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## Camp Alexander Mack

### News from the Director

It is a new day. It is a new year!

The year 2018 has ended in uncertainty and turmoil. There is great political unrest and the economy seems to be uncertain. It seems as though bad news continues to pile up on top of bad news, yet in the midst of trouble, we know that God is faithful and promises life, beauty, and joy. Here are some of my favorites from the Common English Bible:

- Psalm 33:3: *Sing a new song. Shout! Play beautiful music.*
- Isaiah 43:19: *I am creating something new. There it is! Do you see it? I have put roads in deserts, streams in thirsty lands.*
- Isaiah 65:17: *I am creating new heavens and a new earth; everything of the past will be forgotten.*
- 2 Corinthians 3:6: *He makes us worthy to be the servants of his new agreement that comes from the Holy Spirit and not from a written Law. After all, the Law brings death, but the Spirit brings life.*
- Colossians 3:10: *Each of you is now a new person. You are becoming more and more like your Creator, and you will understand him better.*
- 1 Peter 1:3: *Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is so good, and by raising Jesus from death, he has given us new life and a hope that lives on.*
- 2 Peter 3:13: *But God has promised us a new heaven and a new earth, where justice will rule. We are really looking forward to that!*

I find it is easy for me to lose sight of these very real reminders and promises of God when the stresses of the world weigh in. I have to take a break, to reflect, to bathe myself in the light of the Spirit, to connect with others in community. It is here that I can again see the wonders God has shown me. Over this last year, we have completed a strategic plan; we served more campers this year than each of the last several years; we have renewed our efforts to be good stewards of the resources we have been given; we have reconnected with old friends and made new ones; we have positioned the camp to provide significant ministry for the future. That doesn't mean we don't have issues yet to resolve. We are working on these, but in this new year, our focus is on the blessings.

Over the next several months, you will hear of our plans for the future, and they are built on your prayers, volunteer time, and financial support. They are also grounded in God's promises and the ministry of Camp Mack to provide sanctuary, connection with God, creative experiences, and community to as many people as we can. In our reflection, God has given us this call.

In your reflection of the last year, I hope you will count many blessings. I pray that you find many more beautiful experiences in the new year. I know you will continue to be a source of joy for us as we grow and change into the ministry to which we are called.

Gene Hollenberg, Executive Director



## Experiencing 13

New Year resolutions often include items relating to finances, health, and faith. My goals each year include many of those, but I always make nature related goals that include parks to visit, number of birds to ID, and other experiences in nature. After finding this full moon poster for 2018, I set out to experience all 13 full moons (within a day or two on each end to account for weather). It took on a life of its own as I set out to get different views each time, even if from my own property. The coldest moons in January, I took outside with temps below zero. My favorite was on Easter morning. I was in the Florida Keys on a marine biology trip. The special moment came when I was able to watch the full moon set on the gulf side and then turn around on the bridge to watch the full moon rise over the Atlantic Ocean. With each of these photos there are moments I won't soon forget. So, go ahead and make your New Years goals, and make sure a few of them take you outside to experience the beauty of nature.

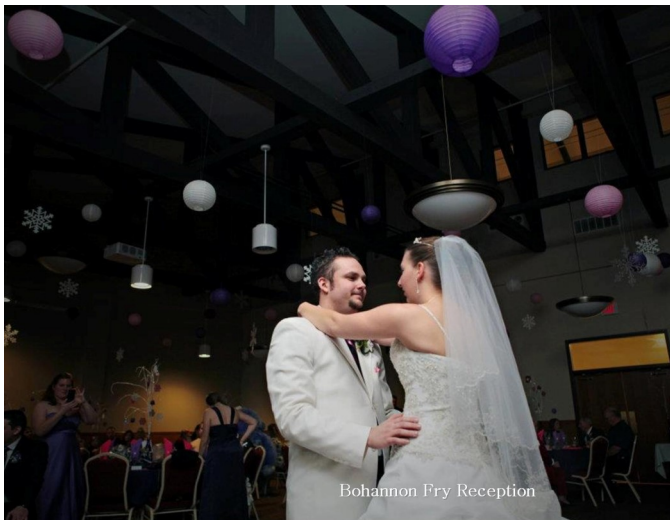
Jessie Kreider, Program Director



### Camp Mack Brides

On New Year's Eve, my husband and I will have been married for seven years. It seems strange that we aren't even in double digits yet, but at the same time it feels like just a few months ago, not years ago, that I was going to every bridal show I could and spending hours planning every little detail. Being a Camp Mack bride, I have a special place in my heart for all the weddings we host at camp. It doesn't matter if the kitchen is catering or if the group is just using our site, I love knowing that I am in some way helping to make the bride's and groom's day special. Rather than sharing a specific recipe with you this month, I would like to share a few of my favorite pictures of camp weddings, including my own.

