



Into the Wilderness

Introduction

There is a reason scripture keeps returning to the wilderness, and a reason summer camp keeps returning to it, too. The wilderness – in the Bible and in the life of camp – is the place where things slow down, where ordinary life is set aside for a little while, and where something new becomes possible. It is where people encounter God, often in unexpected ways. It is where they remember who they are.

That is the heart of this summer's theme. From the moment campers drive onto Cedarkirk's property, we want them to know they are not arriving at a place of distance from God. They are arriving at a place where God meets them: under the trees, around the campfire, in the cool waters of the river, and in the friendships that form before the week is even halfway through.

Into the Wilderness | Daily Themes During Your Week at Cedarkirk

Sunday | You Are Here

Camp begins with the simple, steady promise that God meets us where we are. Before the week has even unfolded, before campers know each other's names, God is already here. This is the idea we open with and keep coming back to.

Monday | God Provides Enough

Drawing on the story of manna in the wilderness, campers explore what it means to trust that what we need today will be there today. Not everything all at once. Not the whole week figured out. Just enough for the day – and enough *is* enough.

Tuesday | Learning to Listen

Camp is full of voices and excitement but it is also marked by quiet, if you know where to find it. On this day, campers practice listening: for God, for one another, and for the kinder, truer voices that often get drowned out in the busyness of our lives.

Wednesday | Who Am I Becoming?

Midweek is the moment when camp gets real. Campers are tired in the best way, and the things that felt new on Sunday are starting to feel familiar. This is the day we name the fact that growth often feels like stretching, and that the hard parts of any week – at camp or outside of it – are not wasted. They are part of how we become who we are meant to be.

Thursday | You Are Not Alone

By Thursday, campers have walked, eaten, played, laughed, and sung alongside the same group of people for almost a week. This is the day we stop and notice it. Friendships form quickly at camp. They go deep. And the truth this day celebrates is one campers will carry home: God meets us, and keeps meeting us, through one another.

Friday | Carrying the Wilderness With You

Camp ends on this day, but what happens at camp does not stay here. On the closing day, campers are reminded that the God who met them under the trees here is the same God who walks home with them – into family, into school, into the everyday rhythms that begin again when they leave this place.

What to Expect

Each day at Cedarkirk follows a cadence that has shaped this place for decades. Campers gather after breakfast for morning watch and storytelling, then head to Bible study with their counselors and small group, usually a quiet circle in the shade with doodle sheets in hand and time to wonder out loud. The middle of the day is full of camp things: swimming, archery, canoeing, hunting for shark's teeth, crafts, games, and the kind of laughter that makes everyone's sides hurt by dinnertime. Evenings bring large group activities and worship, where themes and lessons from the day are revisited, and the day is closed.

Cedarkirk welcomes campers of every background – every denomination, every faith tradition, and those with no religious background at all. Our hope is simply that every camper who comes here leaves knowing they are loved by God, by their counselors, and by the community they have just spent a week becoming part of.

We also hope they leave with something more: the confidence and the skills to build that same kind of community back home. The warmth, the welcome, the listening, the courage to forgive and be forgiven, the willingness to make room for someone new at the table. These things are not automatic, and they are not meant to stay at camp. Campers carry them home in their hands and in their hearts and they begin, in small and often quiet ways, to shape their schools, their families, their churches, and their neighborhoods into places of love and respect. The spirit of camp is meant to travel.

Come With Us

Whether your camper is heading into the woods at Cedarkirk for the first time or returning for their fourth, fifth, or tenth summer, we cannot wait to walk alongside them. The wilderness is wide, and there is room for every one of them.

Registration for Summer 2026 is open.

Visit cedarkirk.org to learn more and reserve your camper's spot for residential or day camp.



CEDARKIRK a place apart to build up
the body of Christ in love
CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

Overview of Daily Themes, Scripture Passages, and Key Takeaways

DAY	THEME	SCRIPTURE	WHAT CAMPERS LEARN
ARRIVAL SUNDAY	You Are Here: Entering the wilderness is not accidental – God leads us there and goes with us.	Exodus 13:17-22 (God goes with them into the wilderness) Luke 3:1-22 (Jesus at his baptism, before the wilderness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coming to camp means stepping into something new - but God is already here. You are not walking into the wilderness alone. God goes before you, stays with you, and does not give up on you. It's okay to feel nervous, excited, unsure, or all of the above
MONDAY	God Provides Enough: In the wilderness, God teaches us to trust daily.	Exodus 16:1-15 (Manna in the wilderness) Matthew 6:25-34 (Do not worry about tomorrow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God provides enough - not everything all at once Trust grows when we stop trying to control the whole journey
TUESDAY	Learning To Listen: In the wilderness, we learn to recognize which voices lead us toward life.	Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (The Shema) John 10:1-10 (The Good Shepherd's voice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God's voice is relational, not bossy or loud Discernment is about learning who to trust Listening takes practice - and community helps
WEDNESDAY	Who Am I Becoming? The wilderness is where identity is tested and clarified.	Exodus 17:1-7 (The wilderness shapes God's people) Matthew 4:1-11 (Jesus in the wilderness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Struggle doesn't mean failure God shapes us through challenge and choice
THURSDAY	You Are Not Alone: God meets us in community, especially when we're tired or confused.	Numbers 11:10-17 (Shared leadership in the wilderness) Luke 24:13-35 (The Road to Emmaus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need each other to make it through God frequently shows up through conversation and companionship
DEPARTURE FRIDAY	Carrying the Wilderness With You: Leaving the wilderness doesn't mean leaving God behind.	Deuteronomy 31:6-8 (God goes with you) Matthew 28:20 (I am with you always)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camp changes us - and that goes home with us God remains present with us beyond this place