Commissioning of Campers and Camp Staff for camps at Walter Scott Camp & Learning Center

Scripture Suggestions
Luke 18:16 (NRSV) – *But Jesus called for them and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.*

John 8:12 (NRSV) – *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.*

Psalm 74:17 (NRSV) – *You have fixed all the bounds of the earth; you made summer and winter.*

Pastor/Leader
Throughout the summer, Camp Walter Scott welcomes campers of all ages arriving from all over our region. Our camps offer opportunities for people – young and old alike and from all different backgrounds – to cultivate relationships with fellow campers, mentors, and with all aspects of God's vast creation. Camp Walter Scott is a sacred space and we hope that your time at our campgrounds nurtures and uplifts your spirits.

Litany of Blessing for Staff and Campers[1]
Leader: In a busy, fragmented world, camp offers people an opportunity to pause, to immerse themselves in the beauty of creation, to open themselves more fully to God, and to experience community life.

Congregation: May our camps be places where people seek and find God's presence in creation, receive God's love in Christ, and radiate God's Spirit in the world.

Ask those serving as camp staff (counselors, directors, staff, etc.) to stand as able and to respond accordingly.
Leader: We are so grateful for the many folks who will serve as counselors, directors, and staff at Camp Walter Scott this summer. Today we ask for God's blessing upon them, and we offer them the support and prayers of our church community.

Leader: Our camps remind us of the beauty of God's creation, and the interconnectedness of all life. God, bless these staff as they learn and teach the importance of living in meaningful relation with all you have created.

Staff: We commit ourselves to honoring the beauty and rhythms of creation, to faithfully live with respect and care and to guide and encourage others to do likewise.

Congregation: We will pray for you in your ministry of caring for all of God's creation.

Leader: God, bless the staff as they practice discipleship, as they model Jesus' life and teachings for others. Guide them as they nurture and shepherd the campers this summer.

[1] Adapted from Camps with Meaning, adapted by Judith Friesen Epp, Mennonite Church Manitoba, Home Street Mennonite Church, 2015.

Ask those attending as campers to stand as able and to respond accordingly
Leader: There are also people of all ages from our congregation who will be campers this summer. May these campers be filled with awe at God's creation, may they be nurtured in their life and faith journeys, may they experience healthy, strong relationships with each other and with the staff.

Campers: We commit ourselves to honoring the beauty and rhythms of creation, to faithfully live with respect and care and to guide and encourage others to do likewise.

Congregation: Bless these campers, God. May their time be filled with growth, adventure, faith, and fun.

Pastor/Leader
We commit ourselves to supporting camp staff and campers. We will pray for you and ask God to bless your work and your rest, the relationships you will build and the solitude you will need. May you sense the spirit's movement in and around you.

PRAYER (*Could be read in unison by the congregation)*[2]
Creator and creating God, we lift up all going to camp this summer. As our young people and our staff venture into Camp Walter Scott, let each one feel your presence and understand your spirit in new ways. Be with them as they experience your creation in the wind, the water, the trees, grass, and all the animals and bugs that live there. Give them openness and insight as they reach out to you and one another as they come together as a faithful community. Bless these campers and staff with new friends, closer relationships with you, and new understandings of their growing faith.

Go with them, as you did Jesus, into the wilderness. Amen!

Optional

- A small journal may be presented to campers as a gift to encourage them to reflect on their experiences at camp through writing or drawing. Alternatively, a small token may be given to campers/staff to remind them that the congregation is praying for me while at camp.

- 2 or 3 Campers/Staff may be asked to present a 3-5 minute statement or testimonial about their experience at camp. Even shorter statements from campers/staff (past or present) where they briefly share an answer to the prompt, "I encountered God at camp when _____"

- Congregants can be encouraged to mail a letter or postcard to campers while they are at camp (***Tip: Assign one volunteer to ensure everyone receives a postcard or letter so that no one is left out!)*** The camp's mailing address is **15290 E 300th Ave Dieterich, IL 62424**

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[2] Adapted from Sample Camp Commissioning Service by the Central Rocky Mountain Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).