

# CAMP MACK CIRCLE

Quarterly Newsletter



## News from the Director

### Giving with Intention

*Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will succeed.*

-Proverbs 16:3 (CEB)

The end of the year is the time of year I review my finances. Part of that is preparing for tax season, but another part is reviewing how my money has been spent. I truly believe that our spending is a reflection of our values and priorities.

Last year we spent more on house repairs, groceries, and eating out than we wanted to. We also spent less on utilities and car repairs than budgeted. I can't control unforeseen repairs, and it was a year when we had the opportunity to correct several issues in the house. I know grocery prices are going up, so we could either increase our budget for 2026, or we could do better planning and hold ourselves accountable to the budget we set. The same is true for our eating out budget. I'm proud of the fact that our utility expenses went down, but before we tighten that budget, we still used the three-year average to set 2026. The same goes for car repairs.

We came to budgeting later in life than we should have. But we finally got fed up with not having enough money to do what we wanted to do when the time came. A prime example of that was in our giving.

I had always felt guilty about the fact that our giving wasn't at least 10%. We made our commitment to the church and paid that weekly, but the other areas we supported didn't bring the total high enough. When we started budgeting, though, we set a percentage we wanted to give from our income, and divided that total out by 12, setting aside that amount each month. That meant we had money to give to causes along the way when they asked.

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Yet, I knew that organizations we valued highly were not receiving as much from me as we wanted to give, because we still weren't regular givers. We needed a way to make sure we were giving in a way that reflected our values, not just sending money every time a worthy cause asked. That's when I began setting up regular payments through our bank. Now, I sit down at the beginning of the year, and when we decide how much we are budgeting, I add up how much we plan to give to our church, to Camp Mack, and three other organizations we prioritize. I set up automatic payments from my bank or a credit card, add up the total, and add an additional amount monthly for other giving opportunities as they arise. If we end the year with money unspent, we choose who to send it to.

I share this with you because in 2026, we are going to be asking the Camp Mack community to consider making monthly or quarterly commitments. Even small gifts given this way have a much greater impact on our ministry because we know we can count on them. If you are ready to begin this process now, contact either Deanna or myself, and we can get you started. If not quite ready, please watch for the information coming out through this year and allow us to share with you the benefits of regular giving.

It really is a blessing to support ministries throughout our community, and having a plan that ensures we are providing for them gives me peace of mind that our spending reflects our values.

Gene Hollenberg  
Executive Director

**“We needed  
a way to  
make sure  
we were  
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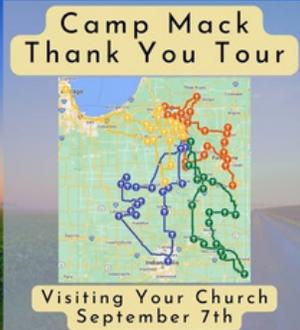
## Kitchen News

"None of these amazing events would have happened without you!"

### Exciting Centennial Recap

As 2025 has come to a close, I want to reflect on all the amazing things that happened at camp last year. Celebrating 100 years of ministry is such an honor, and I had the privilege of helping plan all of Camp's celebratory events.

In September of 2024, 13 staff, volunteers, and board members spent the day delivering thank you signs to 78 churches that support Camp Mack. On the 100th anniversary of the first camp board meeting, Nov 27th, the **Thank You Tour** video was posted and we kicked off a year of celebration! Looking back on the last year, the biggest takeaway I have from these events is how overwhelmingly grateful I am to be in this place at this time. It has been an honor, although a bit of an exhausting one if I'm completely honest, to get to hear everyone's stories of Camp, to plan all these great events, and to help you all create new memories. To get to pour over the history of the last 100 years and dream about the next 100—what a privilege it has been! I would like to thank each and every one of you for the support you have shown, and a special thanks to all the staff and volunteers who helped make this year such a success. None of these amazing events would have happened without each of you!



Speaking of staff, our first guest event at camp for the 100th anniversary was a **summer staff reunion**. Around 40 previous summer staff members came together for a great day reminiscing about their summers spent cleaning buildings, lifeguarding campers, and washing lots of dishes! I personally enjoyed seeing so many generations of summer staffers all coming together. It was great to meet up with friends I had worked with during my years on summer staff and equally great to see the summer staffers that I have had the privilege of leading as the Food Service Director. I also enjoyed getting to hear stories from staffers who were working when I was a camper. We had many people who had previous camp counselors in the room. What a great way to remember why we do what we do and how important our summer staff are to the mission of Camp.

