

# Mission Trip 2014: Burlington NJ Congregational Prayer Journal



## How to use this resource:

in this booklet for your own personal devotions. Second, you can PRAY for us throughout our journey. Third, you can follow along with our journey online at [hopebozemanouthtrips.blogspot.com](http://hopebozemanouthtrips.blogspot.com).

If you use the daily readings in this booklet, you will be unpacking the exact same texts that our teenagers will be discussing during their evening learning times. Hopefully this will connect you to the trip in a new way, and it will inform your prayers for our teens.

We have included informational readings for each day, along with prayer requests. On the days that we will be

working, we've also included a bible passage and some contemplative questions. Feel free to read these together with your family and discuss them, or contemplate them on your own. Many of these questions will be the same ones that our teens are wrestling with this week.

Please note that all photos in this devotional are from last year's mission trip to Red Mesa, AZ!

Mission trips are life changing events for many teenagers and we want to thank you for being a part of that journey. God bless!

-Paul Goodman and the 2014 Mission Team

This is a new resource created with the intention of connecting those of you at home with the youth who are on our mission trip. Youth depart on Saturday, June 28 for 10 days of mission, service, learning and fun. You can stay connected to our trip in several ways. First, you can use the daily readings

### Special points of interest:

- Youth will spend the week working in Burlington, NJ, a small town outside of Philadelphia
- We will be doing home repair work
- Work will probably include painting and home restoration
- Each day in the prayers we've named 3-4 youth or adults to pray for!

## Why Burlington?

Why Burlington? When people have asked us where we are going and we tell them New Jersey they are regularly confused. The simplest answer to "why Burlington" is for a completely new and

different encounter with a diverse, impoverished population. Youth will encounter Christ in the strangers (who will soon become friends) that we meet in New Jersey and in New York City!

### New Jersey



## Saturday, June 28

### Travel Day

Today we will arrive at the airport at 5am for a full day of travel. We will arrive in New York City at 3:45pm and drive to a Lutheran church in Summit, New Jersey. We asked this congregation if they would be willing to host our teenagers and they graciously accepted. In fact, we have already been blown away by their hospitality without even meeting them!

Upon arriving at the church we will be joining together for a group orientation.

We will participate in group building activities and talk about our hopes and expectations for the week.

As you pray for us tonight, take a quiet moment to center yourself. Consider what you hope our teenagers will get out of this week. If you are a parent, consider what you hope your child will gain from the event. If you are a

sponsor, consider the reasons that you sponsored a youth and what your hopes are for that young person.

### **Prayer Requests:**

Safe travels

Chaperones (health, safety, sanity)

For the members of the congregation in Summit, New Jersey

That youth will go into our experience with an open mind and heart

For the "repair" work that will take place, both literally (home repair) and in the lives of our youth and the residents of Burlington, NJ.

## Sunday, June 29

On Sunday, June 29, we will arrive at our site in Burlington, NJ. We will meet several hundred other high school students who have also given up their week to make a difference in this community. We will find out where we will be living and working for the week, and we will receive our assignments for the week. We will begin to learn about the theme: Repair.

Last year on this evening we faced what appeared to be a daunting task. We received our assignments. One group of four received the following: prepare and paint a home, build a porch, put a new roof on a home...in 5 days?! Really? Are you kidding me? I can remember our evening group time being a time of excitement,

anticipation, fear, and much more. I imagine that as we sit down to consider what we will be doing throughout the week that we will encounter all of these emotions and more!

Tonight, as you think about our group, consider what daunting tasks exist in your life right now.

What is your usual response to this kind of thing? Do you tend to run away from big tasks or face them head on? Do you like a big challenge or do you give up easily? What role does your faith play in helping you accomplish your goals?

After reflecting on these ideas pray for our group.

### **Prayer requests:**

Reassurance as we face seemingly un-accomplishable goals

Excitement and energy for the week ahead

That our teenagers will gain a new understanding of themselves through this week

That our youth will grow closer to God and to one another



## Monday, June 30

Today we are awaking to new possibility. We will be meeting our residents, seeing firsthand what we will be doing and getting down and dirty beginning our work. Monday is usually a great day on a mission experience as it is the first time that we actually get to do what we've set out do to.



Tonight we will participate in the first of our evening programs. We will look at the story of the rich young ruler and Jesus.

*The Story of the Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10:17-22)*

After a deep conversation with Jesus, the rich young ruler walked away sad. He couldn't see that the value of a

relationship with Jesus was greater than the value of all his wealth and things. The young man wanted to have it all and was upset that he had to choose. As the week begins, what's keeping you from following Jesus? Your own story doesn't have to end the same way as the rich young ruler's did....

