Eureka is the historical accepted word to shout at the conclusion of a successful experiment. Many stories are told of scientist shouting eureka at the conclusion of a positive experience, so to sum up the Camp Journey experiment in one word, EUREKA!

Throughout the planning and dreaming stages of this adventure; clergy, laypersons, camping professionals and seasonal staff worked together to bring the dream of a Wyoming based summer camp serving the needs of the Wyoming Episcopal Dioceses youth and their friends to reality.

Those involved can look back and wonder what if, if only, and continue to second guess what might have been, but we can all feel good about what happened. The youth and adults participating in this event all shared a blessing. While each individual had a unique experience, and walked away with varying stories to tell from their perspective of the same event, the whole group had fun.

Attached are the comments from the “boots on the ground” Camp GROW seasonal staff and myself. I look forward to hearing the reactions from the Diocese staff.

Greg Hall
Director Camp GROW
Camp Journey

WEEK ONE

Camp Journey week one was a successful adventure.

Most of our opportunities came from the last-minute flood of registrations, which is a blessing that creates difficulties in the logistical side of the operation. Food, crafts, staffing are just some of the areas effected by such registration.

The working relationship with the Diocese staff was great. The ability to be flexible and have open dialog help keep the campers experience as the focus of all discussions.

My one shocking observation was the demographics of the congregations I visited did not match the demographics of the campers. From this observation, I conclude this was an outreach ministry and not one designed for the support of the existing membership.

My program staff had observation also:

- Separating the girls into two cabins formed a split that prevented the girls as a whole from bonding like the boys did being in one cabin.
- Co-ed was different experience than Camp GROW and there was flirting and other gender based interactions that diverted focus from the program.
- The larger numbers of campers limited the time spent at individual activities.
- Parents attending should not be allowed to accompany their own children to an activity.
- The extra effort this week on campfire planning and execution was worth it.
- Having a full time cook of Donna’s skill level was great.
- The menu is fine, do not let one person change it for all of us.
- Guitar player at campfire should be a must next year.
- No more 6-year old’s!
- Parents attending camp should have a clearly stated purpose and be held to it.
- The co-ed campers added a new dimension and opportunities to work with both genders and encourage proper relationship, conduct and communication skills.
- We need an easier schedule to follow, this week was not consistent day to day.
- The additional restrooms were good and might need to be added to all weeks.
WEEK TWO

Camp Journey week two was a bigger success than week one.

Most of week two success was linked to the accuracy of the registration and narrower age range of the participants.

Several of these campers I remembered from the promotional tour Kay and I did.

Program staff comments for week two are brief, positive and mainly concern the changes to the program schedule from the first week.

- Moving morning prayer to before breakfast helped with the program occur during the cooler time of the day.
- Moving God’s play gave a focal point and group activity before lunch, and brought the whole camp together again after separate morning activities.
- Using paper plates and bowls helped free up staff time to work with the campers