



**EXTRA-**  
**ORDINARY**

# FROM **ORDINARY**

# TO EXTRAORDINARY

SUNDAY, JULY 3, 2016

I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"

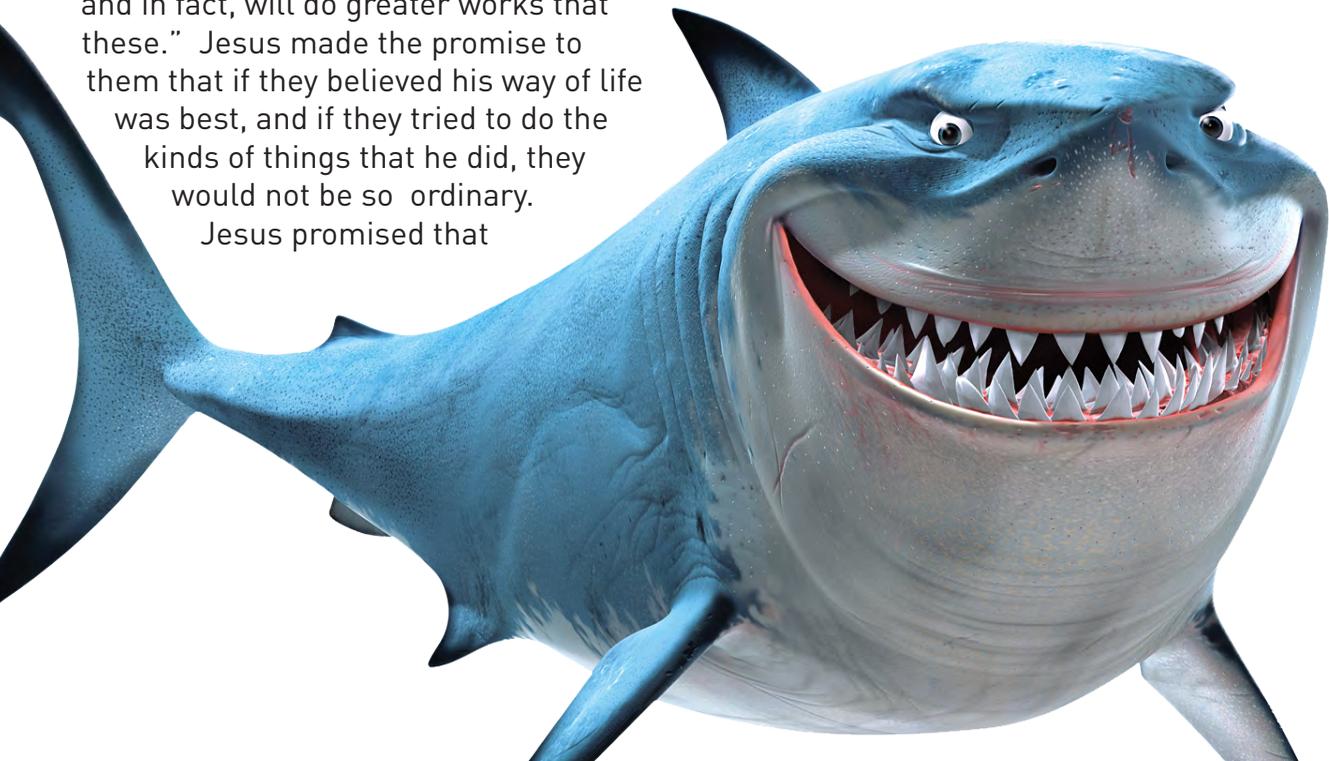
- John 14:12-14

## I'M H2O INTOLERANT

The people Jesus invited to be his friends and followers would probably have described themselves as "ordinary." They didn't have extraordinary amounts of money. They weren't from extraordinary families of authority or royalty. They didn't have extraordinary jobs that brought prestige and fame. They had struggles and times of anxiety and fear. Their days were spent doing their jobs so that they could have a place to live and food to eat. Maybe they felt like the world rarely noticed them, or like they weren't going to make a big difference in the world.

But Jesus said to them, "Those who believe in me will also do the works that I do, and in fact, will do greater works than these." Jesus made the promise to them that if they believed his way of life was best, and if they tried to do the kinds of things that he did, they would not be so ordinary.

Jesus promised that





if we seek to act and speak as he modeled and taught, even the person who feels the most ordinary can live an extraordinary life.

