

How to Pray for RFKC

By Joy Steed

Originally posted July 4, 2014

A month from today I will be standing on dry but fertile ground. I will be helping unload and set up for a week that will change my heart, open my eyes, and cause me to see the Lord working in ways I never imagined possible. Seeds will be planted in hearts. Royal Family Kids Camp is the place where God changes lives.

If you are wondering how you can help, what you can do if you aren't physically going it's really quite simple – **PRAY**.

The days at camp are long and hot. They are full of laughter and heartache. There is exhaustion mixed with an energy that is only explained as Holy Spirit fuel for the exhausted. God is in the midst of it all.

The prayers needed are the simple and the deep, our battle is not against the things we see, and these kids need us to be ready to fight for them through our prayers and by our example of how we love on them. We need to be ready and strong and dressed in the armor of God. So pray Ephesians 6:11-18 for us.

We need to love well. To love unconditionally not just in words but also through our actions, that all we do will show these kids Christ's love and ultimately draw them to Him. Pray 1 Corinthians 13.

The days will be long and mixed with good and hard things, which is always the best. I think it's how God draws us to Himself and how He grows us and changes us even though often times we feel the hurt before we see the change. Pray 2 Corinthians 1:3,4 and Isaiah 43:2.

Every day there will be decisions that need to be made, some decisions will be easy; others will be hard. Pray that we will have the discernment and wisdom to make the right choices at the right times. That we will see things that can only be seen because of the discernment given by God, pray 1 Corinthians 2:10-13 and Proverbs 2:6-8.

There will be kids that are afraid and angry, un-trusting of adults, feeling alone and deeply hurt, broken. Pray for their freedom, for restoration and wholeness. It is never too late for the healing of God. Pray 2 Corinthians 3:17, Isaiah 53:5 and Psalm 103:2-4.

Pray for their protection as they leave camp. Pray for their safety for the coming year. Pray Psalm 91:4-7.

There are so many ways that you can pray for these kids, for this camp, for us as volunteers. Pray for God to pour out His spirit upon these kids, upon the volunteers, and that the kids would develop a heart for God, for His word and His ways. Pray that where there is captivity freedom is found. That we can show these kids through how we love on them that this is Christ loving on them. That through this week we are able to give them hope, to show

them that God does have a purpose and plan for their lives (Jeremiah 29:11). Pray that they will know that He is their refuge.

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. **Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.** You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23*

Sunday Prayer Requests

By Janell Hopper
Originally posted July 2, 2016

“Defend the cause of the weak and the fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.” Psalms 82:3

Today we leave for Royal Family Kids Camp. I’m always a little nervous as I begin to prepare myself mentally and emotionally. I’m picturing the children looking out the window of the bus as they arrive at camp. I’m thinking about the little one who is so tentative and scared as he or she walks down the steps of the bus to their waiting counselor who is ready to love and serve that little vulnerable child with all they have to give for the next five days. I think about the returning campers who are beyond the moon excited to be back at camp. And I see the damaged children who have had to deal with way too much in their short lives. I’m tempted to say “Why God?” But I’ve learned how unproductive and even damaging that mind set can be.

I’ve done that before and it just leads to despair and a sense of hopelessness for these children. But they are not hopeless. They have been chosen by God to spend a week with Him. I see that our gracious, loving Father has brought these children to us. He has charged us with sharing Him with them. We get to be His vessels of hope. We have the honor of showing them Christ this week. So when I look at all of those children I see hope. I see the hope of Christ. Oh, now I’m excited. Let this adventure begin.

Please pray for the children. Pray that they will make it to church on Monday. Pray for their caregivers, that this week would be a week of rest for them. And pray for us. Pray that we will be able to empty ourselves and truly see others, both children and adults, as more important than ourselves. And please pray that we will stay in close communion with God, not letting the fatigue get the best of us. Amen.

