

September 13: Year Introduction

Gather: Bible

Introduction:

During our time together this year we will study the Bible including various books, characters and themes found in it. We will also be participating in weeks of worship and service projects.

This year's theme is "Streams in the Wasteland." Take a minute and think: what comes to mind when you hear that. What images? Any Bible passages or stories?

The theme is inspired by the story of the Israelites in the desert, as well as two sections from Isaiah.

Take a moment and read over **Isaiah 41:17-20** and **Isaiah 43:18-21** and reflect on what strikes you from those passages.

There are times in our lives that we may feel we are in a sort of desert or wasteland and are in deep need of revival. God provided water and food for the Israelites when there was none, and he provides for our needs when it seems impossible. God brings revival to the deadest of places, hope to the hopeless, renewal and growth.

What to expect:

Each week you can expect to take part in a study (topic, Bible character/story, or passage) or a special Sunday in which we practice worship and serving. Each study contains a memory verse, prayer, and a challenge. Some weeks will also include a reflection section. This week's are:

Memory Verse: Psalm 23:1 "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing."

Prayer: Spend some time praying for the others in your group, for the church as it continues to figure things out with this changing world, and for yourself as you go into this new school year.

Challenge: Find where in the Bible it talks about the story of the Israelites wandering the desert. Skim through the story to get a better idea of this year's focus!

Reflection: Use the sections below or make your own chart on a bigger paper. Reflect on the past few months and fill in the appropriate boxes.

Box 1: Things that were difficult, times of fear/anxiety, changes you didn't like.

Box 2: Where you have seen God at work.

Box 3: Ways you have grown as a person and in your relationship with God.

Box 4: Your hopes and dreams for the year to come, prayers for the world, areas for personal growth.

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3	4

Keep these to look back on in the future as a reminder, to pray for those items in Box 4, and to see what changes happen.