

AKRON OHIO STAKE

Stake Presidency Message

We experienced a summer full of activities that offered many of our youth opportunities to grow spiritually. For the Strength of Youth week-long programs, Young Men's and Young Women's camp, and a High Adventure for the older youth offered ample opportunities for youth and leaders to focus on spiritual truths. Spiritual truths exist that are absolute and applicable now and in the eternities. President Russell M. Nelson teaches this in his May 2022 talk titled "Choices for Eternity."

While helping to prepare a message for Young Men's camp, I was immediately captivated by this talk, and I suggest reviewing it as a refresher on eternal perspectives from our Prophet.

Here are some of the highlights of that talk that especially impressed me. First, please ponder this question, If Jesus Christ were to visit you, what do you think would be the first thing He would want you to know?

President Nelson says, "I believe that if the Lord were speaking to you directly tonight, the first thing He would make sure you understand is your true identity. My dear friends, you are literally spirit children of God.

You have sung this truth since you learned the words to 'I Am a Child of God.' But is that eternal truth imprinted upon your heart? Has this truth rescued you when confronted with temptation?"

President Nelson teaches that the identities we should prioritize are, first and foremost, that we are: 1) a son or daughter of God, 2) a child of the covenant as members of His Church, and 3) a disciple of Jesus Christ. While discussing these identities, he shares this insightful teaching, "The way you think about who you really are affects almost every decision you will ever make."

I fully agree with that claim. In our own self-talk, we need to be gentle and kind. It would be a blessing to us individually if we make a concerted effort not to criticize ourselves. Especially don't make statements either to yourself or out loud stating "I am ... "and then adding a critical self-deprecating term.

President Nelson pleads with us to keep these identities in the forefront of our minds. He says, "I plead with you not to replace these three paramount and unchanging identifiers with any others, because doing so could stymie your progress or pigeonhole you in a stereotype that could potentially thwart your eternal progression."

My hope is that we can all engrain in our minds our individual identities as a son or daughter of God, as a child of the covenant, and a disciple of Christ. With these thoughts, we can be positively affected in "almost every decision (we) will ever make."



President Jensen

Good things come to those who
DON'T wait

2023
OHIO
MUSIC CONFERENCE
SAT. SEPTEMBER 9, 2023
8AM-3PM
ohiomusicconference.blogspot.com

All who **register** before September 1st, may choose the **free sack lunch** option on the digital form. All others will need to provide their own lunch.

★ **REGISTER HERE** ★

Stake High Adventure – Seek This Jesus

by Wade Most, Stake YM President

In Moroni's final words, he invites each of us to "Seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written" so that he may "abide in you forever." This was the message and focus of the Stake YW/YM High Adventure held in Hocking Hills State Park for two days in early July.



This was the first time in several years that we held a combined young men and young women 16+ high adventure activity. We had 40 youth and eight leaders attend a fun-filled weekend, with President and Sister Coburn joining us for our hike on Friday. Our adventure began on Thursday afternoon and finished on Saturday afternoon.

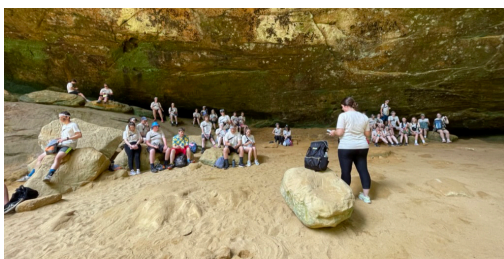


Our main hike and activity began on Friday morning as we embarked on a six-mile hike through the park.



The hike traversed the park and made several stops at scenic places along the way, including Old Man's Cave, Whispering Cave, Cedar Falls, and Ash Cave. These stops also included a spiritual message that focused on the theme. The youth learned about the importance of putting Christ first in their lives

and the power and strength that comes through our relationship with Him. They were also taught about the



doctrine of Christ and encouraged to read the Book of Mormon with a focus on identifying and marking their scriptures in a way to highlight the specific teachings of the



doctrine of Christ. Finally, the youth were taught about building and developing spiritual habits.



Following our long hot hike, we engaged in an epic water fight to cool off and prepare for a trip to Lake Logan, where

the youth had a chance to relax and swim. That night we gathered for a fireside devotional with messages that again touched on

Seeking our Savior, and we enjoyed s'mores by the fire before bed. Saturday, the youth participated in a rappelling activity near Conkles Hollow.



Each youth had a chance to rappel three different heights, the highest being 120 feet.



This was a wonderful activity, and those who attended enjoyed a spiritual, physical, and social experience.



Young Men's Camp – Get Yoked

by Ryland Most, Canton Ward

It's summer again, and that means it's time for stake activities! This year's Young Men's camp was just as memorable as any other. Camp started Wednesday, June 14th, and went through Saturday the 17th, and we had over 75 young men attend. Our theme was "Get Yoked," coming from the scripture in Matthew 11. The message taught throughout the evening devotionals was to teach us about the importance of yoking ourselves with the Savior.