Vanessa Bohannon, Food Services Director





## New Beginning's 2019



I am sitting here enjoying my second or third cup of coffee and contemplating what “we” have accomplished the past year. That “we” is the big we meaning all of us! Probably the biggest project was finishing the siding of Ulrich. It looks beautiful. We need to thank the Copeland family for their generous gift to do that and the anonymous donor who helped us finish. I also need to thank all of you who helped over the course of two years.

Another long awaited project is the stone work we have had done the past two years. This year the focus was on the Chapel. Chuck Eckert spent the better part of two months mortaring the joints. This now prepares the building for a new roof next summer. We hope to continue to work on our stone buildings each year for a long time.

We also spent time on roofing projects this past year. We have a twenty year cycle going here on roofs and we are about two thirds of the way through that cycle.

We began a new relationship the past year with some Eagle Scouts. So far they have completed three projects and we have two more waiting for warm weather this spring. The three that are done are the extension of the wetlands walkway, a new path from John Kline Center to Ulrich, and renovating of the Archery area.

The projects waiting for warm weather are a shore line restoration and a new compost area by the JKC. It has been really neat to work with the Scouts. I have met some great young men who want to help us with our sanctuary work here at Camp.

It feels like we are beginning to catch up on some of our deferred maintenance and this give us a great place to start on 2019. With the Boards Strategic plans for our future we are in a good place to accomplish those plans.

Galen Jay, Facility Director





### New Year, New Technology

When you start a new job, there are always new things to learn and among those are databases and other computer systems. Here at Camp we have three major systems: *Google*, *Quickbooks*, and *CampWise*. *Google* is our newest system as we switched from *Outlook* earlier this year. This change happened very early in my time here, so I think I had two emails in my *Outlook* before we switched. The second is *Quickbooks*, which is a pretty standard bookkeeping software, and it was rather easy to learn. We also added a new donation software: *Mobile Cause*, to the mix that we have been slowly rolling out. You will see much more of it in the future.

Now the big one is *CampWise*, it is the central database for all things at Camp and connects to the registration page that you see online. It was a difficult software to learn since it is very specialized to camps, meaning that the only help we get comes from *CampWise*. Back in August, Deanna and I spent two and a half days in training to better get a feel for the system. We both knew the basics, but this training took my knowledge to a whole new level.

What does this mean? First, it means that I should have taken more programming classes in college and high school, because I really enjoy systems, computers, and setting things up to succeed. More importantly, it means that we now know so many new features and ways to improve our current methods. So here are some things to look forward to this year that should make all things at Camp Mack easier for you to stay involved.

- **Better registration system for summer camp that is as easy as filling out the paper form, if not easier!**
- **Automatic receipts for when you make payments online.**
- **We will be testing a whole new way for camp reps to manage their church's campers. This will roll out for everyone in 2020!**
- **An online application to be a counselor, summer staffer, CIT, or general volunteer**
- **More integrated systems to make sure that Camp Mack staff can better communicate things like dietary restrictions, facility needs, finances, and staffing needs.**

Holy Hospitality means more than just having a phenomenal staff who are faithful servants. It means having a simple and easy way to be a part of this sanctuary. Look for all kinds of tutorial videos coming soon!

Todd Eastis, Development Communication Specialist



## Annual Dinner: Planting the Future

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The annual dinner is a special occasion in our spring schedule. The kitchen staff creates memorable appetizers and meals to share with our wonderful friends. One of the highlights of the evening is the opportunity to hear the stories of our ministry and its impact on so many children and adults. This year we will kick off our new initiative to grow our ministry: ***Planting the Future***

This fundraiser provides support for special projects and operations. The cost is a donation of \$35 per person, \$300 for a table of six or \$400 for a table of eight. Additional contributions are gladly accepted. Please contact our office to reserve your table now. We invite you to join us on Friday, March 8.

Appetizers begin at 6:15p. Dinner begins at 7p.



**Exciting things are happening at Camp Mack!**

## Be Our Guest

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### Indiana Churches – Do we have a deal for you!

For 2019, we want to encourage our Church of the Brethren congregations to consider booking a retreat at Camp Mack. Retreats can be expensive, but we have an idea to make it affordable. Any group of your church (Sunday school, board, leadership team, fellowship, youth, entire church, etc.) can schedule available space up to six months in advance. If the group is willing to give three hours of volunteer service during their time here, the lodging and day fees will be waived.

That means, your group of thirty people can come to Camp Mack, use our facilities, spend three hours volunteering, work on building the community of your group, and you will only be charged for the meals and any program support you may want. If all you want are meals, a weekend beginning Friday evening and ending Sunday afternoon would cost an adult only \$54.00. That's six meals and two nights lodging for that price. The price goes down as the number of needed meals goes down.

