

Overbrook Presbyterian Church Devotions & Prayer Guide for the Overbrook Congregation

Some of our Overbrook Presbyterian Church youth are going on a Mission Trip right here in Philadelphia from Sunday, August 6 - Saturday, August 12. They will be working with a group called CSM that hosts youth groups and others who want to participate in city mission programs for a week in the summer. See www.csm.org for more information. You are invited to participate in their week-long mission experience by praying for them each day. This set of daily devotionals is a guide to your praying—an invitation for you to reflect on their mission experience and to remember God's call to you as well. You may want to use these meditations first thing in the morning, as you pray for the youth at the start of each new day, or you may choose to read them at the end of the day, praying for them when they are tired after a long day and as they are settling in for the night. Thank you for praying with and for our Overbrook youth who are following Christ's call to mission in a special way this week.

Sunday, August 6:

"The Lord said: 'Jeremiah, I am your Creator, and before you were born, I chose you to speak for me to the nations.' I replied, 'I'm not a good speaker, Lord, and I'm too young.' 'Don't say you're too young,' the Lord answered. 'If I tell you to go and speak to someone, then go! And when I tell you what to say, don't leave out a word! I promise to be with you and keep you safe, so don't be afraid'" (Jeremiah 1:4-7).

The call of the prophet Jeremiah when he was still a youth reminds us that there are no age limits that determine when people may hear God's call. We are never too young (or too old) to answer and obey. God's call can come in something as simple as an announcement in a church newsletter that the youth are going on a mission trip. It can come in a nagging feeling that there's too much injustice in the world, including in places very close to where we live. It can come in a growing knowledge that God wants us to make a difference in this world, as we help others.

Please pray for the youth and leaders who are starting out on a new mission adventure today. Pray for them as they arrive at the house on Broad Street where they will be sleeping, as they put their suitcases under their bunk beds, as they look out the windows in a different part of the city, and as they settle in for the night.

Each day, for the next seven days, you will be invited to pray specifically for two of the fourteen mission trip participants (eleven youth and three adult leaders). **Today, please pray for our**

whole mission team, and especially for Emma and Zachary.

Monday, August 7:

"Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat'" (Matthew 14:16).

This verse is part of the story of Jesus feeding of the five thousand, the gospel reading in worship on Sunday, August 6. It is a reminder that Jesus cares for people's physical needs as well as their emotional and spiritual needs. It is also a reminder that Jesus invited his followers to participate in this miracle—and that, in John's account of the story, a small boy provided the first fish and loaves of bread.

One morning this week, the Overbrook youth will be participating in a ministry that gives food to people who are homeless and hungry. Another morning, they will be working in a different lunch-serving program. Please pray for people who are hungry. Pray for plenty of food to be shared, and for plenty of good conversations, too. Thanks also to the Overbrook Presbyterians who are providing evening snacks to our youth on the trip.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Liam and Maya.

Tuesday, August 8:

"And the crowds asked [John], 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise'" (Luke 3:10-11).

When John the Baptist was preparing the way for Jesus, John called on the crowds to repent. They asked him what, specifically, they should do to change their lives. One of the things he told them was to share with people in need.

One morning, this week, the Overbrook youth will be working with the Philadelphia Furniture Bank, whose motto is "...because home is more than four walls." Through this organization, people with extra furniture have an opportunity to donate to help others, and people needing furniture and moving out of homelessness have an opportunity to get basic things like beds, tables and chairs. Pray for the work of the Philadelphia Furniture Bank, for the people it serves, and for our youth as they sort and clean donated furniture to make it ready for people to use and enjoy.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Annabelle and Sam.

Wednesday, August 9:

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs’” (Matthew 19:14).

Jesus cared for children and he reached out to welcome them, in a society that too often pushed children away. In our society, in our city, in our own communities and among our friends, there are children who are being pushed aside. Thankfully, there are many church groups and organizations that are reaching out to welcome the children, as Jesus called us to do.

Our Overbrook Youth will be spending their afternoons this week working at a community center that runs a summer day camp program. We will be bringing books, games, activities, coloring sheets and crayons, jump ropes, soccer balls, and more— and interacting with the children to share God’s welcome and love. Please pray for the children and leaders at the summer camp, and for our youth who will be working with them and getting to know them each day.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Everett and Kayla.

Thursday, August 10:

“Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:30-31).

On any mission trip, by Thursday, it’s easy to feel a bit tired and worn out. There are many new challenges, new people to meet, new places and new experiences which can be both exciting and tiring at the same time. Please pray for continued courage, energy and patience for all who are traveling, living and working together this week.

On Thursday evening, the Overbrook youth group will gather with other youth groups for a special time of worship and reflection on their experiences this week. Please pray for the youth as they worship with others, and as they enter the “home stretch” of their mission trip.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Geneva and Justin.

Friday, August 11:

Jesus said, I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Matthew 25:35-36).

Jesus said that whenever we care for others in need, we are caring for him. Some of the ‘strangers’ around us, and some of the “sick,” are people in nursing homes who have few family members or friends to visit them.

One morning this week, Overbrook Youth will be visiting a nursing home for people with limited income. The activities director has plans for the youth to play BINGO with the residents and to enjoy other activities and conversation together. Pray for the youth and the residents we will be visiting.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Ava and Tom (adult leader)

Saturday, August 12:

“Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; ’Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home” (from “Amazing Grace”).

When we work together, as the youth and their leaders have this week, for God’s kingdom, God gives us a wonderful feeling of being “at home” in him. Our Overbrook mission team will pack up and travel home this morning. Please pray not only for a safe trip home (it’s a short one, just from Center City) but also that God’s grace will continue to work in the lives of the participants, helping them to reflect on their experiences as they come back home.

Please pray for our whole mission team, and especially for Jill and Carolyn (adult leaders).