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January brought one of the most exciting events of the anniversary, the **Caribbean Cruise** hosted by Becky and Paris Ball-Miller. 70 participants went on a 6 day, 5 night cruise on Royal Caribbean's Independence of the Seas with stops in the Bahamas and Cozumel, Mexico. Everyone arrived in Miami, Florida the day before the cruise left, and Becky arranged transportation the day of departure to get everyone to the port after a quick introductory meeting that ended with a fire drill! Everyone got into their rooms and explored the ship until dinner time, where we met back up in our designated dining area, the same area we would meet up at each evening. I personally enjoyed having great meals that I didn't have a hand in preparing! Definitely a great vacation perk! Our first stop at CocoCay in the Bahamas was wonderful. It was sunny and warm and everyone seemed to enjoy their various activities and excursions. The next day was a sea day, and the water was a little rough. Several people were feeling a little sea sick, myself included. We had a Camp get-together in the afternoon and then had a formal night in the dining room. The weather was not as great in Cozumel—several excursions were canceled due to the rain and rough water, but the land excursions were all great! We had one more day at sea before arriving back in Miami. It was definitely a memorable trip!

The weekend after Valentine's Day, we hosted a **couples retreat**. Aaron and Maria Alexander led 8 couples through some great conversations and activities. They had a lovely candlelit dinner on Saturday evening.

In April, we hosted **Adventure Day** out in the wilderness area. This was a free community event where participants were encouraged to pick a time slot to complete different parts of the challenge course. We had people doing both courses of the high ropes course, climbing on the climbing wall, and going down the zip line. There were lots of other activities along the trails like scavenger hunts, sensory bins for the little kids, corn hole, 9 Square in the Air, and archery. We also partnered with a local food truck, Shannigans, to come out and have lunch available at the entrance to the wilderness area. Cory Charwood drove the tractor and wagon back and forth from the ropes course to the main part of Camp. A big thanks to him and Pieter Tramer for planning this fun event that we look forward to hosting again in 2026!

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Couples Retreat



Centennial Celebration



Cruise



Adventure Day



Centennial Celebration



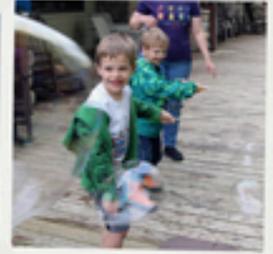
Adventure Day



Family Day



Open House



Centennial Celebration



Thank You Tour



Couples Retreat



Centennial Celebration



Adventure Day



Staff Reunion



Cruise



Centennial Celebration



Senior Camper Day



Centennial Celebration



Family Day



Thank You Tour



Centennial Celebration



Senior Camper Day



Centennial Celebration



Adventure Day



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## Continued Further...

The first Sunday in May, we had our **Summer Camp Open House**. This was an event we have been running for a few years now, where camp is open to people to come walk around, do some fun activities, and ask questions about summer camp. We had Kona Ice of Marshall Co. bring their shaved ice truck out. And, there was face painting and lanyard making, along with smores and candle dipping. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate with us, and it was rainy and chilly. But, everyone who came out for the day had a great time.

August brought THE event of the year—the **Centennial Celebration**. This was a great day of gathering, sharing memories and making new ones, worship, and being in community together. We had activities and games around camp, a campfire with songs, a canoe meal outside John Kline, a large worship service in Quinter Miller Auditorium, and a popcorn snack. The gift shop was open, and people could pick up their exclusive 100th anniversary swag that they had preordered. All the Waubee Waves were in the John Kline gathering room for people to look through. There were several locations set aside for groups, like our partner camps and rental groups, to meet up at. There was a video and photo booth set up to record your camp memories and stories. Several song leaders led campfire songs. We had so many people joining in at the campfire that we had to go get more benches for people! The canoe meal was a typical Camp meal, with hotdogs, chips, and cookies. We had seating inside and out, while most people chose to eat inside because it was so hot outside. The worship service was opened by the Church of God Family Camp Band, with a welcome from Gene Hollenberg. A video about Camp's founding by Bill Eberly was played, and the Columbia City Church of the Brethren did a skit based on "The Cornfield that Grows People." Reflections were given by Galen Jay (read by Tim Morphew), Becky Ball-Miller, and Jessica Kreider. The worship service closed with the singing of the Camp Mack song. Several volunteers from Union Center Church of the Brethren popped popcorn over the fire for a closing snack to end the day. While hot and humid out, the day was a great success, and we had over 320 people come to celebrate 100 years of Camp Mack ministry! This day was exactly the kind of celebration that the planning committee had hoped it would be when we started planning for it in 2024.

