

The Link to a Place Apart

 Lutheridge

 Lutherock

 Luther Springs



CAMARADERIE

“Friendships up at Lutherock feel different,” says Tyler, a Lutherock camper this past summer. “They’re more cherished because you’re so closely bonded in faith and experience with people.”

Tyler was a camper for his fifth time at Lutherock this summer, but Tyler’s mom Ashley remembers his first year at Lutherock well. “The first time he went to camp I noticed the biggest change in Tyler,” Ashley recalls. “That week he was at camp, before he even left, he asked our pastor if he could sign up to be a lector for worship back at church. Camp made him more interested in church, and ever since that first summer, he is always the first one to want to say a prayer at youth group or at Boy Scouts. He has gotten to be good at praying!”

Ashley says that the camp community at Lutherock and the friendships Tyler has made have been really important to him. “Each summer, Tyler gets to make new friends and experience that camaraderie,” Ashley says. “Sometimes it’s hard to find friends you can talk to about God, but that’s what camp is all about.”

The combination of friendships and high adventure have provided Tyler with a unique environment to grow in faith and grow as a leader. “Being at Lutherock

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A Message From The CEO



Dear Friends of NovusWay,

As I write this, I haven't yet started in my new role as CEO. But by the time you read these words, my feet will be on the ground. I've already been joining meetings to get up to speed, so that I can hit the ground running on my very first day. To say I'm excited is an understatement!

I believe with all my heart that camp and retreat ministry is one of the most important doorways into the life of the church. I know this because my own story was shaped that way. I grew up going to faith-based summer camp and participating in youth retreats, and it was at camp that my faith first took root. I see the same life-changing work happening every summer in our programs - faith being formed, leaders being shaped, and young people learning what it means to be loved by God.

About 20 years ago, I heard my own call to serve in camp and conference ministry at Wild Women's Weekend at Lutheridge. (Admittedly, I "borrowed" many ideas that I learned from Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn who led the program that weekend when I became a camp director and later an executive director.) That's why I know this ministry isn't just for children and youth - it continues through adult programs and hosted ministries too. God keeps using our sites to inspire, to form, and to call people in every season of life.

The world around us feels so divided right now. But our camps and conference centers can be places of rest, welcome, and healing for all of God's people. I believe that NovusWay's sites give us a glimpse of God's Kingdom on earth - where all are welcomed, where joy is shared, and where God's love is experienced in real and powerful ways.

I am deeply grateful for the chance to serve this ministry and deeply grateful for YOUR support for NovusWay Ministries. I look forward to meeting you, our supporters and friends, as together we write the next chapter of the NovusWay story.

With joy and hope,

Lauri SoJourney

makes me feel more confident and strong in faith because you're surrounded by other Christian people and you're all there to grow closer to God," Tyler says.

Ashley sees the impact of a week at camp not only in Tyler, but in other youth from their church who spend time at Lutherock too. "I love to see the youth from our church who go to Lutherock and who come back so bonded as a group," Ashley says. Because their church supports their trip to Lutherock, the youth spend time telling camp stories on a Sunday morning a few weeks after they get back. "It brings a lot of joy to our congregation for adult members to hear about these camp experiences," Ashley shares.

Tyler is already looking ahead to next summer. "He's ready to go back," Ashley says. "I'll be ready too. It's so important to me that Tyler has a place where he can say, 'Hey, there are other people out here who have the same experiences and follow the same God as me.'"

Your gifts to NovusWay give campers opportunities to form authentic friendships as they have fun in God's creation. Thank you for supporting places apart where lives are transformed to love and serve.



GRAND

"I had never heard of grandparents camp," says Ben Moravitz. "But when I found out about it, I wanted to sign up right away."

Ben, a retired pastor from Georgia, has participated in events and programs at Lutheridge for more than 50 years. "I've enjoyed every time I've been to camp," Ben says. "I loved being a Confirmation Camp pastor and my wife Leigh enjoyed being a

CARE leader. Our children enjoyed their camp experiences at Lutheridge too. So, I hoped that our grandchildren could have a similar positive experience.”

This summer, Ben and Leigh brought their two grandchildren to Grands Camp. “It was our grandkids’ first time at Lutheridge,” Ben shares. “It turned out to be a great gentle introduction to overnight camping away from home. Having the grandparents with the kids at meals, during some activities, and overnight helped the kids to feel secure. Having time where the kids were in the care of counselors without grandparents around helped them to feel independent and it gave them opportunity to connect with counselors as role models.”

Ben says the grandkids weren’t the only ones who got something out of the week. The opportunity for grandparents to be together was an important part of the experience too. “Leigh and I appreciated the Bible study and conversation time with other grandparents. It gave us a safe environment to support one another in dealing with the challenges and sharing the joys of grandparenting.”

With so many years of experience at Lutheridge, Ben has a deep appreciation for the value of outdoor ministry. “There is a good mix between large group activity where kids feel like they are part of something larger than just their own group or family and small group activities that are geared to where they are developmentally.” Ben also says while at camp his grandchildren got to try some new things. “At one meal, my grandson looked at the food and acted really suspicious,” Ben laughs. “But by the end of the meal he had finished everything on his plate and was asking for seconds.”