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**By Terry Higgins**  
**Originally posted July 3, 2016**

“Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always.” 1 Chronicles 16:11

The norm at camp for most of us is to be watching, moving, responding, and loving the children under our care. In the midst of this, we “know” God is with us, but our focus and vigilance becomes solely directed towards tending the children. Our “knowing” God shifts to the background of our heart and mind, overshadowing our desire for prayer. At camp, it’s easy for prayer to evolve into a kind of “sideline” focus. In years past, I had relied on my professional competence as a Psychologist, instead of activating, through prayer, God’s Holy Spirit within me to respond to the children. Prayer had become a convenience of time, rather than a conscious tethering of myself to Jesus, praying to Him in submission to know His will for us throughout the day. Last year, I realized that I had allowed my profession to overshadow who I am in Christ - I am God’s child serving God’s children. The enemy wants us convinced that it is our own abilities/talents that are valuable, when all that is needed is to

SIT AT HIS FEET; receiving His love and direction. Prayer made all the difference. When I sought God and acknowledged my dependence upon Him alone, I learned that my profession, while helpful, is a far second to connecting with God for His counsel, comfort, and strength.

Seeing our RFKC campers through the eyes of Jesus is a “life giving” gift from God. This gift is revealed through our encounter with the child who is angry, frightened, or withdrawn, and seeing how God enables us by His Spirit to respond with pure love and acceptance. This can only come about through prayer, humility and submission. It matters not what the camper may say or how they behave, as we have been chosen by God to reveal His love through Jesus Christ. Perhaps this is why so many of us say going to RFKC is life changing: For the child, because Jesus shows them they are loved and accepted at camp; And for us, as broken vessels, who have been chosen as God’s instrument for His purpose at RFKC.

Please pray for us at camp. Please pray that we also would pray, pray, pray.

# Monday Prayer Requests

Originally posted July 7, 2015

I was standing in a very familiar place, and yet, with an uncertainty in my heart. I was hesitant; I didn't know what I was doing, and I didn't want to make a big mistake. But God knew what I was doing and He never makes mistakes.

It was a few years ago before I attended Royal Family Kids Camp. I was simply assisting with the RFKC check-in on Monday morning. I was nervous – afraid I might do something wrong – yet excited – hoping that somehow God would use me in that time. What I didn't realize was the big way God would use that time for me.

Into the room stepped three children and a woman, but only two of the children were old enough to go. So, two of the children put on their name tags and t-shirts, had their pictures taken, and then almost forgot to say goodbye. But as they turned back to bid farewell to the woman and the other child, I was blown away with what I saw. That cute little boy was standing in the middle of the room, unreserved tears flowing down his face. He was probably saying goodbye to those dearest to him.

Like him, the children coming to camp will have to say goodbye – to a caregiver, a brother, or a sister. It may be very difficult for them to leave those they know and go to camp – where perhaps they have never been before. Some of the kids may have an easier time because they have attended before and are just looking forward to the fun.

Some of the campers may have butterflies in their stomachs. Perhaps they too will cry. They might not know who will be their counselor or which other kids will be with them in their cabin. For some, perhaps they have no clue what camp is even like. And yet, for others, they are unsure if they should trust anyone at camp especially since their very own parents who they should be able to trust abused or neglected them.

Yet in the meantime, many miles away, another story altogether is taking place as nearly 90 volunteers will be preparing the camp, the cabins, and our hearts to graciously receive each child the Lord will bring to us to care for during the week. Some of us may be rushing around doing some last-minute decorating in our cabins or others might be wandering around seeing the various creative cabin themes. Most of us will be spending the morning in the Word, in prayer and preparing our hearts for the week that God has in store. As we eat lunch in the peaceful dining hall, we may very well also have butterflies in our stomachs. Nervous for what this week will entail, but so very expectant for the Lord to use us in the week.

## Specific Prayer Requests:

- Pray for the children who are **too young** to go to camp but whose siblings are attending camp. Pray for the **RFKC alumni** who are too old to attend camp to continue to trust the Lord and hope in Christ even if they are disappointed they cannot go to camp. Pray that God will **comfort their hearts** during the week.
- Pray each child will feel **very welcomed and loved** from the moment they arrive at camp until the moment they leave.

