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Coaches Eight Weeks of Devotions

Please let me know how I can assist you,

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*UPWARD SPORTS   
Logistics Coordination/Devotions Commissioner*  
                        for  
 Mountainside United Methodist Church  
  
*People are not looking for a friendly Church.   
 They are looking for friends.   
 Join your friends at MUMC.*

**Week 1: Bible Verse to Memorize**“In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths.” [Proverbs 3:6](http://bible.cc/proverbs/3-6.htm)

**Week 1: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams**"Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. Jeremiah, chapter 6, verse 16a  
 **Week 1: Bible Verse’s Virtue: Admiration** for Coaches, Teachers, Leaders, and Our Lord

**Week 1: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank you for Upward Sports, for each player, each coach, and each leader. We are each glad to be here. Keep us safe as we play and learn and grow. Lord, help us to make good decisions in all things that we do. Help us to remember what we have learned in our practices. Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your good path. Amen.

## Week 1: The Makings for a Good Decision

You made a God decision by choosing to be here at the MAC Mountainside Activity Center and involved in Upward Youth Sports! The Christian community is glad to have you here. We invite you to seek the LORD and grow with us in His likeness. We know you will be able to grow your faith with us. The dictionary says a decision is, “the act or process of deciding a question or doubt by making a judgment and then having a determination”. The main point of a book titled, *Love Is A Decision*, is that as human beings we are capable of deciding to do loving things for others even when we don’t feel very loving. Part of decision-making is taking the time to weigh and pray about decisions, not just relying on our feelings. We must find standards by which to measure our choices. We use our life experiences, knowledge and teachings that lead to wisdom and our core values. As Christians we look to God, the scriptures in the Bible, the council of other Christians and our leaders for how to live a good life. In the book of Jeremiah, chapter 6, verse 16 in the [New Living Translation](http://nlt.scripturetext.com/jeremiah/6.htm), what the LORD says is written: "Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, 'No, that's not the road we want!' Here the people had a choice, an opportunity to make a good choice but they chose not to. Decision-making is seldom an easy task, particularly when it comes to those big areas of life – choosing a mate, employment, a life-style, beliefs, and so forth. How can we make it easier for ourselves? [Proverbs 3:6](http://bible.cc/proverbs/3-6.htm) on Topicalbible.org — AKJV says, “In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths.”

**Week 2: Bible Verse to Memorize**In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths. [**Proverbs 3:6**](http://bible.cc/proverbs/3-6.htm)

**Week 2: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams**Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me--everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. **Philippians 4:9** [New Living Translation](http://nlt.scripturetext.com/jeremiah/6.htm)  
 **Week 2: Bible Verse’s Virtues: Planning** and **Practice** for Players, Coaches, Leaders, and Teachers

**Week 2: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Blessings; we thank You for Upward Sports, for each player, each coach, and each leader. We are each thankful that we can be here. Please help to keep us safe from injuries as we play and learn and grow. Lord, help us to make good Game Plans in all things that we do. Help us to remember what we learn in our team plays. Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your plan. Amen.

### Week 2: Have a Game Plan and Practice It Whether it’s a family, a school, a company, or a sports team, we cannot possibly guide our relationships safely through the hours of each day without a plan. A practiced plan is the starting point. Without a clear plan of action we are inviting disappointment. It’s critical that we clearly plan our lives and not let chance set our courses. There has been a time in earlier years when society itself defined boundaries clearly enough to substitute for a clear purpose. But that’s simply not true today. And that is what church is about. It is a best effort to give you a workable, biblically based plan of action for building lasting relationships. Having a clear plan of action really does bring good results. Taking the time to learn and practice a plan of action will turn defeated individuals into an undefeated team. National Football League, Coach Norm Evans made NFL history by taking a last place team to first place by having a clear game plan and practicing it. When Norm first met the losing players he told them, “Men, you’re going to be champions of the NFL”. “*First* we’re going to give you a great game plan each week that works. . . *Second* you’re going to practice that plan . . . *Third* you’re going to learn the game plan and practice it – and win.” That’s a great story if you are a team. Be part of a winning team by having a clear game plan by being in church service on Sundays and put into practice all of the good news that you hear.

**Week 2:** Cross References

[**1 Corinthians 4:16**](http://bible.cc/1_corinthians/4-16.htm) *Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

[**Philippians 3:17**](http://bible.cc/philippians/3-17.htm) *Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.*

[**Philippians 4:7**](http://bible.cc/philippians/4-7.htm) *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

**Week 3: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams to Memorize**T*hose who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.*  [**Daniel 12:3**](http://bible.cc/daniel/12-3.htm)

**Week 3: This Week’s Team Sports Virtues: Rise!** **Shine!** and **WIN!**  **Week 3: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Blessings; we thank You for Upward Sports, for each player, our parents and coaches. We are each thankful that we can be here. Please help keep us safe from injury. Help us to be good players and learn. Lord, show how we can be competitive and yet kind at the same time. Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your great plan for our lives. Amen.  
  
