Volume 4 Issue 1 | Spring 2025

CAMP MACK

Quarterly Newsletter

News from the Director

Continued Pandemic Impact



Sign up for

summer camp today!

Every good gift, every perfect gift, comes from above. These gifts come down from the Father, the creator of the heavenly lights, in whose character there is no change at all. He chose to give us birth by his true word, and here is the result: we are like the first crop from the harvest of everything he created. James 1:17-18 (CEB)

There has been a lot of talk this month about the five-year anniversary of the official start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the conversation has been about the consequences of this historical event and the effects we are still facing.

There are several members of the Camp Mack community who are still dealing with "Long COVID" symptoms, many of which are debilitating. A generation of children, particularly those in poverty, have significant gaps in reading and math skills. A society that had been already moving toward increased isolation became practiced at it, creating more separation between people.

Not only do we see this in the communities around us, but Camp Mack is also still recovering from the shutdown of five years ago.

In 2020, Camp Mack was positioned to become more financially stable than it had been for many years. 2019 ended with a solid balance in the bank; camp registrations were on a track to grow more than they had in the previous five years; partner rentals filled the calendar, and on St. Patrick's Day, it all ended.

You, our faithful community, reached out with financial assistance, volunteer work, gifts of important materials, participation in the few ways we were able to minister, and with prayer. We survived 2020 and opened again in 2021 with our staff intact and many camp improvements completed.

Yet, we continue to face the consequences of the pandemic.

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We have lost forty percent of our summer campers, engagement in many of our programs and activities is down 20%, and fewer people are volunteering and donating to our operational needs. There is no question it has been a difficult few years.

Nevertheless, we have faith, because God has always provided. Over the last couple of months, we have had more interest in partners wanting to use the camp for their own programs. There has been a small increase in participation with our programs. We continue to hope for an increase in our camping ministry. Our staff is working hard to find new opportunities for offering programs and services to the larger community.

As the verses from James tell us, God provides for us what is good and perfect. We have been created for ministry, and we can count on God.

You are the gift God gives us. You enable the harvest. In our work to overcome the continuing challenges of these days, there are tangible ways we need your help.

- 1. Continue to pray for our ministry of sanctuary.
- 2. Find children to send to camp. We need to increase the number of children at camp, so our ministry has more impact, and because a larger number of campers helps absorb the overhead costs we incur throughout the year. When you do this as a family, a Sunday school class, a church, or another kind of group, you are invested in the children you send. It means there will be somebody there to ask the camper about their experiences, and the ministry they receive from here will be reinforced once camp is over.
- 3. Engage in the many opportunities to participate in camp programs. When you sign up for a camp event, not only do you have the opportunity to enjoy the experience, but you are also providing funds that help bring down the cost of camp for children in the summer.
- 4. Volunteer. Your efforts bring down the costs of our day-to-day expenses, which means there are more resources available for campers.
- Donate financially. If you are not able to help in another way, your financial contributions do make a difference. They are spent carefully on the necessary operational and practical requirements of meeting our campers' needs.

The world changed five years ago. Our goal is to be present, active, and in ministry to all people who need us, particularly the children, many of whom have suffered the most.

Gene Hollenberg, Executive Director



"Our goal is to be present, active, and in ministry to all people who need us, particularly the children, many of whom have suffered the most."





Kitchen News

Centennial Events, Giving Day, and Sweet Bread

Cranberry Orange Bread Ingredients 3 cups fresh or frozen (thawed and drained) cranberries 1 2/3 cups sugar 2/3 cup vegetable oil 1/2 cup milk 2 teaspoons vanilla 2 teaspoons grated orange or lemon peel 4 eqqs 3 cups all-purpose or whole wheat flour 1/2 cup coarsely chopped nuts 2 teaspoons baking soda 1 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon baking powder Instructions Step 1: Move oven rack to low position so that tops of

position so that tops of pans will be in center of oven. Heat oven to 350°F. Grease bottoms only of 2 loaf pans, 8 1/2x4 1/2x2 inches, or 1 loaf pan, 9x5x3 inches.

Step 2: Stir together cranberries, sugar, oil, milk, vanilla, orange peel and eggs in large bowl. Stir in remaining ingredients. Pour into pans.

Step 3: Bake 8-inch loaves 50 to 60 minutes, 9-inch loaf 1 hour 10 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes. Loosen sides of loaves from pans; remove from pans and place top side up on wire rack. Cool completely, about 2 hours before slicing. Wrap tightly and store at room temperature up to 4 days, or refrigerate up to 10 days. Springtime is here again and this year is a little unique. We are celebrating our 100th anniversary and have two fun events coming up this spring! On April 26th we will be having an ADVENTURE DAY in the wilderness area. There will be wagon rides to the wilderness area, archery, nature walks, and of course the ropes course! Plus, there will be yummy treat options and a local food truck with food available to purchase. This is a free event that we are very excited about. Because of the amount of people we expect to have for this event, we would like people to register for a time slot for the ropes course. You can find the registration on our website (campmack.org).

