

## **Amy's Email Epistle – Thursday, October 11, 2018**

When I was a kid I attended church camp every summer at Barbee Christian Camp in Leesburg, Indiana. Like most kids who have a meaning-filled and powerful experience at camp I fell in love with the beauty of the grounds, and with the rituals of camp. There was always a dance, campfire circles every night complete with singing, and skits, swimming, crafts, small group time, sing for your mail at dinner, and Vespers.

Barbee had an area called Vesper hill. In the evening following dinner, after we all had a chance to walk back to our cabins and put on long pants and sweatshirts and doused ourselves with bug spray, we would grab our bibles and head to Vesper hill for Vespers. This was sacred time. The sun was just beginning to set. The humidity and heat from the day lifted. There is something about the evening hour just before nightfall that feels peaceful and easy. Vespers calmed and centered us. It brought meaning to our day. It offered a holy and sacred space to sit in silent reflection, to listen to scripture, to pray, and to connect with each other through God. During Vespers all the silliness of youth faded. In that space cliques didn't matter, no person was placed above or below another, we somehow saw each other as equal, we felt a bond of love, respect and empowerment. I love Vespers because of my camp experience.

The world feels chaotic. There is so much fear and anxiety, so much pain and sorrow. So much to worry over, be angry about, hurt by. People are feeling overwhelmed by needs, some are feeling rejected, forgotten, defeated, hopeless while others simply cannot think about, look at or deal with one more piece of negativity, bad news, trauma. How should we respond? What is our call in the midst of the chaos? Experiencing my own levels of fear and anxiety, pain, helplessness, sorrow, anger and feeling overwhelmed by all that needs tending to I searched for ways to provide answers. I sat in silence listening. Within that silence I heard a call to Vespers.

Come join me for Vespers tonight at 6p.m. We will eat a meal together in Koinonia Hall and pray together in Koinonia Hall (our Vesper hill).

There is power in prayer. Come!

*Amy*