**Week 3: An Appreciation of Coaches**  
“Wise” translated in Hebrew means, “to cause to understand”. So our coaches, parents, and teachers “cause us to realize and to know” and hence they shall shine like the stars in the heavens above! And our teachers that we had for a short time and in the days of our youth do shine in our memory. Never can we forget them, how they are shining like lamps and stars today! Through all the years since we have grown to adulthood they have occupied a sacred and hallowed place in our memory. What wholesome principles they continually impress upon us, as well as the lessons of the textbook. And all that we are and all that we have achieved, we owe largely to those who taught and guided us through our youthfulness. How else could we have ever amounted to anything? How they shine in the broad and bright expanse of all human achievement and the world’s advancement. In every realm; in religion, in business, in politics, and thus forth; they shine through the successes and triumphs of all of us to whom they have taught and trained. Do pay attention in these your basketball and cheerleading practices and games so as to hear, to care, to be courteous, polite, considerate, kind, thoughtful and devoted to your coach teachers as you enjoy creating new rich experiences full of wisdom that comes with new understanding! RISE! SHINE! WIN! And give God the Glory!

**Week 3: Cross References:**

*Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.* [**Matthew 13:43**](http://bible.cc/matthew/13-43.htm)

*John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.* [**John 5:35**](http://bible.cc/john/5-35.htm)

**Week 4: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams to Memorize**Thosewho are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever. [**Daniel 12:3**](http://bible.cc/daniel/12-3.htm)

**Week 4: This Week’s Team Sports Virtues: Attitude** and **Sportsmanship  
  
Week 4: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Blessings; we thank You for Upward Sports, for each player, our parents and coaches. We are each thankful that we can be here. Please help keep us safe from injury. Help us to be good players and learn. Lord, show how we can be competitive and yet kind at the same time. Father show us how we can be stars to those whom we have shared our Christian teachings. Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your great plan for our lives. Amen.

**Week 4: Stars Devotional**The Upward Youth Sports Basketball and Cheerleading program presents five stars each game to the player that demonstrates the best in each of the categories; Effort, Sportsmanship, Offense, Defense and Christlikeness.

**Effort**[2 Peter 1:5 For this very reason, make every **effort** to add to your **...**](http://biblehub.com/2_peter/1-5.htm)

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| For this very reason, make every **effort** to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge **...** |

**Sportsmanship**[Proverbs 2:9 Then you will understand what is right and just and **...**](http://biblehub.com/proverbs/2-9.htm)

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| ..... Then you will understand what is right and just and **fair**--every good path. **...** |

**Offense**[Psalm 91:14 "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue **...**](http://biblehub.com/psalms/91-14.htm)

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| "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will **protect** him, for he acknowledges my name. **...** I will **protect** those who trust in my name. |

**Defense**[2 Timothy 4:16 At my first **defense**, no one came to my support, but **...**](http://biblehub.com/2_timothy/4-16.htm)

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| At my first **defense**, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. **...** At my first **defense** no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. |

**Christlikeness!**[John 10:11 "I am the **good** shepherd. The **good** shepherd lays down **...**](http://biblehub.com/john/10-11.htm)

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| "I am the **good** shepherd. The **good** shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **...** "I am the **good** shepherd. The **good** shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep |

**Week 5: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams to Memorize**Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. [**Ecclesiastes 4:9**](http://bible.cc/ecclesiastes/4-9.htm)

**Week 5: Team Sports Virtue: TEAMS!   
  
Week 5: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Good and Gracious Blessings; we thank You for Upward Youth Sports, for each player, for each coach, each volunteer, and for our parents. We are each thankful that we can be here and participating with our teammates. Please help to keep us safe from injury. Help us to be good players and good spectators and to learn the game. Lord, please show us how we can be competitive and yet be kind at the same time. Lord, help us to know that it is with the help of others that enables us to succeed. And Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your great plan for our eternal lives living with you. Amen.

**Week 5: Teams Devotional   
I LOVE TEAMS**

The Bible book of (NIV) **Ecclesiastes 4:10a** reads, “If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”   
**I** love seeing how teams depend on each other! Do you have someone you depend on? I know we all depend on our parents to help us, but do you have a best friend, or a brother or sister? Maybe it’s a grandparent. The Bible reminds us how we are not made to go through life alone. We are made to depend on each other. It’s true. We weren’t made to go through this life alone. Now, it may not always be easy to gain someone else’s support, but when we do, that cooperation is always a great thing. We can always do more together than we can do alone. A prime example is when setting up this gym for Upward Sports Basketball. It would take you one exhausting hour all by yourself to sweep this floor and then mop it and then set out all of these chairs. But with help from six people, it all can be done in 10 minutes with plenty of energy leftover to shoot 50 minutes worth the hoops. So never be afraid to ask for help when you need it, or to give your help when you are asked.

**I** want to pray that God would not only put people in our lives to encourage and help us, but that we would also be prepared to be an encouragement and at the service of others people we come in contact with every day.

