

# FaithBIT



## Where I Feel God's Love

Reflection by Sofia Melchert

Hi! My name is Sofia Melchert, I am a senior in high school and a student leader here at Immanuel. This has always been my church home, and one of the three places in which I have felt God's love most strongly. I will be going off to college next year, and one of the places I will miss most is this beautiful place.

The second of the places in which I feel God's love the most is when I am singing. I currently sing in Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs as well as my high school Women's Concert chorale, but I really attribute my love of music to this church. From singing "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" in the church smorgasbord when I was 4 years old, to singing duets with Ellen Whalen, to singing with Cornerstone choir in today's service, I have always loved singing here so much. Part of that love comes from being able to share my passion for music with this awesome congregation, but another big part comes from the amazing people I have gotten to know. Because, that's a big part of faith, isn't it? The brothers and sisters in Christ you meet along the way?

The third of these places in which I see God's gifts is the Great Outdoors. I have always loved camping, and climbing, biking, hiking, sailing, really anything that ends in "ING" and is outside - I love it. Just last summer, I was blessed to spend six weeks of my summer working and living on Isle Royale on Lake Superior with the Minnesota Conservation Corps. We were cutting back branches from the side of the trail, digging drainage ditches, and even hauling seventy-five-pound batteries two miles up a mountain to a radio tower. I loved every second of it. Everything about those six weeks were amazing, from the beautiful sights to the absolutely amazing people I had the huge privilege of getting to live and work with.



**"I challenge you to expand your view of God's gifts past the walls of our own lives, and out into God's beautiful gift of this earth."  
- Sofia Melchert**

I think that all too often we see God's gifts as restricted to the inside of the walls of our own life, whether those walls are the physical barriers we put between us and the elements or the rigid structures we put up in our own lives. The question "What are you thankful for?" comes up so often around thanksgiving, and while "friends, family, and faith" are all beautiful gifts from God, that's often where our answers end. So, I would challenge every one of you to come up with something you are thankful for that no-one else in this room are likely to say. I challenge you to expand your view of God's gifts past the walls of our own lives, and out into God's beautiful gift of this earth.

So, what's my point? In terms of everyday stories of thanksgiving and generosity, I can think of no better example than the daily gifts from God we receive from this beautiful earth he has given us, and the daily thanks we give him for it. By sitting and praying before a meal, we thank God for this food - for the farmers that raised the animals and plants, for the air and ground that supplied the nutrients, and for the sun that provides the energy. We thank God for all this and more, for "In his hand is the life of every creature, and the breath of all mankind." Amen.