEWAL GROUP)

Each participant is part of a YRG, which consists of 6-7 people, including 1-2 adults. The YRG experience is designed to give youth the opportunity to renew themselves, discover new meanings about their lives, increase their self-esteem and confidence, make new friends, and be a contributing part of a team with a common goal. When dividing into YRG's our staff members will ensure that they are as balanced as possible across age, gender, experience and home church.

COMMUNITY EVENING PROGRAMS

These programs are a time for fun and fellowship with the whole camp community. Programs may consist of group recreation, group builders, singing time, guest musical acts, or free time.

The evening always includes a sharing time and worship. Sharing gives everyone the opportunity to express their thoughts and insights from their day with the community. Worship is an ecumenical experience designed to focus on serving God. It is an opportunity for campers and staff to engage in reflective moments as they seek to grow closer and further develop their commitment to God.

MAJOR GROUP WORSHIP

Mountain T.O.P.'s style of worship is often participatory, engaging campers to connect with the Lord in creative, tangible and unique ways. One aspect of our camp weeks that may differ from other organizations is Thursday evening Major Group Worship. Each group will be responsible for planning their own worship service. The Major Group Leader will facilitate the planning. This experience gives youth the opportunity to be on the planning end of programming. For some youth, this will be the first time to really be apart of thinking about how to extend the opportunity to worship to others. This challenges youth to explore their own faith while also giving them the chance to be creative and develop skills.

YRG (YOUTH RENEWAL GROUP) CELEBRATION

This is the closing time for each YRG on Friday afternoon before returning to camp. It is a time for each member to express his or her thoughts and feelings to the others about the team experience along with rejoicing in the growth and renewal that comes from giving of yourself to others.

FRIDAY CLOSING WORSHIP

This worship is dedicated to celebrating the journey of the camp community throughout the week and to asking participants to commit to being a fisher of people in the valley below. This time of reflection is designed to highlight for participants that the Mountain T.O.P. experience does not stay on top of the mountain, but it goes home with each participant in their hearts.

SATURDAY MORNING CLOSING CIRCLE

This celebration is designed to reconnect participants with their own youth groups and to challenge the youth groups to go forth and continue to share God's love in the valley below. Mountain T.O.P. seeks to enrich the lives of its participants so they will take their experience and build on it when they return home.