
Youth Sermon – Betsy Brennan

A sermon by Betsy Brennan
Easter 4 – Year A

Hi y'all, I'm Betsy Brennan and I am a senior at the Lovett School, and I'm so honored to be up here today. I've been dreaming of this moment to be standing in front of y'all since my freshman year when Camilla Grayson was actually the one up here, and after that I made it my goal to get to where I am standing right now. I've always thought about what I would want to say, and I had some pretty good ideas over the years, but once I sat down to actually write this I didn't even know where to begin.

But the first thing I thought of is how the Cathedral has become a part of who I am, and that this community has made the biggest difference in my life ever since I was a little girl. I was baptised here on February 14, 1999, only 3 months after being born, and after that I devoted my life to this church, and especially to the youth program when I became old enough.

I remember coming in with my mom and sitting in the pews while she arranged flowers, all the Sunday Schools I've participated in, the Week of Wonder's I went to, the Christmas pageants ... I even remember when my sister brought me to my first Fellini's Bible study the summer after sixth grade. Ever since then I became a regular to weekly bible studies and Sunday Schools, going out of my way to do everything I could in this youth program. I've been here since Brandon, then to Rebecca, and now to Maggie, Jacob, and Meg and have loved every second I've spent with all of them. They have each brought something so special to this program, and I wouldn't be up here without any of them.

It's crazy to think of everything I've done here over the past nearly 18 years and that my time in the youth group is coming to an end, but I could not be more thankful. It's helped shape me into who I am today, and it's also helped me build the foundation of my faith. I have found that lots of my favorite memories have been ones here at the church with the people who I call my best and closest friends. I have to say one of my favorites was when we went on our first rafting trip a few years ago and my rafting guide's name was Heavy Metal Jesus. Not going to lie, I was a little frightened by his name at first, but he turned out to be a really cool guy until he purposefully tipped all of us out of our raft and Rebecca lost her GoPro, which is still a touchy subject. We went back the next year and had Heavy Metal Jesus as our guide again, and he learned his lesson from the previous year not to tip us out.

Looking back on all my time at the Cathedral I've realized that I have taken advantage of my faith because it has been handed to me on a silver platter for almost all of my life. It wasn't until these past three years that I began to realize what the word *faith* actually meant to me, and how I could make it MY faith instead of what I was told to believe. My mom has always told me that being baptized in the Episcopal Church was her and my dad's decision, but after confirmation freshman year that's when it was time for me to grow up and make my own decisions about my faith. My sophomore year when I went to Happening at Camp Mikell was when I finally started to take ownership of my relationship with God. I was able to share something with everyone at camp and church that I never could with my school friends.

I became so close with everyone at Camp Mikell because we had something in common that was much deeper and more special than going to school together, or playing on the same sports team. We all understood the true meaning of God's love and his grace, and through the few summers of being a counselor and camper at Camp Mikell and participating in youth retreats like Happening and DYC, I've been able to find a community that proves that God's unconditional love

stretches beyond the walls of the Cathedral, and is present in people we have never met before.

It is important that we find what makes our faith special and in what ways we feel closer to God. Whatever it may be, we must learn to cherish our relationship with God and carry it throughout our whole life. I've gotten through some of the worst and best moments of my life with him and this community because I know they will always have my back.

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