We also have our annual COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE on May 4th. There will be wagon rides around camp, crafts, treats, and a Kona Ice truck with shaved ice available to purchase. This is a great event to bring people who are interested in our summer camp program and would like to see our camp and meet our staff. Program staff will be around to answer any questions about summer camp that parents or campers may have. We can't wait to see you at these upcoming events!

Camp also just finished up our Giving Day fundraiser. We raised money to replace the kitchen's walk-in freezer. Check out all the videos we posted on our Facebook page for more information on the freezer. We really need to get it replaced before the summer season starts, so that it is a safe place to continue storing our inventory. Right now the ice that builds up in it is a huge slip hazard for our staff and can also damage our products. We look forward to replacing it soon thanks to all the generous donations we have received.

I want to leave you with a new personal favorite recipe that I found this winter and have been making and freezing at home. It's from my trust Betty Crocker Cookbook. I found this recipe after I was given a big bag of dried cranberries from a family member and needed some creative ways to use it. So I grabbed my favorite cookbook that I received as a wedding shower gift. I hope you enjoy this yummy



cranberry bread as much as my family has. (Recipe in the left panel.)

Vanessa Bohannon, Food Services Director

Sunny Camp Mack

Spring 2025

It is mid-March, and our weather has turned unusually warm with temperatures in the mid 60's and even a low 70° with lots of sunshine. This is a welcome relief but also a reminder that we have a lot of work to do before we hear the sounds of kids coming to camp. Cory spent some time this week bringing in our fire circle wood boxes for repairs and painting. We built these several years ago and they serve well at each fire circle but just need some repairs and a new coat of paint.

I spent some time with Pieter, our Outdoor Education Director, back at the climbing wall and high ropes area checking on areas that need attention. We don't do repairs to the wall or high ropes equipment—that is done by the professionals, but we trim trees and mulch the area. The woods continually wants to reclaim that area!

With the warming air it is time to start thinking about golf carts. Cory got his out the other day, but I am not ready to ride in a golf cart just yet. Dick Fife and friends come up in the early spring each year and prepare our carts for the summer. We have 10 electric carts and now one gas-powered cart. These carts are essential to our summer work.

With spring wanting to come, it is time to work on our stone driveways. I take the skid loader and fill in the holes with stone, and then I get Knepp Sand and Stone to come spread stone over the whole drive. They have a

lime truck that holds 15 tons of gravel. It has two disk spinners and stone is delivered to them by a chain apron. The spinners spin slowly and deliver a ten-foot path of perfectly laid stone. It works great for our tree-covered driveways.

We had volunteers come for Volunteer Work Days at the end of March. They helped us in some preparation of this sanctuary space for our summer camping season.

Galen Jay, Facility Director



"This is a welcome relief but also a reminder that we have a lot of work to do before we hear the sounds of kids coming to camp."

Be Our Guest

Giving Day Volunteer Fun

Volunteering is a blessing and something worth some hours. I got to volunteer this last month amidst the breeze and the flowers.

During Giving Day, we had several folks around serving Camp. The morning was filled with projects and a time to revamp.

I worked on the team who picked up branches and sticks. From tiny twigs to hefty wood chunks, it was a diverse mix.

After covering about a third of the main grounds to the east and north, We filled a trailer three times, and could've kept going to at least a fourth.

We had a great crew with Galen as our leader and guide. He had a chainsaw to divide big pieces and drove the tractor with pride.

We all pitched in and enjoyed fellowship along the way. It was a brisk morning but no rain to complicate the day.

We accomplished a lot in that quick morning of work. The teamwork and many hands were a blessing and a perk.

Though I work here year round, it is always nice to give back. Can't wait until the next time I get to volunteer at Camp Mack.

Deanna Beckner, Guest Services Director



"Though I work here year round, it is always nice to give back."





UPCOMING EVENTS

April 7–11

Spring Break Day Camp: Grades K–5. 9a–3:15p, with options for before and after care at an additional charge. \$150 (some scholarships may be available). Fun, nature, crafts, free play, community, games, and more!

April 14 & 16

Homeschool Outdoor Ed Days: Survival Day—Build shelters, learn about survival priorities, and practice fire-starting skills. Ages 7–14. 10a– 5p. \$25/session (bring a sack lunch, or \$5 for a camp sack lunch). Dress for the weather. Clothes may get dirty.

