

## Carrying the Torch

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017

### Opening

Good morning everyone! I am truly honored to be giving today's Chapel. It's been a dream of mine since I was a homesick, would-be camper Crogge in 2006. I'm especially honored to be speaking to you all in the midst of Timanous' 100<sup>th</sup> Summer.

TO THE HUNDY!

100 years is a remarkable amount of time. At the time of Timanous' first summer in 1917, World War I was still being fought, Babe Ruth was a star pitcher for the Red Sox, Jazz was the hot new music genre, and Pineman was in Eagles. All kidding aside, an incredible amount of change around the world has occurred since that inaugural summer. And yet, somehow, this place hasn't really changed. We still don't use electricity. We walk on the *same* grounds as people who passed away before we were even born. We still eat in a barn that was once used as an *actual barn*. People forget that.

A common phrase alumni let out upon walking on these grounds is "It hasn't changed at all". Until recently, I couldn't fully understand why that alum would say that. It seemed silly to me, frankly. In the span of the last three summers alone Timanous added a gaga pit, an "H" to main dock, paddleboards, two fold-up tables in the barn, and long hair to Dan, George, Hambone and Evan—among others.

How could things have stayed the same when there's constant change going on here? Over the course of a century, how has life here stayed the same? The answer, naturally, is a deep and mysterious one; but I feel the closest to it when considering a particular line in the Call to Worship, which I will close with. The line is "The bliss of growth; the glory of action; the

splendor of beauty.” Each of these three insights perfectly captures the eternal spirit of Timanous.

*Let’s start with the splendor of beauty:*

### **The Splendor of Beauty**

I want everyone to take a moment and look up at the trees. Really observe them. Where else in your life do you get this image on a day-to-day basis? Think about it: this is where we all *live*. We are blessed beyond belief to get to occupy this plot of land. In all these years, these trees have stood tall, watching over us and listening to our words. Most other settings would have either uprooted or chopped down these pines by now. But here, they make the place eternal.

There’s something satisfying then, when considering the amount of change that could have been inflicted upon this place. The passing of the torch isn’t always a smooth one, yet we pass it on summer after summer without any burns. That is because there is an eternal respect for this place that connects all that step foot onto it. It allows the old to trust the young—a topic I’ll touch on later.

We often forget about the beauty around us here because we are often too wrapped up in our own minds. Try as we may, we all struggle with sweating petty stuff, or wrestling with our fears and anxieties. What makes Camp such a special place is that in this environment, it’s easy to defeat these concerns, or at the very least, keep them at bay. Consider the passage of a day at Timanous. There’s an immense amount of joy to be had in the simplicity of it. There’s so much to love! I love watching the sun peak out over the pine trees in the morning, and pour in pockets of sunshine over the dock. I love the moon acting as a natural flashlight when I wake up in the

middle of night to take a 50. I love the vastness of the blue sky as the sun beats down on the field in the afternoon. I love precious our pony, and snowflake our white horse.

All kidding aside, the splendor of Camp Timanous allows us to remove ourselves from the struggles of our day, and remind us of how lucky we are to be here in the first place.

**Now will the choir please join me in singing “Here Comes the Sun”, an insert.**

### **The Bliss of Growth**

*I'd like to now talk about “The Bliss of Growth”*

Growth is a central part of Timanous’ culture. Embedded here are traditions that proudly display one’s growth: the signatures in the Crows nest, the countless relics that hover over the barn, the Woodsman and Voyager clubs. Each of these checkmark points has a story belonging to a particular summer or era. Moreover, these plaques and signatures represent a snapshot of the summer, a rare glimpse into the past for all to see.

While these relics of time help tell the story of Timanous, they only cover a moment in time, not the entirety of one’s growth. Take the Hall of Fame for example: some of Camp’s most influential figures have never had their name immortalized on there, yet they have left behind a much bigger impact than their camper career would suggest. Gugs’ name isn’t displayed in the barn, but his ferocious dedication to teaching young sailors has left an impact on anyone who’s ever been in a JY. Evan Cummings was never a voyager, but his loyalty to camp—14 summers and counting—is evident daily. Dustin... well, he was never a camper, but his impact at the Rifle Range—and throughout Camp—is immense and astonishing.

The reason I bring these guys up is because they all have grown blissfully, without these traditional acknowledgements of growth. We all either have similar stories of growth, or are on our way to. The strides we make over the course of each summer, is also eternal.

I can see the strides in my Loons cabin. I've had most of these campers for two or three summers, and their strides extend far beyond that of a fastwalker. The progress they've made brings me endless joy, so I thank you all for that. Just the other day Will {camper's last name} noted that the sound of the sprinkler on infirmary hill reminds him of the beat to "The Eye of the Tiger". Now every time I walk down the path I hear DUN...DUN DUN DUN... DUN DUN DUNNNN. Just three summers ago he would cry over temporarily losing a sock. If that's not growth, I don't know what is.

Each of us possesses a great capacity for growth. In this setting, with these people, we are all capable of growing in leaps and bounds. This potential is cultivated thanks to the trust between the old and the young here. I've learned a lot from my Loons cabin, growing plenty in my first year as a head counselor. I don't know for a fact, but I hope my campers have learned a lot from me.

**Now will the choir please join me in singing "Ripple", an insert.**

### **The Glory of Action**

*Finally, "The Glory of Action"*

Within each day is an endless possibility. There is no eight-hour school or workday to sift through. We are constantly moving from one period to another. Our days start so immediately. Where else is waking up at 7:45 AM considered sleeping in?

This allows us to experience the full cycle of a day. From the moment the first bell rattles throughout the bunkline on a gloomy morning to the staggering stumble of tired legs

down the field after free evening, we are getting the most out of our day. In between those times are frequently changing activities and vibes that keep us at once in constant action and eternal peace.

It's part of a ripple effect to everything we do. That is what makes our actions eternal. Consider: An older camper helping carry a Mallard's laundry bag down to his cabin; an experienced ball player teaching a new camper how to make contact with the ball; picking up trash along the path. Over and over again, we are granted opportunities to take action and make camp better. Perhaps that older camper and the Mallard form a strong bond, one that lasts until they're both in Green. Maybe that camper goes on to coach a Twilight League team, teaching a new generation of guys how to make contact. The trash you pick up on the ground when seemingly no one is watching simply makes camp a cleaner and better environment.

Acknowledge the ripple effect you can leave behind on this place. The simplest things you do here can leave a profound impact on those around you. So take action. Don't fear the possibility of failure or judgment from your peers. Your embarrassing moments, failures and shortcomings are forgotten immediately. The positive impact you leave here is *eternal*. We all have our fingerprints on the torch in one way or another. Take great pride in that. Here's to another 100 years. Happy Hundy, everyone.

**Now will the choir please join me in singing "Wooded Path", located on page 7 of your hymnal.**

## **Call to Worship**

Look to this day! For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence: The bliss of growth;  
the glory of action; the splendor of beauty.

For yesterday is already a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision. But today well lived  
makes every yesterday

A dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day.

Such is the salutation of the dawn.