

All Saints Campus Ministry

by Vicar Wessel

Outreach from a Kayak

Not even the rain could dampen the spirits of the seven young students who went on this year's kayaking excursion to French Creek. While the forecast for the day of the kayaking trip looked promising, when the day came, it was cool and rainy. But this didn't stop seven students from eagerly accompanying Pastor Deal and Vicar Wessel on the approximately four-hour route along French Creek. Thankfully, by the time we arrived at the launch site, the rain had mostly let up, and it would prove to be a fun and wholesome day for all involved.

The group ranged from seasoned kayakers to first timers, from avid outdoorsmen to long-time city dwellers, but everyone was able to find something to enjoy. Pastor Deal and Vicar Wessel were able to help some of the less experienced kayakers, and by the end, everyone was merrily and confidently paddling along like old pros. There was plenty to do along the way. Pastor Deal and one of the students brought their fishing rods along and enjoyed some fly-fishing, albeit not with the success they had hoped. Plenty of interesting wildlife was seen along the way, on land, water, and air. Some of the students passed some of the time by making bird calls to converse with or provoke birds in the area. Another highlight of the trip was a stop at an island with plenty of good skipping rocks that required investigation. It seems several of the students were somewhat well-practiced in rock-skipping!

But beyond all the fun, the students were able to break away from their studies for a bit. The excursion also gave other opportunities as well. Pastor Deal was able to have discussions with two students looking into going through catechesis with him. While kayaking is hardly a normal situation for catechesis, we are happy for the opportunity to engage with students and use the time we have to help provide for them spiritually. Although the kayak trip was neither the beginning nor the end of those discussions with the students, we are thankful for the opportunity it provided. While we are happy to provide mere fellowship and activities to students, our goal is and remains to work within those relationships formed to strengthen and build up students in the Christian faith. The fact that this was able to happen on this most recent kayaking trip was a great blessing and points to what all of our student activities ideally aim for.

This kayaking trip was also interesting from a campus ministry perspective in that all the students were from Grove City College. While we are located right on the campus of Slippery Rock University, this year God has blessed us with particularly good opportunities for campus ministry and student engagement on the campus of Grove City College. We will, of course, continue to reach out to the Slippery Rock students as we are still given some opportunities with them. However, the interest and openness to receiving us at Grove City has been overwhelmingly encouraging so far

this year. Throughout this coming school year, we pray that God continue to bless the work He has given us to do at Grove City, as well as at Slippery Rock and Westminster, so we can continue to share His Word with students – even if that means doing it in a kayak on the middle of a creek.



Seven students from Grove City College accompanied Pastor Deal and Vicar Wessel on the kayak trip on French Creek.