### **RIGHTEOUS!**

The characters of Pixar's "Finding Nemo" and "Finding Dory" are quite ordinary at first glance. They are not the biggest, brightest or strongest of sea creatures. They have flaws and struggles. But as they discover meaning in life that is beyond just surviving each day, they live extraordinary adventures and accomplish extraordinary good. As we think about these characters this week, we also think about the promise that Jesus made to us – the promise that if we discover a greater meaning for our life, we enter into a future full of extraordinary days and adventures.

# **POSSIBILITY**

If you've seen the "Finding" movies, why might you describe the characters as "ordinary"?

Who does the world tend to describe as extraordinary? Who would you describe as extraordinary?

Why might you describe your life as ordinary?

Why do you think living like Jesus leads to extraordinary things happening?

What extraordinary work in the name and way of Jesus do you hope to do this week?

# FROM THE **ORDINARY**

***"IT'S ABOUT ME" TO  
"IT'S ABOUT OTHERS."***

MONDAY, JULY 4, 2016

Then the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus with her sons. She knelt respectfully to ask a favor. "What is your request?" he asked. She replied, "In your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left." But Jesus answered by saying to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?" "Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!" Jesus told them, "You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen."

When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- Matthew 20:20-28

## **SERVING OTHERS**

The mother of James and John wanted for her sons to be extraordinary. We understand. Most parents want what is best for their children. In the world and times in which they lived, the extraordinary people had titles and seats of authority and prestige. They were the friends and employees of those with all of the money and power. This mother wanted Jesus to put her boys in those extraordinary places just like a king or local ruler would.

But Jesus invited this mother, her sons,

and all of his followers to change their understanding of what is truly extraordinary. Instead of naming those with the power and wealth as the extraordinary people, Jesus taught that those who lovingly serve others are the most extraordinary human beings. Those who no longer live only for their own sake, but live for the sake of others are extraordinary.

## **P. SHERMAN 42 WALLABY WAY, SYDNEY**

We meet Marlin, Nemo's father, for the first time in "Finding Nemo." After a



# SERVICE

painful and traumatic happening, Marlin intentionally built his life (and Nemo's) around fear and self-preservation. Marlin's days were spent wandering only a short distance out of their anemone and then immediately sprinting back. Marlin and Nemo ate, slept, and hung out in their home. Their life was ordinary because he had no concern for anyone else, and no reason to do anything more.

When Marlin was forced out of his anemone by the need to rescue Nemo, his life slowly re-oriented around the needs of Nemo, Dory and others. As his life became more and more about others, he ventured out beyond his place of safety and fear, and his life was filled with extraordinary adventures and good.

**What fears might have kept you from coming this week?**

**What risks did you take to be part of this extraordinary adventure and good?**

**What fears keep us focused on ourselves instead of others in our everyday lives? How are these fears selfish?**

**What risks can we take at home so that we become great through our service of others?**

**Who are some people you would describe as extraordinary because they've lived for the sake of others instead of themselves?**

# FROM THE **ORDINARY**

**"INTIMIDATED" TO  
"BOLD."**

TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2016

The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, along with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and other relatives of the high priest. They brought in the two disciples and demanded, "By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we've done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says:

'The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.'  
There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."

The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing right there among them, there was nothing the council could say.

- Acts 4:5-14

## **GOOD WORKS**

Peter and John were in an intimidating place. All of the religious rulers and leaders gathered together in Jerusalem. These leaders were the ones with the power and authority. These leaders were the ones that most of the town would have described as extraordinary. Peter and John were ordinary people forced to stand trial before these powerful and extraordinary leaders.

Peter and John could have allowed the intimidation to overwhelm and silence

them. They could have said nothing, or they could have told these leaders what they wanted to hear. But instead, Peter and John were bold. They were honest about being followers of Jesus and about healing the sick just as Jesus had taught them. It was unusual and probably ill-advised for ordinary people to be so bold in the face of the powers, but they had nothing to hide. They were doing extraordinary good, and when the leaders realized that they were doing good, they had no opposition.



## **THIS IS THE OCEAN, SILLY, WE'RE NOT THE ONLY TWO IN HERE..**

Nemo was an ordinary fish. He had a fin that was smaller than normal, which his father feared would keep him from being able to do extraordinary things, if not even some ordinary things, too. Nemo was taught by his father to be intimidated. He was taught to avoid risk. But Nemo was not content to live in fear and intimidation.