- Pray for God to prepare the **hearts of the kids** and the hearts of the volunteers. Pray that He will speak to each of us through the week. Pray He will give us His eyes to see what he sees and His heart for the children. Pray as volunteers, He will **break our hearts** for what breaks His.

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By Paula Gooch
Originally posted July 4, 2016

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 36:26

My prayer for RFKC is for God to break my heart and give me His heart for the kids. And each time, it hurts, it's full of tears, it's really hard, but it's also very good. Through all of the challenges that camp brings, I am drawn closer to God in the midst of the hardship and that's why it's so good. With the tears comes joy and hope in Christ. “Why are you crying?” my mom asked me when I sat in my bedroom after a RFKC training a few weeks ago. I had asked God why I was going to camp this year: Would I be needed? What did He desire of me for this week? How does He want to use me? I did not really know why I was crying that night – only that God was breaking my heart for the kids. He gave me an answer to my questions: I am going to camp to get a small glimpse of the kids' hurt and pain and to weep over it, just as He does. The first year I went to camp, I asked God to give me His heart for the kids. When I came home and processed through the week, I kept thinking, “Why was it so hard?” Finally, about a month later, I read through my prayer journal and noticed all the times I asked God to break my heart. Suddenly it all made sense. The following year, I had a choice. I did not HAVE to pray such a big prayer. Yet, if I didn't, would camp be so good? It might be easier, but would I be missing out on what God had in store for me? So, I chose to pray for His heart knowing it would be challenging, but also amazing. And I continue to pray that prayer for RFKC. Please pray for the volunteers to be softened to receive God's heart for these precious foster children. Pray that instead of allowing ourselves to check-out emotionally, that we would be fully present at camp – ready for the incredible work God desires to do in each of us, giving us a heart of flesh in exchange for our hearts of stone.

Lord, give us Your heart for these kids! Let us not hold back from what you desire for us in this week. Use us for Your glory. Amen.

Tuesday Prayer Requests

By Starr Pappagalo

Originally Posted July 5, 2016

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Cor 12:27 (but do yourself a favor and read from verse 12 through to 27)

I am self-critical to a suffocating degree, regularly focused on my failings and flaws, and keenly aware of where I fall short compared to others. It is a cloud that casts shadows on nearly all my days. But at camp, everything is different. RFKC is what God's kingdom looks like when it's operating as He's designed it. It is a living, breathing, example of many members being of one body and one Spirit in Christ. It is like a beautifully orchestrated symphony. Each person joyfully doing their part, pouring into each other, so we can all pour into the kids. I've never experienced anything like it. At camp, I am walking so fully in His Spirit, that my eyes have no time- and no desire- to analyze myself. Camp is not about me (thus, no selfie). It is about the body, about the kids, and about His Kingdom. It is a soul-shifting experience. And it's what I desire life to look like outside of camp. I want to wholeheartedly feel, know, and rely on Him in the same way. At camp, I can see myself as a warrior, servant, ambassador of Christ, child of God, and member of a body. But the reality is that, that is who I am all the time. That is who we all are, whether we've been to camp or not. Because that is who God has made us to be. May we be able to see ourselves this way. Everyday. May we rejoice and remember that we are all part of a Royal family.

Lord, please help us as a family of believers to live as one body. Help us to joyfully be the part you have created us to be. I pray against division, comparison, and selfishness in me, and in our church body, Lord. Help us to have concern for one another that we may work, live, suffer, rejoice, and pray together for your glory. Thank you for RFKC and all you have done through it.

Wednesday Prayer Requests

“Give Our All”

Originally posted July 8, 2015

It's pretty humbling that some of the kids at camp have never celebrated their birthday before.

So the fun event on Wednesday night at camp is a huge Birthday Party for everyone!