One of the activities we did when we first started camp was a tractor pull. We were divided into groups, and the goal was to pull the most number of boys with the least number of boys in our group on a sled to a certain distance. For us to be able to do this, we had to all work together. If we had to pull all the weight on our own, it would be very difficult or impossible. With the help of other people, we were able to pull more, just like when we are yoked with the Savior.



During our stay, we got to participate in many enjoyable activities. Thursday, we participated in a service project where we got to paint a cabin close

to our campsite, had a spiritual lesson about yoking ourselves to the Savior, as well as participated in chair soccer and field hockey. That same day we drove over to a large community pool in Uhrichsville. That night similar to last year, we had another thunderstorm, which never fails to make camp more interesting! On Friday, we went canoeing on the Tuscarawas River. The trip was 8 miles and took us about 2 hours. The rain from the prior evening made the trip much easier with the faster current! The rest of the day consisted of a few activities: Atlatl was led and taught by Brother Rodgers; he showed us how to throw arrows and had us aim at hay bales. Brother Oda taught a class on finance where he introduced us to investing and how if we are responsible with our money how it will benefit us in the future. We also learned about plumbing and had the opportunity to practice the skills we learned by building plumbing structures off of a diagram made by Brother Murawski.

That evening the priests split from the teachers and deacons for their own separate devotion. The priests and bishops hiked up Buzzard's Roost about a mile and a half, where we learned about the importance of the temple. We specifically learned more about the covenants we make during the endowment. Our leaders all shared a message with all of us and bore their own testimony about its importance and the power that can come through the endowment. Being able to hear that from our leaders was one of my favorite experiences from camp this year. Young Men's camp was a great spirit-nourishing experience this year, and I am already looking forward to next year.



Girls Camp 2023

by Shannon Stiggins, Stake Girls Camp Director

Girls Camp 2023 was a fantastic success. Our theme this year was “Witness,” and we spent time each day learning about why and how we can be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Our week started out with our older young women hiking to Kendall Ledges. The round trip took us five miles. Halfway through the hike, we picked up large rocks to represent burdens or trials we might carry. Then we picked up a second rock representing another’s burden. We used these rocks for a Faith walk on Wednesday evening after all the young women arrived.

On the Faith walk, each young woman carried a rock as they went to different points in the campground and listened to our graduating seniors share experiences that have helped them grow closer to Christ. At the end of the walk, the girls placed their rocks at a picture of Christ. Then their hands were washed and massaged by our adult leaders at camp. The evening wrapped up with a beautiful musical number and closing remarks from Sister Wilkinson and President Coburn.

We spent our afternoons swimming, canoeing, and shooting BB guns and arrows at the Archery range. And making bracelets, lots and lots of bracelets were made by the young women.

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Girls camp is the best week of the year! It is absolutely the best week of the year! This was my first year at girls camp, and it was amazing! Girls camp is filled with wonderful people! Girls camp is so fun! It is filled with fun exciting activities and adventures, along with spiritual ones, such as Zumba, BB, crafts, scripture study, and a faith walk! Girls camp is such a wonderful, amazing, and safe place to be, and their food is off the chart!! I think and wish that everybody could go to girls camp. Girls camp is the best!!!
- Faith Stiggins



There are so many things that I loved about girls camp, but if I had to pick a favorite thing, it would definitely be the faith walk. I loved how spiritual everything was, and I especially loved getting my hands washed. I don't think I've ever felt that sensation of peace before; it was a really special feeling. I also really loved getting to meet new people; everyone there was so amazing and welcoming. I can't wait to do it all again next year!!
- Delaney Johnson



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Girls Camp 2023 *continued from previous page*

We had one exciting evening of storms when we had all the bishops and ward leaders at camp. All of our first-year campers ended up sleeping in the big lodge after most of their tents were wet.

Other activities for the week included a service project for Safe Harbor, learning scripture study skills, and learning about caring for all areas of our health. Our final evening concluded with a musical fireside and testimony meetings at each campsite.



We already miss camping with all the Young Women and can't wait for next year!



Girls camp is always one of my favorite things I do in the summer. I always leave having felt the spirit, had fun, and made new friends. This year one of my favorite parts of girls camp was the faith walk we did. We started by being handed a big rock representing our burdens. Then we carried it as we walked to stations where girls shared examples of overcoming burdens from their lives and the scriptures. At the end, there was a big picture of Jesus. We got to lay our rocks or burdens down at the feet of Christ. Our leaders then washed our hands. I loved the symbolism of this activity. This activity helped me to really feel the spirit and helped bring to life how Christ is there and will lighten our load. It was also fun to do.

– Ariana Murawski

MISSIONARY UPDATES



KAYLIE HUFFAKER

Medina Ward

Starts 26 June 2023 2022

California Oakland/
San Francisco Mission



SPENCER FRY

Canton Ward

Starts 3 July 2023

México Xalapa
Mission



MADELINE CARTWRIGHT

Wadsworth Ward

Starts 21 August 2023

California Sacramento
Mission



ERIS FOUTZ

Wadsworth Ward

Starts 30 October 2023

Texas Lubbock
Mission



SPENCER JONES

Akron Ward

Returns 31 July 2023

Argentina Buenos
Aires Mission