He saw the possibility for extraordinary adventure and good out beyond his anemone, and so with a spirit of great boldness, Nemo swam for the surface. As he was captured, confined, and sought to return home, Nemo faced a number of intimidating obstacles. But, he did not back down, nor did he allow for the intimidation to win. With boldness, Nemo faced and

overcame every obstacle with extraordinary authenticity, determination, and goodness.

# **BOLDNESS**

**Who or what do you find to be intimidating?**

**What makes someone else intimidating?**

**Do you find it intimidating to talk about Jesus and to live like Jesus?**

**When have you overcome being intimidated and acted boldly?**

**How can we help each other to be bolder as we seek lives of extraordinary adventure and good?**

# FROM THE **ORDINARY**

**"I'M AFRAID" TO  
"I'M AMAZED."**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2016

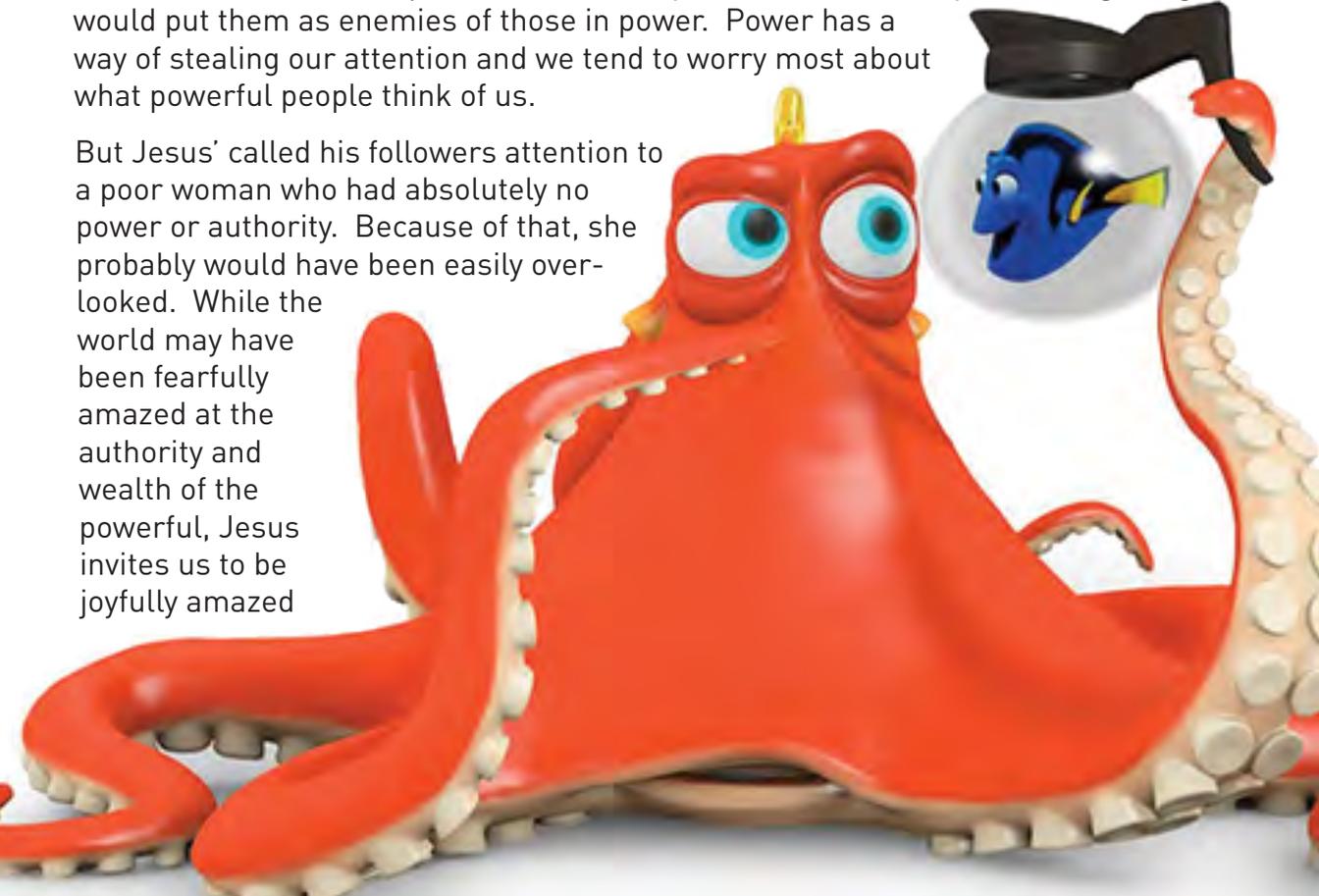
Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

- Mark 12:41-44

## THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

As Jesus and his disciples sat close enough to the treasury to watch people make their offerings, there were many rich and powerful people; the kinds of people the world around them labeled as extraordinary. It must have been tempting to be afraid in the face of that much power and authority – afraid to do or say the wrong thing that would put them as enemies of those in power. Power has a way of stealing our attention and we tend to worry most about what powerful people think of us.