If this is something you are interested in doing, please contact Deanna at 574-658-4831. We hope you'll join us.





## **An Exciting Opportunity for Growth!**

In Chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew (a Church of the Brethren favorite), Jesus tells three parables. In the first, he tells of bridesmaids who were not prepared when the bridegroom arrived. He is telling us to be prepared and to watch for opportunities around us.

The second parable is about investment. Three servants entrusted with the master's resources make different decisions about the money, receiving different results. The one who buried it, had nothing to show when the master returned. Jesus warns us that we need to use what God has given us.

Most of us know the third parable well. Jesus tells that he will sit on the throne in heaven and divide the people into groups: sheep and goats. The actions of each individual toward people who have no power and few resources will determine if they are to receive eternal life.

All three of these stories work together to help us understand that we are called to be active – to do something. To be the wise bridesmaids and servants and to be the sheep means that there is work to do. Camp Mack has an idea for you. In the next couple of weeks, our 2019 program brochure will be sent. In it, you will see all of the schedule for the year, and our feature will be the summer camps. We count on many of you to volunteer, but we also know that volunteering is not always possible. What if you could participate in sending a child to camp?

Everywhere are children who need the Christian community and activity found at camp. What would it look like for you to organize a fundraiser and use those funds to send a child from your neighborhood to Camp Mack? Not only will you have the shared fun of working with others in raising funds, but you will also make a difference in the life of a child, or perhaps several children. They will find a place where love and family will welcome them, and they will return to your community changed.

We are challenging individuals and our churches to join together to make this possible. Find children who need this experience at your local schools or organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs. Send them to camp and let us know that you have sponsored them. When you do, we will contact your pastor after camp to let him or her know about the camper's experience. This can help you to build a long-term relationship with the child and his or her family.

Think about the impact you can have on your church and your community when you sponsor a child for camp!



# Upcoming Events at Camp Mack:

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## Camp Mack Calendar

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Jan 12    Camp Rep Meeting

Feb 14-17    Quilt Retreat

Feb 21-24    Scrapbooking Retreat

March 2    Team Leader Training

March 9    Annual Dinner

## Camp Rep Meeting

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Talking about summer camp and all the programs that happen at Camp Mack throughout the year starts now. We want all camp reps to attend the camp rep meeting on Saturday, **January 12, 2019 at Camp or at Union Grove Church of the Brethren in Muncie, Indiana.** We will be sending out response cards closer to Christmas. When you attend, you will have breakfast provided for you, you get all the print resources, camp staff will let you know about important changes coming to the registration process, and most important, you get to network with other camp reps to see what special things they are doing within their churches. Breakfast is at 9a with the meeting starting at 9:30a.



## Quilt Retreat

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This is a unique opportunity for quilters of all ages to gather and share their expertise and love of quilting while enjoying the tranquil scenery of Camp Mack. Bring your sewing machine, UFO's (unfinished objects), and quilting supplies. February 15-18, 6p Thursday (early arrival) to 3p Sunday. Cost: \$123 per quilter arriving Friday night, \$138 for Friday morning arrival, and \$167 for Thursday evening early arrival.

## Scrapbooking Retreat

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Crop until you drop with a weekend of scrap therapy. Bring the scrapbook you need to finish or may have been waiting for the perfect time to begin. Spread out your supplies and enjoy an uninterrupted time with fellow scrappers.

February 22-25, 6p Thursday (early arrival) to 3p Sunday. Cost: \$117 per person arriving Friday night, \$131 for Friday morning arrival, and \$146 for Thursday evening early arrival.





# Upcoming Get-A-Way Days

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***\*Please sign up for Get-a-Way Days 1–2 weeks in advance.***



## **February 10—Eagle Watch**

Eagle Watch is a program put on by the Upper Wabash Interpretive Center. We will meet at camp and then travel to the Salamonie Nature Center for a brief program on Bald eagle restoration in Indiana. From there, we will caravan to popular eagle locations in the area before ending up at the roost site. Dress for the weather. The colder the weather, the better the Bald eagle viewing. Sunday 1p–10p. Cost: \$20 (Includes travel and snacks)

## **February 23—Scrapbooking**

Join the Camp Mack scrapbooking crew for a day of preserving memories. Work on the book you need to finish, catch up on your journaling, scrap a page or two, gain inspiration from the projects surrounding you, and find treasures at the swap table. Saturday 9a–4p. Cost: \$15 (Includes lunch)



## **February 23—Board Games**

Winter is the perfect time to light up the fireplace, gather up snacks, pull up a table, and bring out your favorite board games of yesteryear and today. Saturday 9a–3p. Cost: \$15 (Includes lunch)

*-For more information, check out Get-a-Way Days at [www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days](http://www.campmack.org/get-a-way-days) or by emailing [info@campmack.org](mailto:info@campmack.org).*