



POST-GATHERING BOOKLET

Introduction

We made it! After CLAY 2018, we've traveled by various routes, whether by rail, ferry, road and/or sky that, like threads, link Thunder Bay to our homes. CLAY 2018's *Threads* has now been woven into the cloth of our shared experiences — something that will always be with us, something we may soon forget, something to share with others or to wrap ourselves in as we settle down with our own, private thoughts. Whichever way, threads had an effect on us all and we'd like to invite you to reflect on what those threads are and what we can do with them, individually or together, in our continuing story.

As you come back together as a beautiful tapestry of threads in your homes, your churches and your communities, we invite you to share your experiences with each other – to examine the many threads of CLAY and see what they have become in you. We offer you this booklet to debrief and have also provided ways for you to share *Threads*.

May you know that you are always an important thread in God's story and that God is always present in your story, too. Together, they make a beautiful pattern called 'you' for everyone to see! May the Lord continue to bless you and the many threads in your life, today and always.

See you in 2020!
— 2018 NPC —

1. From the Story of God ...

The many books, chapters and verses of the Bible can be considered the individual threads that together create the fabric of God's story for us. Now that you've returned home, what biblical thread (or story) do you now like, relate to, or remember most from CLAY 2018?

2. ... to the Story of US ...

CLAY 2018's *Threads* — including your journey there, your experiences at CLAY and your trip home — created a swatch (a small piece) of the quilt that will make up your life story! We hope that it was a fantastic experience, but we know that everyone sees something different in every experience. Maybe it was out of this world positive! Maybe it left you with more questions than before. Maybe... whatever! Think about how you feel about your experience at the gathering or perhaps CLAY's significance to you and then choose one of the following classical opening lines to represent the start of your story and share with your group why you chose that one (or one of your own).

"Once upon a time..." — a common fairy tale

"A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away..." — George Lucas, *Star Wars*

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." — Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is..."
— J.D. Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye*

"It was a dark and stormy night..." — Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *Paul Clifford*

3. ... to OUR common threads.

CLAY is always an experience for people and often it is a positive and inspiring one. We hope that CLAY 2018 was exactly that for you! We pray that God has used *Threads* – CLAY 2018 to become a part of your life, and that you can see how God's story and each of our stories are all part of the same tapestry of life. This is captured well in the scripture from Matthew 25:37-40 :

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?"

And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

How can you or your group use the experience you have gained at CLAY to weave it into your life, into the story of your friends and family and the story of your congregation? In other words, how can you share CLAY 2018 with these people in a meaningful way so that their threads, your threads and God's threads all come together? Brainstorm with your group and here are some other suggestions to get you going!

- You can use photos your group took and songs from the LGGs to make a presentation (e.g. Microsoft powerpoint) to share with your congregation and families.
- CLAY was about stories, so write a story for your church bulletin or newsletter telling the congregation about your experiences at *Threads* – CLAY 2018!
- You can lead a worship service that includes using the bible scripture readings from the Pre-Gathering Bible Study, stories from LGGs, and songs from the gathering
- You can choose a favourite activity and use it in conjunction with a lunch prepared by the youth to share your experiences AND as a fundraiser for CLAY 2020.
- You can use an interactive game like a web builder where people sit or stand in a circle (youth and congregation members mixed). Toss a large ball of yarn from one CLAY participant to the next explaining what you enjoyed or got from CLAY 2018. Then have the congregation members pass the ball back and forth explaining what they see in you as a result of your statements. In the end, you will see that we are all a thread in the story of CLAY – whether we were there or not!
- You can adapt the National Youth Project activity to do with your youth group or faith community. The activity will be found on the CLAY website after the Gathering is over. You will also be able to download the postcards from the website. You can look for different educational resources to come out over the next two years to help educate us about the issue of Housing and Homelessness.