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## Kitchen News Conclusion



On Labor Day, we hosted **Family Day**. This was a day of fun along the lakefront. We invited our neighbors around Waubee Lake, along with anyone else who wanted to come, to come to Camp and enjoy our swimming and boating beaches. Everyone enjoyed getting to use the Summit, Camp’s inflatable slide. And, several people enjoyed fishing from the shore while their family members swam in the swimming area. This was a great community event, and it was fun to enjoy the lake with our neighbors!



In October, we had our last anniversary event—**Senior Camper Day**. This was a fun day for people 55+ to come and enjoy a day of camp activities. We had 18 participants who got to play Camp Mack trivia, learn to make pancake art, and sing songs around an indoor campfire. It was such a fun time!



I am so blessed to have been a part of all these events, and I can’t wait to see what the next 100 years brings to this amazing sanctuary space that I get to call home.

Vanessa Bohannon  
Food Service Director

"I can't wait to see what the next 100 years brings to this amazing sanctuary space that I get to call home."



# CAMP MACK

## Be Our Guest



### A Servant's Heart

As many of you know, I am not new to Camp Mack; I am simply new to the Guest Services Coordinator position. My mindset has always been that of a welcoming servant to others, and this role aligns perfectly with my approach at Camp Mack. I am here to welcome individuals and groups to Camp Mack, especially those who are not connected to specific programs or events that we fully facilitate. Additionally, I strive to support my coworkers in our shared mission to nurture the sanctuary that is Camp Mack, ensuring that everyone who walks under the archway feels the warmth of hospitality and is truly welcomed. This is a sacred and holy gift that we aim to extend to all.

Since I began this role right after the Centennial Celebration, my efforts toward this goal have been non-stop, often even more intense than I anticipated. I am grateful for the opportunity to actively engage in tasks that I might otherwise delegate to others, as this work is essential. Once those tasks were completed, it was heartwarming to hear our guests' feedback, expressing their enjoyment of their time here.

We welcomed a family for Thanksgiving, prepared a lakeside meal for another family, and hosted a long-time family that celebrated Christmas at Camp, as well as the Town of Milford, which had their annual Christmas Party at Camp Mack this year. College students came together to form a family in Christ, while high school students, chosen by their classmates to be leaders, came together and bonded during another biannual retreat at Camp Mack, creating their own community of leaders.

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**“My mindset has always been that of a welcoming servant to others...”**



# CAMP MACK

## Be Our Guest Continued

At times, we became a hub for board retreats. We hosted another camp's board, providing them with a space to envision how they could grow their camp while sharing insights into our plans for Camp Mack's future and our camp practices. On the same weekend, we also welcomed our own Indiana Camp Board. This wasn't the only time boards gathered at Camp Mack; in one weekend, we also hosted a school board, a district board, and a Board Games Get-A-Way Day. Although many meetings were taking place, there was certainly no sense of boredom at camp!

As the year wound down and the snow continued to fall, I was reminded that Camp's work continues. Recently, I had the pleasure of starting preparations for a family reunion around Christmas. They had visited other places after coming to Camp Mack to celebrate Christmas and the wedding anniversary of the head of their family. Yet, they chose to return and will be back next year because Camp

Mack holds a special place in their hearts. One of the grandchildren even asked if they could come back to Camp Mack because they hadn't had Christmas here in a while.