Again in the book of

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|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Ecclesiastes 4:8 “**There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.” | | |

**Week 6: Bible Verse for Teams to Memorize**“Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.” **James 1:19**

**Week 6: Team Sports Virtues: Self-Control  
  
Week 6: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Blessings; we thank You for Upward Sports, for each player, our parents and coaches. We are each thankful that we can be here. Please help keep us safe from injury. Help us to be good players and learn. Lord, show how we can be competitive and yet kind at the same time. Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your great plan for our lives. Amen.  
  
**Week 6: Self-Control Devotional**

**W**hat is needed is self-control and not self-expression. Much of the moral looseness in our modern society is the result of the false philosophy of “freedom of expression”. Expressing ourselves is not sinful until we allow our actions to run to ruin. Our desires, instincts and passions are God-implanted, and when rightly controlled and brought under the guidance of the Divine Spirit they issue in what Paul calls “the fruits of the Spirit” which are love, joy, peace, tolerance, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

We need to pray that the actions of ourselves and the actions of others will not bring ourselves or others to ruin as they recently have in families, work places, movie theaters and schools. Lord help us to have the patience to be slow to anger and to live with self-control that resembles Christ’s love and understanding full of joy, peace, tolerance, gentleness, and goodness. Amen.

**Week 6:**

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**Week 7: How-To be Responsible**

(NLT) **Matthew 1:19** *“Jesus replied, "'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.'”*

**Week 7: W**hy would loving the Lord our God be related to responsibility? All things begin and come from and are modeled from God. [**Deuteronomy 6:4**](http://bible.cc/deuteronomy/6-5.htm) tells us that there is only One God and that the Lord is God. We all call Jesus Lord. This is proof written in God’s Old Testament Word that Jesus is Himself, God. The Great I AM who had no Old Testament name would later in the New Testament have a name, Emmanuel Christ Jesus – God with us. Cross References show that Jesus was quoting [**Deuteronomy 6:5**](http://bible.cc/deuteronomy/6-5.htm) *“Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”* which is His first and most important Commandment: L O V E – it is a Spiritual Gift that makes world peace possible! If we would follow the first commandment, we would not need the other nine! We have learned that we cannot love anyone else until we can first love ourselves. When we are having a problem with loving, we should ***Revert back to loving God*** from whence all gifts originate. God first loved us. Reciprocally it makes it easy and natural for us to first love God; and then we can extend love as a gift to *All* others. [**1 John 4:21**](http://bible.cc/1_john/4-21.htm) *“And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.”* Being responsible to others means to be accountable to others. How can you be accountable to others? Just simply have and show love. In doing so, you will treat everyone with responsibility. When you bond and have concern for others you are obligating yourself to them. A bonding, obligating, concern for *All* is being responsible. ***Always be a full-time responsible person!   
It is a Good and God thing to do! And then, “They will know that we are Christian’s by our Love.”*Matthew 1:19**

**Week 7:**

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|  | http://bible.cc/crossref7.gif   |  | | --- | | [**Deuteronomy 6:4**](http://bible.cc/deuteronomy/6-4.htm) Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.  [**Deuteronomy 6:5**](http://bible.cc/deuteronomy/6-5.htm) Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.  [**Deuteronomy 10:12**](http://bible.cc/deuteronomy/10-12.htm) And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,  [**Matthew 22:36**](http://bible.cc/matthew/22-36.htm) "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"  [**Matthew 22:38**](http://bible.cc/matthew/22-38.htm) This is the first and greatest commandment.  [**1 John 4:21**](http://bible.cc/1_john/4-21.htm) And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. | |

**Week 8: Team Sports Virtues: *Strength verses Struggles***

**Week 8: This Week’s Bible Verse for Teams to Memorize:**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. [**John 14:27**](http://bible.cc/john/14-27.htm)

**Week 8: A Prayer for Coaches to use with their Youth Teams:**Dear Lord, We thank You for all of Your Blessings; we thank You for Upward Sports, for each player, each volunteer, and our coaches and parents. We are each thankful that we can be here. Please help keep us safe from injury. Help us to be good players and learn the game of basketball. Lord, show us how we can be competitive and yet kind at the same time. And Lord, in all good things we acknowledge you and your great plan for our lives. Amen.  
  
**Week 8: Strength verses Struggles Devotional**

Struggles, troubles, trials, sorrows. We do not like words like these. Therefore we resist these. We even desire our successes to come with a minimum amount of effort. Yet life is not made this way, is it? Did you hear of the boy who decided to help a butterfly emerge from a cocoon? When the movement began inside the cocoon, the boy carefully enlarged the hole through which the butterfly was to emerge. This made the butterfly’s entrance into the world an easier one. The butterfly made its appearance without much of a struggle – the only problem was that it could not fly. Butterflies gain their strength in their wings by pushing against the side of the cocoon. There was no need for that, so there was no development of the wings.

Lord, I confess I would like to have life a little easier than it sometimes is. Sometimes I think my wings are strong enough. Assure me of your presence in the midst of my struggles, and I will endure. Amen.

**Week 8:**

http://bible.cc/crossref7.gif

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| **John 16:33** I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."  [**Acts 14:22**](http://bible.cc/acts/14-22.htm)**b** "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.  [**2 Corinthians 6:4**](http://bible.cc/2_corinthians/6-4.htm) Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; |