But Jesus' called his followers attention to a poor woman who had absolutely no power or authority. Because of that, she probably would have been easily overlooked. While the world may have been fearfully amazed at the authority and wealth of the powerful, Jesus invites us to be joyfully amazed





at the generosity and kindness of this humble and poor woman. The offerings made by the wealthy were nowhere near as difficult and self-sacrificing as her offerings. Theirs were made for the sake of their reputation, while hers were made for the sake of love and God's good.

### **ES-CA-PE!**

If we were a sea creature, we may have been tempted to keep our focus on the large and powerful around us. If our eyes were fixed on the sharks, whales, and other threatening creatures, we would overlook Dory, Nemo and Marlin. We would miss out on their extraordinary adventures and amazing things that they accomplished. Our lives would be driven by what we fear, rather than by what amazes us.

# **AMAZEMENT**

**Who do we tend to focus on? Why?  
What about them do we fear?**

**Who do we tend to overlook?  
Why?**

**What are some examples of someone who is ordinary and ordinarily overlooked doing something extraordinary and amazing?**

**What stories could you tell when you get home that help others to be amazed at what God has done through you?**

# FROM THE **ORDINARY**

**"I DON'T MEASURE UP"  
TO "I AM LOVED."**

THURSDAY, JULY 7, 2016

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied.

Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt."

"That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume.

"I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven." The men at the table said among themselves, "Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?"

And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

## JESUS ANOINTED BY A SINFUL WOMAN

This woman did not measure up by most people's standards. She was a woman, and sadly, women were not held in the same regard as men by most of the people around Jesus. She was a known sinner, and according to the religious teachings of the Pharisees, she was the kind of sinner who was to be segregated out and kept away from the "good people."

But Jesus didn't judge people or demand that they measure up. Jesus loved this woman – not because she earned it by measuring up, but because he knew that God's will was that she be loved just as she was. Jesus invited this woman out of that place of being alone and into the place of being loved by someone. God doesn't ask people to measure up. God asks people to love each other, so that none of us is ever alone.

## IT'S A COMPLICATED EMOTION..

Dory's memory problems made her alone. It made her so ordinary, that no one would be her friend or help her out. But Marlin was different. Marlin befriended Dory, and Marlin even risked his life to save her from a school of jellyfish. Later, when Marlin was considering leaving Dory behind, she said to him, "Please don't go away. No one has ever stuck with me for so long before. I look at you, and I'm home. Please. I don't want that to go away."

Maybe we've felt like Dory before. Maybe we've felt like our flaws and mistakes make us to not measure up, and therefore make us alone. Maybe we've looked at others judgmentally, as though they don't measure up, and as though they don't deserve to be our friends. Jesus invites us to not only know that we are all loved by God, but to help others who may be feeling like they don't measure up that they are loved by us, too.



# LOVE

Where do we feel like we don't measure up? Why?

Where do we feel loved? Why?

Why do we doubt that God loves us?

How can we help each other to realize that God loves us and doesn't demand that we measure up?

How can we help each other, and others in the world around us, to know the extraordinary feeling of being loved?

# FROM THE **ORDINARY**

*"I WANT TO STAY" TO  
"I WANT TO GO."*

FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2016

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus. Peter exclaimed, "Rabbi, it's wonderful for us to be here! Let's make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He said this because he didn't really know what else to say, for they were all terrified.

Then a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my dearly loved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, when they looked around, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus with them. As they went back down the mountain, he told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what he meant by "rising from the dead." Then they asked him, "Why do the teachers of religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?" Jesus responded, "Elijah is indeed coming first to get everything ready. Yet why do the Scriptures say that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be treated with utter contempt? But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they chose to abuse him, just as the Scriptures predicted."