Camp Mack continues to strive to provide that sanctuary where people can experience holy hospitality, connect with God, engage with His creation, and build a family/community stronger than when they first entered through the archway. May your memories and feelings from Camp Mack return to you like gifts under the Christmas tree, and may you be drawn back to Camp to create new memories while continuing to feel the holy hospitality that Camp Mack strives to offer everyone who passes under the arch.

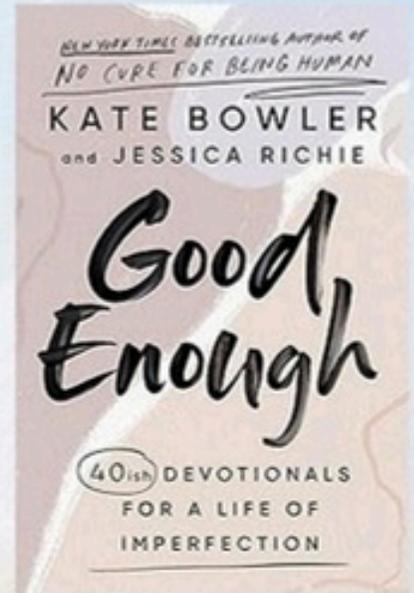
Chris Power  
Guest Services Coordinator

"...may you be drawn back to Camp to create new memories while continuing to feel the holy hospitality that Camp Mack strives to offer everyone who passes under the arch."



# Women Creating Community

## A Spiritual Journey Together



This book offers "fortyish short spiritual reflections on how we can make sense of life not as a pursuit of endless progress but as a chronic condition."

Some of you may have read Bowler's *Everything Happens for a Reason* and other lies I've loved. Bowler, a divinity-school professor and young mother, reckoned with a Stage IV cancer diagnosis when her son was quite young. Her writing is fresh, heart-felt and down to earth.

*Good Enough* is a book set up in "40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection" as it is termed on the cover. Bowler and Richie seamlessly traverse a host of ways we can be "good enough". Each of the 41 reflections (including "When Good Things Become Burdens", "When You Are Exhausted", "To My Body" & "The Cost of Caring") provides:

- a several page personal introspection
- a blessing for the journey in better understanding this reflection
- a "good enough step"
- quotes at the end to remind us that introspective minds through the centuries were onto something with these very topics.

Join Yvonne Riege as she leads this faithful, supportive, and reflective community in discovering the joy and freedom that comes when we acknowledge that God has made us "Good Enough!"

### Fall 2025

September 11  
October 2  
November 6  
December 4

### Spring 2026

February 5  
March 5  
April 2  
May 7

9 AM - 3PM  
Lunch included

\$125 per half-year

Financial Aid is available - contact [info@campmack.org](mailto:info@campmack.org)

Register at <https://www.campmack.org/retreats-and-events/#spiritual>

# CAMP MACK

*Homeschool Outdoor Education*



**February 9 & 11: Habitat Day**

**March 9 & 11: Play Day**

**April 13 & 15: Survival Day**

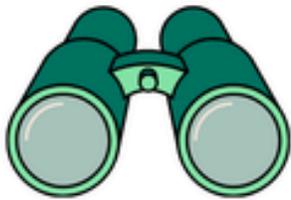


# WINTER *camp*



Missing Camp Mack? Want to try it out? Join us for experiences you can only have in the winter! For an extra adventure, we will travel to Pokagon State Park for tobogganing! Open to 3rd-8<sup>th</sup> graders. Register today!