After the fun games are finished, the cupcakes are eaten, and it's time to head back to the cabins, it could be the hardest night to put the campers to bed. They have just had a whole bunch of sugar, received a bunch of great gifts, and just do not want to sleep. And yet, what is also hovering over some of their minds is the fact that the next day, Thursday, is their last FULL day at camp.

Both the volunteers and kids experience a lot of emotions at camp. I think it is pretty accurate to say that Wednesday night/Thursday morning provides a turning point for everyone.

The kids start to realize they only have one full day left at camp. Many of these kids, because of what they have been through, are very resilient. Therefore, some of them may begin holding back and shut us out to protect themselves because they know we will say goodbye on Friday.

At this point, as counselors and staff, we are all faced with an important decision: we can either hold back ourselves because it hurts to bid them farewell or we can choose to continue pouring out all for them despite the fact that it may be very painful to load them on the bus on Friday.

The first year I attended camp, I distinctly remember being challenged during our staff “chapel time” on Thursday to not check out emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally. We were encouraged to continue to be present to the kids at camp. If we refrain from giving our all, we will regret it later. Instead, we must continue to pour out every ounce of strength and energy, trusting that God will supply us with even more of His – and He so faithfully does. The good news is that we, as camp volunteers, are not the kids' savior. That may seem quite obvious, but I remember crying out to the Lord, “Why can't we take them all home with us?!”

But that's not why we go to camp. **Christ is their Savior.** He is the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep each by name. He has called these kids to camp and us His people to serve at camp. So, we can put on a smile (even through the tears and the brokenness of our hearts) as they leave so that they can know their Savior, Jesus, is the One who holds them in the very palm of His hands and He has a perfect plan for their future.

Specific Prayer Requests:

- For the **Birthday Party**, please pray that through all the fun events and celebrating, the kids will know God has specially made them and He loves them so much.
- Pray for those who help **put the kids to bed** on Wednesday night! Pray for God's peace to be upon everyone.
- Pray that even if the children start to **hold back**, they will continue to receive the truth, be receptive of God's love, and experience what He has brought them to camp for. Pray the kids will focus on **enjoying the present moment** and not spend the time focusing on leaving camp.

- Pray that each volunteer will continue to **showcase the love of Jesus** in our every action. Although it will hurt us to say goodbye, pray we will give our all and **not hold back** in an effort to avoid the pain. Pray for strength to not check out but rather to pour out all on them.
- For the girl's **Tea Party** tomorrow afternoon, please pray God reveals to them His tender love and care. Pray He will show them what a godly man is like through the men God has called to camp this week.

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**By Melanie Anderson**  
**Originally posted July 6, 2016**

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” And He took them up in His arms, laid His Hands on them, and blessed them.” Mark 10:14-16

Jesus spoke of children quite a few times to us, he invited them to Himself when we did not & He told us to become like them in order to be the "greatest". Children are generally humble and teachable- not prone to pride or hypocrisy as we are. They are dependent on the adults who care for them and therefore possess a necessary trust to be cared for and believe what they are told. This is sometimes referred to as "childlike faith"- it believes what the Father says. If you have a young child imagine how they might respond if you woke them in the dead of night and told them you were taking them to Disneyland- they'd be excited...because they believe you. As children get older they begin to lose that, they're not open to believe everything we say because we've broken promises or they've gotten a realistic dose of this world- but with God it is never so, He is always trustworthy. The children coming to RFKC, even the youngest, are sadly, probably already robbed of that childlike faith- they doubt what adults tell them and struggle to trust, they close off & scrutinize as a defense because they've had more than broken promises, they've gotten more than a "dose" of this world. They have learned to survive without trusting. But there is good news. God tells us He is the author of (all) our faith, that it, along with saving grace, is a gift from Him and not by our own doing.

