

February 2016 NAU Canterbury News

This past month, Canterbury Flagstaff joined with the other campus ministries in the Diocese of Arizona for a retreat at Chapel Rock. Rather than me tell you more about this, we are continuing our three month series of student stories from the retreat.

Enjoy!

Brad Eubanks, Episcopal Campus Chaplain



“A few days before I went to the Chapel Rock Episcopal Campus Ministries Retreat (whoo, what a long and official title. Let’s go with Kool Kidz Taking the Rock, shall we?), I attended a Coming Out Monologue event where a woman with a guitar told us, “I’ve always kind of thought people just went to church to sing together,” perhaps one of the truest statements I’ve ever heard.

Singing has always been a huge part of church for me. My grandma always sang in her church choir, my mom sang in ours, and, with college, I have started carrying on the tradition in Flagstaff. There are few places I’ve felt holier, felt more God, than night-time choir rehearsals—either my own, or my mother’s over Crayola’d coloring books—while the church was vastly empty and dark, yet still heavy with hymnody. There are few times I felt more connected to my congregation than when singing (on vastly brighter, fuller Sunday mornings), when I connected to the tradition of my family’s women, when we all connected to the tradition of song that Christians have communed in for centuries.

Under the guidance of Chad Sundin and Benjamin Garren, the chaplains of Arizona State University and the University of Arizona, respectively, Kool Kidz Taking the Rock focused on this holiness of song through monastically rhythmmed worship. Sandwiched between global tragedies with the terror attacks on Paris and an inundation of personal stress through the final weeks of the fall semester, the Kool Kidz put their voices together in the cooling Prescott air through ambrosiac melodied hymns and psalms. Ranging from praises to the acknowledgement of anger, we found a kind of peace together through the blending of our voices, the synchronization of our breathing, the oneness we created in twenty individuals.

Amidst a world moving into more and more obvious division with terrorism and war—even amidst the very simple individualism of what feels like *the end of the world* during finals—we created a kind of unity that only comes in song.

We went to church to sing together.”