

Ms. Ashleigh Henning
Community of Grace, Grayson, GA

I am a senior at Grayson High School about an hour outside of Atlanta in Grayson Georgia. I plan on attending Georgia Tech this fall to study physics or biology. However, my work with the church has mainly been with the Southeastern Lutheran Youth Organization serving as the Chaplain. Growing up with both parents being pastors it's been almost second nature to serve in this community, and it has been one of my most special experiences in high school

My favorite verse is Colossians 3:12, "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience."

It's always been one of those verses that has been a reminder of what we have been called to do, be like Jesus. It can be intimidating to try and live a life so driven by love, but when you break it down into the steps, you realize it's just like getting dressed in the morning. It also reminds me of the intentionality of walking alongside God. Being a friend to Jesus is not just an hour on Sunday, but rather something you wake up and put onto your heart every moment you can.

My dad and I have been preparing for a Spring Trip on the Appalachian Trail. I have always seen Christ working so imminently during times of anticipation and preparation (take Advent for example!). It also coincidentally happens to fall during the time of Lent. It's the moments where we are putting up our tents in our yard, or making bag meals on the back porch with our gear where I see God's tender love and joy in my life right now. God delights in all of our attempts at living and has a real art at making our moments that seem mundane, absolutely extraordinary.

Every single thing in my life has come from God and the work of the Church. My parents both are serving in the ministry and have been my entire life. My sister and I grew up in the front pew of worship every Sunday. My best friends have come from the church. It's impossible to not see how the Church has built and sustained my entire life. I can give thanks for all of that to God's work within the world. Finding not only that God sustains me, but provides such intimate friendship throughout my life has been such a focal point of God's abundance in my life.