## Tuesday, July 1

Tuesday is usually the point of the week where relationships among youth really start to blossom. Youth have now been together for enough time that the nice ties and "do you like me" behavior starts to segue to kids being real. This is great...and challenging all at the same time. Work will continue throughout the day and youth will hopefully really get going with their projects.

Tonight we will encounter the story of Legion, a man possessed by demons

who is forever changed after his encounter with Jesus.

*The Story of Legion (Mark 5:1-20)*

Sometimes, transformation is gradual—taking weeks, months, even years. But sometimes, it happens in the blink of an eye. Powerful. Memorable. Miraculous. That's the story of a lonely man trapped in isolation and demon possession, literally wandering in tombs and cutting himself. As people ran away,

As a devotional tonight:

Read Mark 10:17-22

Discuss (or consider) the following questions

What gets in your way of following Jesus?

What are some things that get in the way of teenagers following Jesus?

What are things that might be considered "more important" than following Jesus today?

What are some ways that we can re-focus on Jesus?

### **Prayer requests:**

That the excitement experienced tonight can continue to grow throughout the week

That youth will grow closer to their team across the week

That youth will experience Christ through their residents

For Kurt, Ben and Marissa

Jesus walked toward him and turned his life around in a moment. Life for that man wasn't just better. It was amazing. What's in your life that Jesus could transform in a moment?

*(For the devotion and prayer requests see the next page)*



## Tuesday, July 1 (continued)

For a devotion today, read Mark 5:1-20 and consider (or discuss) the following questions:

- \*What “demons” do youth encounter on any given day?
- \*Are there any things in your life that act like demons?
- \*We don’t really see the end of the story...how do you think this man’s life was changed?
- \*How can an encounter with Christ change the way you live your life?

### Prayer requests:

Specifically for the residents who we are working with (for their names check our blog [hopebozemanouthtrips.blogspot.com](http://hopebozemanouthtrips.blogspot.com))

For the demons that youth wrestle with.

For those in Bozeman who are facing demons

For Taylor, Alyssa, and Maggie



## Wednesday, July 2

Wednesday is a “storming day.” This is the day that we look at our project and consider that there is no way that we can finish our goals. It is also regularly the day that the “cute” mannerisms that we all have that are a little quirky on Sunday...DRIVE EVERYONE CRAZY...When processed effectively, this is actually a positive form of group development. Youth suddenly realize that even the nicest youth has a grumpy side...and yet this “being real” with one another allows youth to actually grow through their differences and become actual friends!

Tonight we will look at the story of Lazarus

*Wednesday: The Story of the Death of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)*

If Jesus can do anything, why doesn’t

he do something for me right now? That’s the question Mary and Martha surely asked when their brother, Lazarus, died. Jesus loved their family, but as Lazarus lay sick and dying...no Jesus. Four days later, however, Jesus showed up, on his own time schedule, and raised Lazarus from the dead. We’ll dig into our own disappointment and anger with God over things we think he should have done, and see if, perhaps, there is still more to come from a Savior who can make anything happen.

For a devotion: read John 11:1-44 and consider/discuss the following questions:

When in your life have you been disappointed with God?

Why do you think Jesus intervenes in the ways we want him to?

What disappointments do you think today’s youth face? How can being in relationship with Jesus help us during times of trial?

### Prayer requests:

That difficulties in relationships among our teenagers can be worked through  
That youth gain the tools to realize that God is present, even in our darkest times  
That residents can gain a new understanding of Jesus’ love through our teen’s witness

For Ashley, Kayla L., and Cecilia

## Thursday, July 3

Last night, as a part of our evening devotions, youth were given one on one time with one another to share struggles and pray for one another. This is always a powerful time together as youth who may not have connected yet are given that intentional opportunity. Our hope is that by Thursday we are almost done with our project...growing closer to one another...and growing in our faith...while learning and connecting to the community that we are living in. Tonight we will look at Zacchaeus, and consider how Jesus offers us forgiveness and acceptance.

*Thursday: The Story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)*

A short, sinful man in a tall tree straining to see Jesus. Zacchaeus didn't make excuses, and he didn't care what others were thinking. Anyone could have written the list of wrongs committed by Zacchaeus, but only Jesus could see past the list to

love the person and offer forgiveness and new life. Sometimes we forget that Jesus doesn't expect us to have everything together when we approach him. Like Zacchaeus, we can go to him just as we are, and let him take care of the rest.

Tonight there is an event for all the residents (people who we've been working with) including a program and reception.