- Mark 9:2-13

## **THE TRANSFIGURATION**

When Peter, James and John were on the mountain with Jesus, it was awesome. They didn't want to leave. They wanted to build tents for Moses, Jesus and Elijah so that they could all stay on the mountain longer. They knew that there was a whole world down the mountain that needed Jesus' help (and their help, too), but that wasn't their concern in the moment. They just wanted to stay where things were so good and so awesome for them.

It is a very ordinary temptation to want to

stay in that place that is good for us, whether we worked really hard to get there, or we were just lucky in ending up there. But God's command was for them to do what Jesus instructed, and it wasn't long before Jesus led them back down the mountain so that they could continue to teach and heal people.

Jesus knew that their life would be incomplete for them if they stayed. Jesus knew that the most rewarding and the best possible life for them was not on that mountain, but as they continued to



She could not stay. She was compelled to live her life with the love, help and guidance of her parents. We cannot just stay where we are simply because it's easy for us. Eventually, we all remember God's love and calling upon us. When that happens, we are compelled to live our lives with the love, help and guidance of God.

We don't just sit back and watch Jesus be extraordinary, but we are compelled to follow Jesus out into the world and join in the community of extraordinary people who do the same extraordinary things as him. This may not be the easiest life, but it is the most rewarding and best possible life.

learn of God's love for them and to live boldly with love for others in service. It was ultimately not in that place of seeing only Jesus be extraordinary that Jesus' friends found a good and true life, but in knowing the loving support of God and the ability to do extraordinary things themselves with God's help.

### **JUST KEEP SWIMMING**

The story of Dory could have ended after the first movie. She was in a good place. She had just finished some extraordinary adventures and done some extraordinary good. We would have understood if she just wanted to stay where she was so that she could enjoy the awesomeness of friendship around her. But Dory's story wasn't over. Dory remembered her parents. She remembered their love, and she remembered that she didn't have to live without their loving support.

## **COMPELLED**

**What has God done this week that makes you want to stay here forever?**

**What feels like the hardest part about leaving this mountain and going back home?**

**How have you felt loved by God this week?**

**What extraordinary things have happened this week that God helped YOU to do?**

**What have you learned about God and yourself that makes you feel compelled to go home and serve boldly?**





YEARS

## CEDAR GROVE

Faith Presbyterian Church is proud to be celebrating their silver anniversary with Group Publishing's summer workcamp program. The primary goal is the spiritual growth of high school and college-aged students. Workcamps are an intensive week of community service offering teenagers an opportunity to perform hands-on home repair projects for low income families. Projects include carpentry, roof repair, step and porch construction, weatherization, wheelchair ramp construction, painting, and drywall work.

As the campers serve, their confidence and character can grow like never before. Their faith ignites as they complete hands-on, meaningful work that really counts, and

they discover a genuine appreciation for all God has given them. Some residents must choose between putting food on the table and fixing a leaky roof. The real repairs, however, are done not to the homes, but to lives of of the campers and those they touch.

This year, we head to Cedar Grove, WV. Cedar Grove was built as a booming coal-mining town. Many neighborhoods that were built in the early 1900s are showing their age. Coal moves more slowly now, and residents are now becoming elderly, many with disabilities and black lung disease from years of mine work. The folks in Cedar Grove neighborhoods are tightly connected and take great pride in their families, their heritage, their school and each other. We aspire to bring a renewed sense of hope to this struggling, rural town.

The theme for this year's workcamp was **EXTRAordinary**. This booklet has guided us through the primary scriptural focus of this summer's workcamp. We hope God's word has spoken to you just as it has to us.



THANK YOU FOR  
MAKING  
A  
DIFFERENCE!



Faith Workcamps is thrilled to be attending its 25th camp this year in Cedar Grove, WV! Be sure to stay up-to-date with all of the workcamp happenings by checking out our daily video blog, photos, and twitter feed at [FaithWorkcamps.com](http://FaithWorkcamps.com). We'd love to hear from you, so please feel free to leave us a comment on the blogs or reply to us via Facebook or Twitter. We look forward to sharing our experiences with you both online and after we return!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

## 2016 / CEDAR GROVE, WV

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Tatyana Alston  
Dave Arney  
Carolyn Baittinger  
Joanna Baittinger  
Judy Baittinger  
John Barabas  
Sara Baxter  
Julie Benner  
Rebecca Bilder  
Erick Brewer  
Jill Brewer  
Gabrielle Burger  
Jillian Burger  
Jonna Burger  
Bailey Clark  
Emily Cole  
Ben Colson  
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Bryan Cope  
Jack Decker  
Jackie Decker  
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Josh Kreider

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