

HOPE YOUTH
THOUSAND PINES CAMP

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2024

Hope Chapel Newsletter

A Family Called Hope

Connected through Community



hopechapel.



Over President's Day weekend, we took a group of 36 Jr High and High School students and 9 Youth Leaders up the mountain to Thousand Pines for winter camp. Located in the beautiful San Bernardino mountains, Thousand Pines exists to serve the church. Their desire is to provide a space for the local church to gather and grow in unity while seeing, knowing, and experiencing God through His creation and His word. Throughout the weekend, we studied what God's word says about images, idols, and identity.

We saw the goodness of God in how He created man in His image, the desperation of man in our fallen, broken, and sinful condition, and the surpassing beauty of Jesus Christ in His atoning work on the cross that provides rescue, redemption, and renewal for all of creation.

These truths cut deep into the hearts of both our leaders and students. We discussed the idols we create to replace God and the lies of the world that claim we can find our identity apart from Christ. Together, we reset our focus back on Jesus and committed to grow in our love for Him and obedience to His word. We also had a lot of fun fellowshiping over good food, enjoying shakes and s'mores, playing insane amounts of gaga ball, paintballing, hopelessly failing at archery, creating beautiful arts and crafts, zooming down the zip-line, and much more, but these were all just icing on the cake!

We hope these testimonies encourage and edify you with the reminder that, right here in our church, God is faithfully raising up a generation of youth to love Him and serve Him in mighty ways. What an honor it is for us as a church family, both young and old, to serve each other and praise our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, together!

Andrew Talley
Youth Pastor

Ivory Whitaker
Women's Youth Director





Student Testimony | Esther Dean

Winter Camp was truly an amazing and fun experience. I learned so much and enjoyed how beautiful it was to be around the tall trees and melting snow. The Holy Spirit reminded me of God's faithful promises and strengthened my perspectives. One thing God taught me during winter camp is that I should not be afraid of what other people think of me when I am praising him. People didn't die on the cross for my sins. Jesus did! So why should I be afraid of what other people think of me when I'm praising the one who cares for me, the one who loved me when I didn't love myself, the one who forgives me, over and over again, no matter how many times I fall short of His glory, the one who calls me His, the one who gave up His one and only son to take my place, being brutally beaten, humiliated, mocked, betrayed, and hung up on a cross all so that I could have a relationship with Him?



God is such a beautiful, loving God that deserves all my praise, so I am not going to let anything stop me from praising my wonderful king.



*Worship is offering yourself to God
and physically expressing that you love Him
and thank Him for all that He's done.*

When you worship God with all your heart you're saying, "Lord! I am yours! I offer myself to you so that you can come into my heart and fill me with your presence." **2 Samuel 6:14** says, "*And David danced before the Lord with all his might.*" When worshipping God, you can even dance! I must admit, I'm guilty of that. So, I encourage you today if you're feeling a bit shy or are worried of what other people think of

you when you worship God, don't be! Just put your hands up and praise His name because when I tell you it's worth it, I mean it.

Overall, winter camp was just so beautiful. I absolutely loved being in His wonderful creation while spending time with Him, seeking Him, and growing closer to Him.



Student Testimony | **Matt Molinero**

My experience at Thousand Pines Christian Camp this winter was honestly amazing. Since none of my close friends were able to go, I was forced out of my comfort zone to meet new people. I almost did not want to go because of that reason, but I am so glad I did because of how God was able to show His grace.

The whole theme of this year's camp was idols. I already knew that I had idols in my life separating me from God but the messages that the camp pastor taught really sparked a light in me to give up these idols and follow God. It got me thinking that 5 minutes or even years of pleasure on earth is not worth eternity in hell.



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What really stood out to me during this trip was that once you step out into faith and trust God with your decision, He will bless you.

During my 1 on 1 with pastor Andrew, I expressed how I really wanted Christian friends in my life to be able to build a deeper connection with; so we prayed about it. I know God heard our prayer because

as I was walking out of the Malt Shop, encouraged but with no clue of what to do next, a girl from a different church came up to me out of nowhere asking if I wanted to hang out with her and her friends. They were super cool people and we ended up talking for more than an hour until dinner. This truly was God showing that He does hear our prayers because it was so out of the blue, and perfect timing, that there is no possible way it was a coincidence. Now, I might never see them again since they live very far from me back home, but I think that's missing the point. I believe God allowed this to happen because He wanted to give me a glimpse of the miracles He can do if I trust in Him.



Leader Testimony | **Eva Thomas**

I was so grateful for the opportunity to join this year's winter camp as a leader. From worship, to building relationships, and getting a first-hand view of students committing and renewing their relationships to God, camp was an amazing experience. I witnessed students take ownership of their faith and really think about what it means to be a follower of Christ. I saw how God was moving in their lives and how they were committed to following His direction; even thinking about using their future careers to serve God.



The theme from camp focused on where our identity is found and whose image we are made in. Being reminded that there is no sin too great and that when we confess and lay our sinful burdens at Christ's feet, we are forgiven and become the "new image" that God intends us to be.

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*We are made in God's image,
and none of the idols of this world will satisfy us.*

Another takeaway is that we will stumble and struggle in this life, but as long as we put our trust in God, we can have confidence that He will direct our steps and see us through the challenges of this world, all for His glory. One verse that was highlighted during camp, and that I have continued to reflect on is **Jeremiah 17:7–8**, *“But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”*



Leader Testimony | **Atilla Gahbro Jr.**

The theme of this year's winter camp was all about the "image of God." The camp's speaker emphasized that in the beginning, when God created man, He said *“Let us make man in our image.”* But when Adam sinned, man became a “broken image.” Every person now has this broken image that needs to be restored,

which is why God sent His Son to live a perfect life, die for our sins, and rise from the grave. Putting our faith in Jesus is the only way for that broken image to be restored. The camp's speaker also had some pretty cool props on stage to help us visualize what the "image of God" really means.

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Camp also acts like a “reset” where you can separate yourself from distractions of life and focus on your relationship with God.

Each day we'd go to chapel twice, and we'd have some time in our cabins to talk about what our takeaways were. Cabin discussions were probably my favorite part of camp. Most of the time, one of the boys in our cabin would have a question or an insight that we would discuss for a while. We also got to bond as a small group by doing cool stuff like paintball, gagaball, and making s'mores, all while being in God's creation in the forest. It's easy to feel like God is nearer to you at camp.



We go to chapel twice a day, we talk about the sermons with each other, and we're away from our phones most of the time. But something that I'm always reminded of at camp is that God is with us everywhere, not just at a camp. We're told in **James 4:8**, "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." Just because our day-to-day lives look a little busier than life at winter camp, doesn't mean we can't draw close to God! So before we came back down the mountain, we were all encouraged to keep drawing close to God, and I think what we learned at Thousand Pines this year will help us do that.



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Get In Touch

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Weekend Services

Saturday		5:00 pm
Sunday		9:00 am
Sunday		11:15 am

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