

FaithBIT



Community of Faith

Reflection by Andy Vergeront

19 years ago, our family went to Wild River State Park for Labor Day weekend camping trip. On Saturday, we canoed on the St. Croix River. We enjoyed it so much, the next year we invited the Totall family. The year after that, the Gusts and the Arvidsons came.

This summer will mark the 19th time for our Labor Day outing. Now we are up to as many as 9 families. Many of our kids who have graduated from college still attend and look forward to it and several younger families from Immanuel have become regulars. When we go on our canoe trip on Saturday, we tie the many canoes together and float down the river together. We are quite a sight!



“...community and these relationships have a powerful impact...”

- Andy Vergeront

This annual trip has become an important part of our family and our faith life. In addition to the fun memories and being in God’s creation on the beautiful St. Croix, we have developed deep, lasting relationships with these families over time. We are a community. Everyone helps out. Older kids watch younger kids. Empty nester parents hold babies and give the younger parents a break (and occasionally parenting advice).

I think this community and these relationships have a powerful impact, especially on the children. I know my own kids were very active in church activities growing up, in part because they knew their friends would be there. It is very rewarding to see this playing out for a new generation of Immanuel families.