

# Cabin Time Ideas from Antiochian Village

## For 13 and older

1. Night hike: meditation or overnight trail involving life savers, no flashlights, and candles
2. Spiritual Scavenger hunt with quotes: at various locations around camp discuss quotes before moving to next location... at the end have something chill/fun set up
3. Box of fears: pass out paper, tell campers not to write their names on the paper, ask campers what struggles/fears they're facing at home, about camp, etc. Have campers fold papers and put in a box/hat/etc. and then have each camper pick one. Campers cannot unfold the paper until it's their turn—go around in a circle, have the camper read the paper and address the stuff written. Debrief in terms of similarities in the cabin, etc.
4. Relationship/what love really means discussion
5. Meet and discuss different roles in the church
6. Quotes: have the campers write down their favorite quotes and put them up all over the cabin
7. Life stories
8. Washing of the feet – must debrief
9. Candle activity: give each camper a candle, have them sit in a circle and put the flames together. Large flame represents cabin unity. Have campers try to lightly blow out the large flame (this represents struggles/obstacles cabins will face) and they will not be able to. Have a camper blow out the flame of a single candle. Debrief in terms of: a unified cabin will be able to withstand obstacles, but if they are divided or single themselves out, they will not be able to.
10. Forgiveness vespers
11. “What next?” discussion: talk to campers about what they should take home with them from camp and how to stay involved with the church after high school
12. Blindfolded Rope Walk to the Church - Take cabin(s) around in a van blind folded and have them be silent. Bring them to the tennis courts (or somewhere random). Get them out of the van and in a circle, and have them hold on to a rope that is tied in a circle. Then tell them they have to work together to get to the church. As they figure it out, pull on the rope, trip them a little, try to get them off track. This represents the devil tempting us. You can have someone else do this, and if you'd like, have the counselors be the “good” voice leading them the right way. Debrief in the church about how you cannot get to salvation alone and how we need to surround ourselves with people that will bring us closer to God and each other.
13. We used the topic of labeling. What we label our self as, what we label our peers as, and what we can label society as. We gave each camper a few sticky notes and a markers and told them to write down labels that you can give to a person (ugly, beautiful, ignorant, etc) and we put them into the center of the circle. We shared

- many of them so we can see how we are all on the same page. And you can notice that the negative labels outweigh the positive. beyond this, our counselors borrowed a few icons from the book store and on sticky notes put words that describes the saint in that icon (for example, martyr, god-bearing...etc). After the activity we asked the why we didn't have any of these written down. It opened the eyes of many campers. We also brought up the fact that we are supposed to be images of God and walking saints for those around us, and all of these negative labels on people take us away from that. and the girls seemed to have a great discussion just following each others lead, we barely had to add in.
14. Autobiographies -Every day (or night), 1 camper tells their "story." Really just helps the cabin bond and better understand why certain campers act a certain way/do certain things. -My guys loved doing this at night before bed, it was a great way to calm them all down.
  15. I did a night time trust fall last summer with the older cabins a couple sessions and they loved it. As for a debrief, you could pretty much roll in any direction you want with it. I usually just came up with a couple questions that went along with the "theme" that the cabins had and the kids pretty much took it from there.. Just a couple safety and logistic things, they probably want to do this activity after they go on ropes course so they are already familiar with spotting and things like that. and the counselors of these cabins chose to have their facilitator NOT take the kids on trust fall during their normal ropes course day. I think doing the opposite could be just as valuable one for safety reasons and two so the kids can draw a comparison in the debrief and relate it to anything they can come up with and in order to have time to do this activity at night.

### Ages 9-12

1. Catching Fireflies (see Johanna for bug catcher)
2. Celebrate random holidays like Christmas or Valentine's Day or make one day everyone's birthday in your cabin
3. Read them stories and from children's books
4. Discovering church: go to church early and have them look around and ask questions
5. Play with play dough
6. Sports
7. Go through the service books with your cabin so they know what is going on and can follow along better during church
8. Warm fuzzies

### For any cabin

1. Patron saint discussion
2. Choose a patron saint for the cabin
3. Spend time in church
4. Games: card, board, and other
5. Mailboxes/warm fuzzies: have campers (and you too) write notes to everyone in their cabin explaining why they appreciate each other and then open them up during the session