April 18

Silent Retreat Day: Reflect on Good Friday as you spend most of the day in purposeful silent reflection, either at stations around iconic camp spots or how you wish, with art, reading, resting in nature, or something else that you feel called to. 9a–2p. \$10, includes lunch.

April 23–27

Spring Quilt Retreat: All filled up! Sign up for a future retreat or join the waitlist.

April 26

Adventure Day: This is a FREE day to enjoy camp. There are activities for people of all ages from wagon rides to archery and high ropes. Shawnanigans food truck will be there! Other snacks will be available, too. Sign up online for the challenge course time slots.

April 27

Wildflower Walk Get-A-Way Day: Explore the spring wildflowers as the forest floor comes alive. FREE. 2p–4p. Meet at Wampler; dress for the weather.

May 1-3

Birdwatching Retreat: Experience spring migration with birdwatchers of all ages. There will be offsite trips along with some time around camp. 6:30p Thurs. to 2p Sat. \$185 for 2 nights, 4 meals. \$140 for 1 night, 2 meals.

May 4

Summer Camp Open House: Bring your friends to check out Camp Mack! This is a great afternoon of fun exploration of camp. There will be wagon rides, crafts, treats, and a Kona Ice truck with shaved ice available to purchase. 2–4p.

Check out campmack.org and Camp Mack's Facebook page for more details.





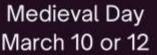


Spend your Spring Break at Camp Mack! Enjoy games, nature activities, crafts and free play.

April 7-11



2025 Spring Homeschool Outdoor Ed Days



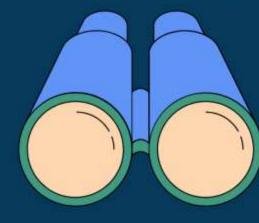
Survival Day April 14 or 16

March 10 or 12

Ages: 7–14 Cost: \$25 **Register at campmack.org**

Quilt Retreat Join other quilters and work on your latest project while enjoying a peaceful time at Camp Mack. February 13–16 April 23–27 October 15–19 (options for shorter stays available)

Birdwatchers Retreat



New and experienced birdwatchers are welcome to discover birds found at Camp Mack and on field trips to area birding hotspots. Open to birdwatchers of all ages. Anyone under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

May 1-3

Camp Mack Open House

Come to camp for a fun afternoon of snacks, crafts, and exploring! Our staff will be around to answer your questions about our summer camp program! We can't wait to see you this summer!

May 4th, 2-4PM

Spring into action and register for summer camp today!

Campers grow at camp.

SUMMER CAMPS:

Grand Camps: June 25-27, August 3-5 (grandparents of all ages/grandchildren ages 5-10) Samplers: June 22-24, July 9-11 (completed grades 1 or 2) Seekers: June 29-July 4, July 13-18 (completed grades 3 or 4) Finders: July 6-11, July 20-25 (completed grades 5 or 6) Followers: July 20-25 (completed grades 7-9) Youth Camp: June 29-July 5 (completed grades 9-12) Eco-Adventure: July 20-25 (completed grades 5 or 6) Splash: July 13-18 (completed grades 5-8) Target Sports: July 6-11 (completed grades 6-9) Culinary: June 29-July 4 (completed grades 6-9) Creative Arts: July 6-11 (completed grades 6-10) Survivor: July 6-12 (completed grades 6-9)





Contact Pieter

As part of the Centennial Celebration, we are hosting a Wilderness Area Adventure Day. There will be something for everyone to enjoy, regardless of age or skill level.

This FREE event will be held on Saturday, April 26th from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Camp Mack.

We have a full day of adventure planned for you, including our climbing wall, high ropes, zipline, archery, hiking, food, and games. The camp store will be selling items. Additional activities may be added later, so keep an eye out on the webpage.

We believe that this Adventure Day will be a great opportunity for you to connect with others and with God in a fun and exciting way. Come challenge yourself, have fun, and enjoy the beauty of creation in springtime.

This event is free of charge. While registering is not required, it will help us greatly with planning the day. You can register by scanning the top QR code above or by visiting the website through campmack.org.

We hope to see you there!

Wildflower Walk Join us for a free, family friendly walk. Learn about wildflowers found at Camp Mack. Meet in front of Wampler Lodge. April 27, 2-4p

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 2025 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Save the date for the largest celebration in Camp Mack history! Spend Sunday, August 10th with your camp friends at reunions for current and former campers. Then, gather with the entire Camp Mack community in Quinter Miller Auditorium for a time of worship and dedication before closing out the day with a popcorn campfire with all your favorite songs. Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime celebration!