

WORLDVIEW WEEKEND with Pastor Heidi

WESTSIDE JUNIOR YOUTH RETREAT



I have a colourful bracelet. There are 10 strands of beads on it, each strand, a different colour. Each strand represents a part of the story of the world from the perspective of Scripture. Blue is the colour of creation; black, the fall into sin; stone, the law of God; white, the coming of Jesus; wood, the cross; pearl, the resurrection; purple, Jesus' ascension to the right hand of God; red, the coming of the Spirit; green, the growth of the kingdom; gold, the new heavens and the new earth.

This biblical story (along with several questions and answers of the Heidelberg Catechism) shaped the Junior Youth's Worldview weekend: 14 young people spent a Friday evening and a full Saturday with me, learning and growing their faith.

We started out on Friday night at Cataraqi Cemetery, where we read Question and Answer 1 of the Heidelberg. What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong, body and soul, in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ. We walked through the cemetery, and I asked the kids to take pictures of gravestones that touched them in some way. We shared our pictures with each other and then went to the home of a couple in our congregation for pizza and talked with them about their journey with cancer and what their faith in Jesus has meant to them. We came back to the church for a debriefing circle, where the kids talked honestly about what that visit was like for them and about their own thoughts and fears about death. We finished with ice cream sundaes.



Saturday morning at 9am, we gathered at Lake Ontario Park in the midst of the May flies! It was a beautiful morning to take pictures of God's creation and to talk about the wonder of our Creator God. After snacks, we went back to church. There we learned about God's law and used 'Emoji Theology' (telling a story through emojis) to unpack the catechism's questions and answers about it.



Next, we journeyed to the mall for lunch in the food court and an assignment – to go through the mall looking for examples of the ten commandments being kept and the ten commandments being broken. This wasn't the easiest assignment, but one group did see someone shoplifting! Definitely, an example of the 8th commandment being broken.



Back again at the church, a junior youth mom welcomed the youth into the making of Ezekiel bread, a recipe based on the ingredients listed in Ezekiel 4:9. She did some beautiful and subtle teaching about the Christian life being one of activity and waiting as we worked the dough and then waited for it to rise. That bread blessed our communion celebration on Sunday.

Our afternoon teaching time covered the law, sin, and atonement, using The Bible Project videos (check them out online – they're awesome!). We focused also on the Lord's Supper and baptism as the sacramental rhythms of our life together. After an excellent ice cream treat, I shared my testimony and the kids had some time to spend alone with God and some guided questions.



We finished our day with a spaghetti dinner and dessert. But this wasn't just any spaghetti dinner. The kids' arms were splinted, such that they couldn't feed themselves but had to feed each other in order to eat – an illustration of how we must lean and rely on each other as the communion of the saints.



I thank God for the parent helpers, the prayer partners (who were kept up to date on the weekend) and for his hand on this weekend. Please continue to pray for our Junior Youth and their leaders. God is going to do great and marvelous things through them!