Lord, we pray for these little children to become like little children. Give them an unblemished faith to believe- to open their hands as excited children receiving the Christmas gift with unhindered joy. Wash away the hurts of this world and restore the trust they should have. Show them your unmatched love, in Christ, and help them to believe it is for them, that Jesus is for them. Reveal Yourself as the Good, Good Father they can run to and not be failed.

# Thursday Prayer Requests

By Janell Hopper

Originally posted July 7, 2016

“Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.” Psalms 28:7

Today is Thursday. This is a hard day. Last night was the birthday party and everyone was happy and wired! But today is the last full day and the campers are beginning to think about going home tomorrow. Counselors and staff are exhausted, but still pouring into the campers; we can sleep when we get home. As the camp Grandma and Grandpa, Chuck and I have had some sweet times with the campers as they visited our cabin for milk and cookies. We still have a couple more cabins coming today. Then we'll rush to the Tea Party where the girls get to dress up in prom dresses and be escorted and waited on by the men (Grandpa and Uncles) of camp. They want the girls to experience being treated with the love and respect that they deserve. The Talent Show will happen after dinner. The cabins have been working all week on their acts. One more opportunity for affirmation. Bed time is going to be hard. No one wants to go to sleep because they know when they wake up it will be time to leave. Emotions will be raw. Fights will probably break out on the boys side. Grandpa and I will visit the cabins one more time to pray with the campers. Some of them will want us to pray and some will be pushing us away; they don't want another goodbye. I don't want another goodbye. But camp isn't over yet and so we give our all.

Dear Father, we pray for these children that you brought to us. Please use our weak and flawed efforts to impact their lives for you. Lord, please let the seeds that we have planted go deep and take root in their souls. Let them see that you are love and you are hope. Thank you for giving us this week. May it not only change them but please change us as well . Thank you for meeting us right where we are at and empowering us to do and love in ways we didn't know possible. Thank you for these children. Amen.

# Friday Prayer Requests

“The Goodbyes”

Originally posted July 10, 2015

It was time to say goodbye. We were outside in the blazing hot sun in the early afternoon. Any of the four other previous days, around the same time in the afternoon, the kids could easily be heard splashing and laughing in the pool, seen putting together Lego masterpieces, cheered on as they bounced basketballs, or watched doing a variety of other fun activities. But not so on this day. Today it is Friday and instead of all the fun activities in afternoon, we are waiting to load the kids on the bus.

While the luggage is put on the buses and everything else gets prepared before the kids' leave, to pass the time, the kids and volunteers sign each other's t-shirts. Also, the counselors get an opportunity to give their campers the specially made memory book filled with pictures and notes from the week.

Last year, I remember in particular, one graduating girl who was walking around with a poster board piece that she was asking everyone to sign. She asked me to sign and I gladly did. She was in tears and could hardly speak a word. It was so hard to look at her like that. This was her last year at camp. In fact, these were her last couple of moments at this very special place.

It is challenging to say goodbye after pouring out on these kids every last ounce of love we have (and all week long, God seemingly continues to fill us up with more of His love to pour out). Even in their cussing, kicking, running off, and hating, when God gives us His heart for them, somehow we love them in the messes. Not only does His love in us for the kids make it difficult to watch them leave, but also the fact that it is truly “goodbye.” We cannot promise to see them at camp next year, we cannot excitedly exclaim, “See you in heaven!”, and we cannot be certain we will ever see them again.

In these moments, the one thing we can take comfort in, is the knowledge that the Lord holds these precious children in His hands. He is their Savior, He is their Good Shepherd, and He is their hope. He will protect them and continue to direct their steps. So though we cannot make promises to the children about the future, the greatest thing is that we know the One who holds both the kids and their futures – and He is surely trustworthy.

Though this particular girl may never come back to camp again – though we do not know if any of these kids will ever come back to camp whether or not they are graduating this year – we submit them to the Lord. All we can do is ask Him to continue to lead them nearer to Himself!

## Specific Prayer Requests:

- As we say goodbye, please pray that God will **comfort our hearts**. Pray that though we may grieve and be broken, we do not grieve as those without hope because we know God holds the kids and their futures **in His very hands**.