For a devotion, read Luke 19:1-10. Consider/discuss the following questions:

- Who is the hardest person in your life to forgive?
- Who is the easiest to forgive?
- What things in life are unforgiveable?
- How does knowing that Jesus forgives unconditionally affect you?
- How was Zacchaeus changed

after his encounter with Christ?

### **Prayer requests:**

Forgiveness in our own lives and in the world  
continued growth among youth  
Continued safety during the trip  
That we can finish our project tomorrow  
That the lives of our residents will be forever changed

For Paul, Liz, Kayla B and Skylar

## Friday, July 4

Friday is the last full day of programs. This is a day of closure. We are saying goodbye to our new friends... both our residents and other teens. HOPEFULLY we will finish our projects today. Our group will continue their journey for the next few days.

Tonight we will look at the story of Ananias and Saul

"Repair: Be A Story of Transformation" doesn't stop when camp comes to a close. In fact it's just the beginning of a new story with Jesus. But fear can get

in the way. Fear of the unknown, fear of what others will think, and fear of things not working out very well as we live out our Christian faith back at home. Ananias received a mission from God that was laced with fear: Go to Saul who hated Christians and put them to death—and restore his sight. Yikes! Yet Ananias trusted Jesus more than he trusted his own fear. Will you?

Devotion: Read Acts 9:10-19

Consider the following questions:

- What risks have you taken in the last year in the name of your faith?
- Do you think that God calls us to take risks on a regular basis?
- What is your comfortability with taking risks?
- What risks do you think that youth are faced with on a regular basis?
- How can our relationship with God strengthen us to take life giving risks?

## Prayers for Friday

For a devotion today, read Mark 5:1-20 and consider (or discuss) the following questions.

What “demons” do youth encounter on any given day?

Are there any things in your life that act like demons?

We don’t really see the end of the story...how do you think this man’s life was changed?

How can an encounter with Christ change the way you live your life?

### Prayer requests:

Specifically for the residents who we are working with (for their names check our blog [hopebozemanyouthtrips.blogspot.com](http://hopebozemanyouthtrips.blogspot.com))

For the demons that youth wrestle with.

For those in Bozeman who are facing demons.

For Olivia, Ellie, Kahlee, Rachael

For Elizabeth L and Anna who will join us tomorrow!



## Saturday, July 5

We will say our final goodbyes to people who began this week as strangers but became friends. We will be sent with the challenge to continue to do repair work in the lives of people throughout our lives.

Today we will spend the majority of the day at Six Flags Great Adventure.

I am a large proponent of taking teens to amusement parks...here’s why. While we spend time in line waiting to enjoy rides, youth are forced to communicate. At the end of a week like this, youth dwell on memories, consider the work that was done, tell unrelated stories and jokes, and continue to grow closer to one another. Also, we get to ride awesome rides.

### Prayer requests:

For a fun and safe day

That youth will continue to grow closer to one another

That God will be at work through fun.

For Cecilia, Kurt, and Rachael

## Sunday, July 6

Sunday is a day of debriefing. We will spend some of the day traveling to New York City, some of the day at the beach, and a good portion of the evening intentionally debriefing our program.

One activity that we will be participating in is affirmations. We will go around the circle and have youth verbally affirm other members of our group. This is always a powerful “ending” to our program... while we will be in New York City for two days, this will be the unofficial “ending” of the mission portion of our trip.

### Prayer requests:

That youth will feel affirmed through our debrief process

Safety as we ride subways, walk in Times Square, etc.

For the City of New York

That youth will encounter God in the chaotic world of New York City

For Alyssa, Marissa, Skylar and Kahlee

## Monday, July 7

Monday we will experience New York culture in several big ways. We will spend the morning at the Metropolitan Museum of Art followed by an evening on Broadway at a play.

**Prayer requests:**

For a safe and fun day

That we will be open to the way that God is at work today

That relationships will continue to grow, even as we grow tired

For God to work through the rest of the trip

For Maggie, Ashley, Olivia and Taylor

## Tuesday, July 8

Tuesday is our last day. We will go on a tour of the city, see the Statue of Liberty, learn about immigration at Ellis Island, and (weather permitting) attend a Mets game. We will depart early tomorrow morning for home.

**Prayer requests:**

For a fun and safe final day

For the city of New York

For safe travel in the morning

For the things we've learned to stay with us

For Kayla L., Ben, and Ellie

We hope that this devotional has been helpful for you in connecting with our youth and their trip! Thank you for praying for us. Don't forget to join us on Sunday, July 13 to hear our stories in person at both worship services!