**February 13-15**



*SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>*

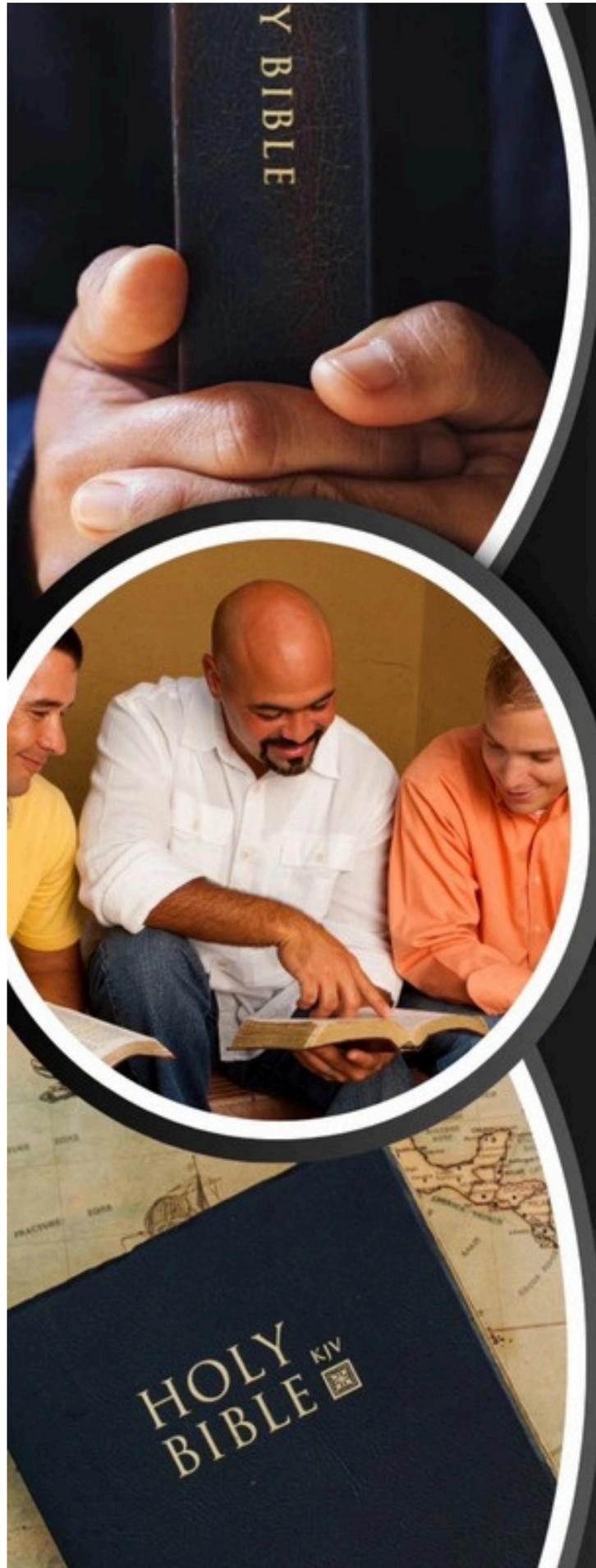
*1-9PM*

# EAGLE WATCH

*JOIN US FOR AN EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL DAY OBSERVING EAGLES AT  
POPULAR HOTSPOTS, LEARNING ABOUT THEIR BEHAVIOR AND  
REINTRODUCTION EFFORTS IN INDIANA.*



**Find out more and register today at [campmack.org](http://campmack.org)**



# MEN CREATING COMMUNITY

The Men Creating Community book study will return February 18th at Camp Mack. We meet from 9a-3p in Wampler with a break for lunch. This session our book for study will be by a local scholar J. Nelson Kraybill titled "Apocalypse and Allegiance: Worship, Politics, and Devotion in the Book of Revelation". We are hopefully that Dr. Kraybill will be able to join one of our sessions in person or via Zoom.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays**

February - May



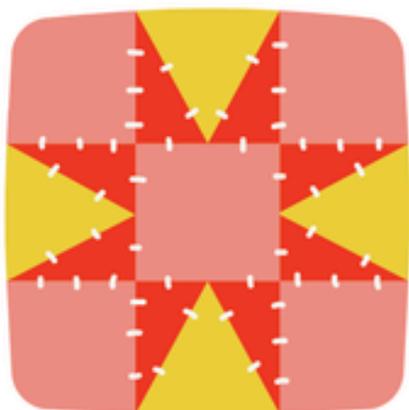
**From**

9.00 am - 3.00 pm  
lunch is included



**Contact Camp Mack  
for registartion info**

# Camp Mack Quilt Retreat



Spend a long weekend at beautiful Camp Mack working on your latest project with fellow quilting enthusiasts!