- For those of us riding on the **bus ride back home** with the kids, please pray that God will give us the words to say and will lead us in our interactions with the kids. Pray for God to give us strength and grace as we spend the **last few moments** with the kids.
- As the kids **re-adjust** to “home life”, whatever that may be, pray they will be received back by their caregivers well.
- Pray God will **continue to speak** to the campers even after they leave camp. Pray that He will soften their hearts and that they will turn to Him and seek a personal relationship with Him. Pray for their brokenness and past hurts to be **healed** in Jesus’ love.



**By Mena Hughes**  
**Originally posted July 8, 2016**

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

There is a certain kind of exhaustion reserved for RFKC volunteers. If you've been before, there's no explanation needed. But if you haven't I would say it's sort of like the combination of having a newborn (sleep deprivation, emotionally rewarding yet requiring all of you), 5 consecutive days of Sharefest (physical labor, constant movement in the form of walking up and down steep hill), finals week and a bachelorette party simultaneously (mental focus, attention to detail needed while maintaining a party-state level of energy) with possible constipation, headache, or feeling bloated, and being without all your typical sources of comfort (all access to caffeine, social media... ). Obviously, choosing to engage in proactively loving orphans (kids in the LA foster care system) and enduring these type of conditions requires supernatural motivation and strength. It's the best depletion to experience knowing that you have given everything possible for the sake of a little one knowing the tangible love of Christ. And when the week is over and a volunteer has given everything they had to give, only Jesus can provide the rest that is needed to recover and re-engage in life. Whether you're coming home from camp or coming off a hard week what is required of you to get help from Jesus? Nothing. Just stop. Come. Be done with whatever for now. All your efforts have been seen. Jesus is ready to take your burdens and give you exactly what you need: rest in Him. Don't over think it. Don't put it off. Come. And if Christ has meet you in this place of depletion and exhaustion, pray for the others who are still in need. Come to Jesus and get enough rest. You'll know you're ready to go again when you have more of His love to give out all over again.

Dear Jesus, we give You these kids who have captured our hearts and ask that You tend to their every need. We pray for them, their caregivers, families, and social workers and ask for love, mercy, grace, hope, health, and safety to mark their lives. Thank you for the RFKC team, refresh them body and soul. Amen.

# Saturday Prayer Requests

By Joy Steed

Originally posted July 9, 2016

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

Years ago, when we would pick our oldest daughter up from her time away at camp, the 24 hours after bringing her home was the hardest. On her and us. When she did talk it was through tears. All she wanted to do was go back to camp. My heart broke for her yet rejoiced knowing that the reason she wanted to go back was because she had a wonderful week with people that loved Jesus and showed His love to her through all the activities and time they spent with her. We prayed with her and for her, giving thanks for camp and those that gave of their time so she could know how much Jesus loves her.

Today those that volunteered at RFKC are experiencing feelings full on- emotionally, physically, and mentally. They are trying to enter back into life, yet re-entry after a mission trip isn't that easy. Conversations and moments with the kids that attended camp will creep in and hold tight to their hearts. They will wonder how those kids are doing, if they are okay, if anyone is asking about their week, or praying for them, or listening to them. They will have a hard time sharing how camp was, and when they do, it may sound like a jumble of things that don't really connect or make sense. They are wondering about the kids that came to camp, because they too are re-entering into life. So they will have tears and silence and emotions that no one will know how to deal with or, very likely, have the time to deal with. The day after camp is HEAVY with emotion and exhaustion and prayer is needed big time. Often we pray like crazy when our missionaries are out in the field but when they come home the prayers taper off, we forget that the battle rages on. The kids are home and for many the environment they are in is not a loving or safe one. The volunteers are home and they know this and this makes it harder to be home with their loved ones.

Keep praying people. Don't stop, let your prayers rise up. If you see someone that volunteered ask them if you can pray for them. Stop whatever it is you are doing and PRAY.