** The Episcopal Diocese of Lexington\_\_  The Cathedral Domain (606) 464-8254**

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Friends,

May I trouble you for a few minutes of your time to share a gift with you? Having the opportunity to share my Domain story is one of the great blessings of my life. The Domain has been my soul’s happy place for decades and holds many of my most cherished memories and transformative moments – experiencing the unconditional love of my friends and Episcopal family at camps, Happenings, Confirmation, the Baptism of my youngest child, the renewal of my marriage vows. The gift that is the ministry of the Cathedral Domain is a thread connecting me to God’s love and woven through every experience of my life from youth to adulthood.

I first experienced the Domain as a camper at Junior Conference. Junior Conference is the camp for middle school aged young people, and at that stage of my life, there was little scarier than the idea of spending a week on the top of a remote mountain with a bunch of complete strangers. I remember walking into the opening meeting in Patterson desperately hoping for a friendly face. A few ice breakers and lots of laughs later and many of those faces not only became friendly, but to this day are counted among my closest and most cherished friends. I came back year after year, event after event, jumping on every opportunity to return “home”.

Throughout the trials and tribulations of youth, the Domain was the one place that I knew I could always go to find love and acceptance. God’s unconditional love was palpable in that place, even surrounded by 100 or so other teenagers – who, let’s face it, are not always known for being non-judgmental. To this day, moments like my Confirmation, which took place in St. George’s Cathedral one beautiful spring afternoon during a youth rally over St. George’s Day weekend, remain some of my most cherished. Surrounded and lifted up by the love of my friends and Christian family I learned that nothing could separate me from God’s love, and that even as a teenager, \*I\* had the power to share God’s love in the same open and boundless way it had been shared with me.

I took this renewed commitment to my faith down from the mountain and served in my home church. I tried to incorporate that feeling, those lessons, in everything I did. And it has made me a stronger, wiser, and more compassionate leader in every aspect of my life. The older I get, the more I recognize the continued impact of these gifts throughout my life. The lessons learned at the Domain are truly woven through every fiber of my being. These gifts call me to be a better person, a better Christian, a better leader, a better friend - every day of my life. As a parent, I now have the distinct joy of watching my children experience these same blessings. Of watching them be wrapped in the arms of God’s immeasurable love and be called into deeper relationship with Him and with the rest of God’s children.

At every stage of my life, the Domain has offered a boundless source of welcoming and love and growth and spirituality. But the reality is that none of that would have been possible in my life if it weren’t for the generosity of those that came before me. I never knew it at the time, but I was the beneficiary of the Domain’s generous scholarship program throughout my camping experience. It’s impossible for me to imagine my faith journey, or truly any aspect of my current life, without the transformative ministry of the Domain as an inexorable part of my foundation. And I cherish the opportunity I now have to give back, through my time, and through my support of the Domain scholarship fund. Just like I will never know who paved the way for me to experience the Domain, I will never know who has the opportunity to camp because of my gift. But it is enough, no, it is EVERYTHING to know that through our collective gifts, the Domain will continue to lay the foundation of God’s love and to raise up beautiful, Christian leaders in our Children. I ask that you consider joining me in supporting this incredible ministry and I look forward to our next opportunity to gather together at the Domain and share in the immeasurable bounty of God’s love.

Love and blessings to you all,

Kat Luchtefeld

***The Cathedral Domain is a ministry where all people are embraced, nurtured, and sustained with open acceptance in God's love.***