February 19–22

April 15–19

Save the date: October 14–18

Options of shorter stays available

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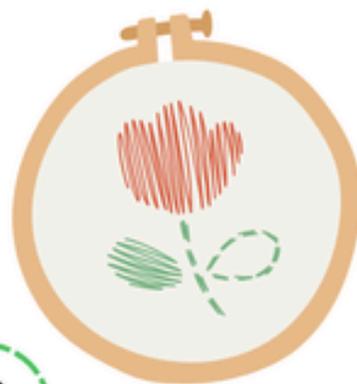
## scrap + craft retreat

Enjoy a weekend of uninterrupted crafting time at Camp Mack. Meet new people, enjoy meals & snacks, and craft all day long!

February 26–March 1

Save the Date: October 29–November 1

Options of shorter stays available



**get-a-way day:** February 28, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Save the date: October 31

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## knit + crochet get-a-way day



Learn a new stitch or pattern from a seasoned crafter or teach a novice a new skill in this get-a-way day suited for people of all skill levels.

February 28, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., lunch included

Save the date: October 31

Find out more and register at [campmack.org](http://campmack.org)

**MOTHER  
DAUGHTER**  
*Retreat*

March 21-22



Gather up the girls in your life and register for this fun overnight at Camp Mack.

*giving  
day*

Join us for a day of fundraising to replace the carpet and update furnishings in Sarah Major lodge.

*March 28*

**spring break  
day camp**



**ATTENTION K-5<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS!  
SPEND YOUR SPRING BREAK  
EXPLORING CAMP MACK!  
GAMES, CRAFTS, LUNCH,  
SNACK, AND MORE ARE  
PLANNED FOR YOU!**

April 6-10

*Birdwatchers*  
**BIG DAY**



Join us as we travel from Camp Mack to go on a full-day birdwatching adventure. Learn, explore, and connect on this extended day trip!

May 9, 9AM-9PM

**Find out more and register at [campmack.org](http://campmack.org)**

# Camp Mack 5k & Adventure Day

Saturday, April 25, 2026



## Adventure Day

11:00am - 5:00pm

Camp Mack's wilderness area has over 100 acres that houses a variety of fun activities. This free day will have the opportunity for people to enjoy camp activities like archery, zip lining, rock wall, high ropes, hiking, and more.

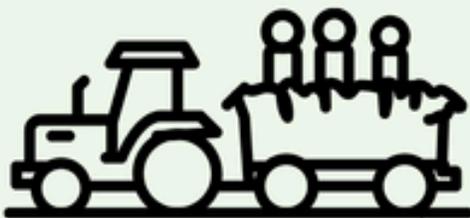


All Adventure Day and Open House activities are FREE.  
Food available for purchase

## Open House

11:00am - 5:00pm

Bring out the whole family for crafts, games, hayrides, and more. This is a great opportunity to introduce friends who have never been to Camp Mack to this special place.



## Cinnamon Toast 5K

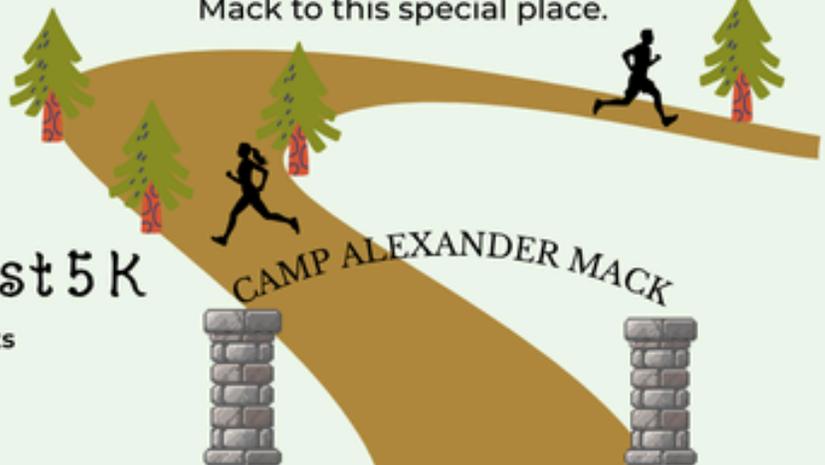
8:00am - Registration Starts

9:00am - Race Start

9:30 - 11:00 - Breakfast

10:30 - Prizes

Run an exciting course through the wilderness area and enjoy Camp Mack's famous cinnamon toast breakfast



[campmack.org/adventureday](http://campmack.org/adventureday)