6. Hang out with oldest/youngest cabins
7. Go to confession as a cabin
8. Naptime/quiet time in the cabin
9. Fruits of the Spirit: write on a popsicle stick what virtue each person embodies
10. Decorate picture frames
11. Color in coloring books
12. Decorate the cabin and each bunk
13. Glow-in-the-dark stars: see your staff manual
14. Tummy Ha Ha
15. Leave notes on your campers' bunks for them to find when they come back from 12:15 cabin time
16. Chant Paraklesis
17. Set up a quote board when your campers can write down funny/deep things from the session or things they are thankful for
18. Make a cross/full value contract out of wood and nails
19. Volunteer your cabin to clean the church
20. Star gazing with a discussion
21. Bonding ball: write a bunch of questions on a ball and pass around room. Whichever question the person's left thumb lands on is the one they answer
22. Origami fortune teller with "deep" question on the inside
23. Have campers write letters to themselves about what they hope to take home from camp, goals for their home life, etc. Mail them these letters in the fall. Good debriefing tool.
24. Secret prayer buddy: give campers a person to secretly pray for each day while at camp or when they go home
25. Secret note buddy: each camper will have the name of someone to write a note to a few times throughout the session; author should be kept secret.
26. Playing cards along with a discussion
27. Chicken Soup for the Soul stories; each one picks a story, then discuss the moral
28. Funny Talent (Ice Breaker)
29. Going to confession as a cabin; to prepare, do self examinations during cabin times
30. Go to church and discuss the importance of living for God at all times and places, especially in the face of social pressures (sex, alcohol, etc...)
31. Cabin time discussion in church: Stare up at the icons on the ceiling and let everyone think to themselves; have a discussion afterwards.
32. Discovering church: use a flashlight in the church when it is dark.
33. Discussions around a topic: love, friendship, creation, truth.
34. Bring in one counselor who can play the guitar and discuss the meaning of the words that were sung.
35. Appreciating God's creation by going to the basketball courts on a clear night and looking up at the stars.
36. Play Uno
37. Question and Answer session with a priest; let the kids ask any type of question.
38. Prayer/Game Combo: Write verses of a prayer, Psalm, ect... Give each camper a piece of the prayer and have them put it in order, then say the prayer.

39. "Psychiatrist" game – one person leaves the room and others decide on something that's wrong with them. The person who left (psychiatrist) comes back and asks questions, trying to figure out the "common problem." (This really works! The problem can be almost anything, and it's fun to connect it to camp somehow.)
40. Have your campers write something the like about each person in the cabin. They will each do this on their own sheet of paper. (There is a story in the 1<sup>st</sup> Chicken Soup book called Good Things that goes along with the cabin time.) This also works GREAT if you do it on one of the last nights. Collect the sheets and write each person's name on a separate sheet and list all the things that people wrote about them. Older and younger campers love this!
41. Discussion about death with the older campers. Go around and share experiences; it shows how talking about it will help.
42. Discussion about miracles (any age.) You can do this in the church, it's a good alternative to ghost stories; talk about how faith creates miracles, not vice versa.
43. Do a fun art project if you have little kids – something original and creative.
44. Pray together every night.
45. Write letters to God (age 9-10.)
46. Have a night of beauty where you do facials and paint your toe nails (teens.) Talk about how inner beauty is most important.
47. Have a question and answer box in your cabin and you can pull one out for cabin time discussions.
48. Talk about your first impressions of each other (girls, usually age 14+)
49. Pass out glow in the dark stars. Each star represents a person they want to pray for; hang the stars up near your bunk. Also, the stars could represent a goal, wish, or accomplishment that they hope to reach while at camp.
50. Write a quote or a funny thing that happened to you. They each try to guess who was who.
51. Who can make the loudest farting noise with their hands. Somewhat inappropriate, but it breaks the ice (boys).
52. (9-10 yr. Olds): read a children's book with a good moral. Have story time and have the kids try and figure out the moral – then elaborate.
53. Girl Bonding Night: You can tell each other all your secrets.
54. Chips and Salsa night: eat and talk
55. What is Love? Cabin time...Love as an action etc...(16 yrs)
56. (Girls) all sit in one bed with lights out and talk and giggle
57. Hide and seek in the chalet when the other sections of the chalet are gone.
58. Discussion about angels and demons
59. Cabin Gratitude List: Each person writes something on the list each day that they are thankful for.
60. Post an "Ask Aboona" sheet in your cabin and anytime a question comes up that no one knows the answer to, you can remember to ask the priest.
61. Candy icebreaker on the first night (get to know you game)
62. Coloring name tags for your bunks
63. Memorizing a prayer a little each night that would be fully memorized by the end of the session.

64. Praying for each other out loud, in a circle, before you go to bed. Each person prays for the person to the right or to the left.
65. Dance Lessons: before the hufli, we taught/learned different dubki moves and solo moves.
66. Anything you've ever wanted an honest answer to night: Campers ask so many questions – even silly things – they will be really impressed with the honest answers you will give.
67. Have cabin prayer lists.
68. Learn about each camper's patron saints.
69. Share the most embarrassing or the scariest moment in your life.
70. Go around in a circle and say why we know we believe in God (14 yrs)
71. Have a cabin symbol: "We had a funny face that only our cabin did and whenever we were all together we would say "cabin symbol" and we would all do it." (10 yrs)
72. Play dress up (girls)
73. Play dough as an icebreaker (13 yrs +): Have two colors; one is you before camp and the other is camp. You have the option of becoming a new ball of dough. Mix
74. Tape a piece of paper to everyone's back with the name of a person (i.e. saint)/place/feast, then have the kids walk around and try to figure out who/what they are by asking yes/no questions. At the end, talk about everyone's person/place (10 yrs.)
75. Ask everyone what one thing they learned that day (and give them a piece of candy when they tell you), then talk about the things they learned (10 yrs).
76. Play Jenga

## For Boys

1. Physical bonding activities

## For Girls

2. Bandana bracelets
3. Manicure party
4. Inner beauty day
5. Tea time
6. Friendship bracelets
7. French Braid their hair
8. Have girls lie down in circle under the icon of the Theotokos with their heads in the middle. Talk about inner beauty, etc. Take icons of women saints off the walls and place them on each girl's chest. Talk about how some of those saints were their age, how they should make decisions with the weight of the saints on them, etc. (See Johanna if you need more)