Ben is grateful for the quality time he and Leigh were able to spend with their grandkids this summer. “It was unique that our grandkids got to go on a trip with just us,” Ben says. “And it was also unique that we got to share something that has been so important to us over the years. Lutheridge has been such a special place. I love that our grandkids got to come and see part of our world.”





FULL CIRCLE

According to the program staff at Luther Springs, Isabella Eastwood is the first “legacy” counselor at Luther Springs. Isabella’s mom worked on staff back in the early 2000s. This summer, Isabella became the first child of a former counselor to work there too.

With a mom who was deeply connected at camp, Isabella has been going to Luther Springs since she was young. Despite all that camp experience, at the beginning of the summer Isabella wasn’t sure if she was ready to be a counselor. “I had worked with kids before the summer,” Isabella says, “but being the one they relied on every day while at camp was a new experience. I’m grateful I had training to help me feel more prepared.”

Isabella says the staff training she received at Luther Springs gave her more confidence, providing her with the skills and practice she needed to serve as a counselor, especially as a Bible study leader. “During staff training we all taught each other the Bible studies we planned to lead for the summer,” Isabella says. “Some of us would even act like campers for part of the time. Learning to teach about God in a way that campers of different ages can understand was really helpful.”

Isabella says that leading Bible studies during the summer was one of the experiences she loved the most as a counselor. “I really liked one of the readings we used from 1st Samuel, the one about how God does not look at the outside appearance but looks at the heart,” Isabella shares. “That really spoke to me, especially when working with teenagers at a time when they are self-conscious about their appearance. Campers need an outlet to talk about that kind of thing because they don’t get the opportunity often.”

This fall Isabella started her college journey, and she has taken with her some of the lessons she learned at camp. “Being a counselor wasn’t easy at times. So that has taught me to stay calm and focus when difficulties come up. Some of the things I learned in staff training have helped me in my daily life as well.”

During the summer, there were moments at Luther Springs, when Isabella appreciated the camp legacy she was living out. “I remembered the games and songs from being a camper, and now I was leading them. I remember my counselors from when I was young so it warms my heart to know that I could be that person for some of my campers. It was a full circle moment. I feel lucky to have been doing what my mom did. Teaching kids, walking my own faith journey – I loved every minute of my summer.”

Thank you for your gifts to NovusWay which provide holy space and loving support for young adults to grow as servant leaders, teaching them skills they use with summer campers and in their daily lives among God’s people.



DIY

This summer at Lutheridge, the Lutheridge staff had a goal – to get campers involved in more leadership responsibilities during their time at camp. One idea that emerged from the summer staff was to give campers an opportunity to plan and lead worship. “To create that opportunity, we made some changes to the way we do evening vespers,” says Pastor Drew Yoos, one of the Lutheridge program directors. “We decided to make Thursday, the last night of camp, a night when campers would lead vespers for themselves. That took a little extra work from our staff, but the impact was incredible.”

To help prepare for vespers, counselors encouraged campers to incorporate activities and conversations that were meaningful to them into their plans. As a result, Thursday vespers often included a variety of experiences such as campers reading scripture, leading music on guitars and ukuleles, praying for cabinmates by name, and creating unique activities that proclaimed God’s love. One high school cabin decided to focus their vespers on “building each other up,” so they used natural materials to build a house together. One group of Outdoor Adventure Program campers each picked a different fruit of the spirit and talked about where it showed up in their lives.

Pastor Drew recalls that one week during the summer, an area director was a little alarmed to see a group of campers running down a hill beside the Lutheridge lake. “As the area director was trying to figure out what was going on, the campers rushed up to share the joy they were having in their evening vespers, which included running on the hill, skipping rocks on the lake, and coloring with chalk. They shared how cool it was that they got to choose the activities and talk about God at the same time. At the end of the week, it was their “God moment” from their time at camp.”

Hunter, a long-time high school camper, reflected on leading worship at camp saying, “A favorite memory of mine from this summer is when I was invited to play a song as part of camper-led vespers. Standing up in front of my peers and helping to lead worship showed me that there’s a place for me in the church and that youth add value to the church even if some people think we’re too young or don’t know what we’re doing!”

“All summer we heard great stories of campers excitedly planning and leading vespers,” shares Pastor Drew. “A lot of counselors said that some of their most meaningful worship experiences of the summer were camper-led. I’m excited to continue camper-led vespers next summer so that other campers can discover new gifts and experience God in even more ways.”



The goal of the Lutheridge 75th Birthday Capital Campaign is **\$3.6 million**. Toward this goal, we have received gifts and commitments of over **\$2.9 million**.

We are so grateful to the many friends of camp who have made their love of Lutheridge known through gifts to the Lutheridge 75th Birthday Capital Campaign. These gifts are funding exciting projects at Lutheridge. Updates to beloved spaces like the chapel, Faith Center, and Lakeside Lodge are wrapping up. New cottages in Pioneer A are coming soon, along with renovations to Efrid Hall and Kohnjoy Inn. This vital time of generosity and renewal continues as individuals and congregations strengthen the ministry of Lutheridge for generations to come.

NovusWay Ministries

PO Box 830
Arden, NC 28704
828-684-2361
www.NovusWay.org

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