

Great Oaks News

Camping & Urban Youth Ministries

Jul-Sept 2018 Report

On July 8th, we broke ground on our new Office Building/Maintenance Shop. At that same time, a few of our Board Members got together and prayed for the new building.

Ground Breaking



As a camp, we are very thankful God has blessed us with this new building. We are also very thankful to all of you who helped make this possible. Hopefully, this fall, we will have a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new building, as well as a time to pray and thank God for His provisions. As the building project progresses, we will post a date for that ceremony. Be sure to visit our website or our Facebook page to stay informed!

Summer Camp 2018:

Great Oaks had another successful, fun-filled summer! Great Oaks ran seven weeks of camp this summer, and during that time, we saw almost 190 campers from Peoria and the surrounding areas! Our older campers enjoyed the Adventure Challenge Course this year, as well as playing paintball. All of our campers got to enjoy a new 9-square game, a new slide into the pond, and a bigger and better blob! Thursday nights at camp are always memorable with campfires, hot dogs, even s'mores! Of course, to top the night off, we provide ice cream, along with an "end of the week" dance party, complete with a DJ from Peoria!

The theme for the summer was CHOOSE. Every week, our campers learned about God's love, Jesus' sacrifice, and the gift of Eternal Life. All our Bible Studies and Chapel services centered around the life of David. During those times, our campers studied and learned what it means to follow God and *continue* to follow Him, even when it's hard. Our campers learned about David's life and how he chose to follow God. They also learned that even though David messed up, God still loved him. David was able to repent of his sins and continue to follow God. Every Thursday night, our campers heard a Gospel presentation and were given the chance to respond to that call.

Counselor Perspectives

**one of the blessings of camp is seeing former campers return and serve as counselors for the summer, this summer a majority of our summer staff were former campers*

Because Jasmine wasn't familiar with God or Jesus, I was able to share with her about both. We talked about how they're both with us all the time, and I explained to her about Jesus dying on the cross for us. I gave her a Bible and some Bible verses, so she could continue to read and pray at home. Whitney asked to lead Bible Study all week, as well as volunteering to pray. It was great to see her step out of her comfort zone. I was very proud of her.

At first, Jessica was very shy and didn't really talk with anyone. However, Monday night, during Bible Study, we talked about how God was always there for us. She volunteered to pray that night and really began to open up to me and her other cabin mates.

Before camp started, I sat by myself and prayed. I was going through something difficult and wasn't sure if I would have enough patience to minister well to the campers that would be arriving soon. I began to talk to God and asked Him to help me. God helped me. I had a great week and found all the patience I needed.

On Thursday night, after we had a guest speaker, one of my campers got really upset because she didn't realize that Jesus died for her. We talked about it, and she began to understand the significance of that. She just kept saying, "I can't wait to come back to camp and go to church on Sunday."

At first, C.C. did not like going to Chapel. However, one night during Chapel, Paul talked about how God is always with us and there for us. Afterwards, she prayed and looked forward to learning more about God at the next Chapel Service.



Campers Perspectives

I learned...

- God loves me, even when I don't love myself*
- God knows everything, and He still loves me.*
- God forgives us, even when we don't deserve to be forgiven.*
- God is our Savior, and He will love you, no matter what.*
- Even though David did some wrong things, God still loved and forgave him.*
- Jesus is in my heart!*
- Not to be so selfish and to treat others the way I want to be treated.*
- David had great faith in God to fight Goliath*
- God only cares about the inside, not the outside.*

