

The Link *to a Place Apart*



LUTHERIDGE



LUTHEROCK



LUTHERSPRINGS



LUTHERANCH



As a kindergartener, Emily Bugay rode to Lutheridge with her family to drop off her big sister for summer camp during Christmas Week. She remembers being disappointed she wasn't old enough to stay at camp herself. As a six-year-old, Emily had already developed a love for camp through retreats with her church and family visits.

When she did finally reach the coveted age of 3rd grade, her family once again chose Christmas Week and registered both the girls. The week that July 25th falls in each summer is celebrated as Christmas Week at Lutheridge.

"My sister and I always attended the same week of camp," Emily shared. "I know now, as a parent, that was an ingenious decision by my parents."

Emily is all grown up now. Camp has always been a part of Emily's life and faith formation, but she remembers

clearly the time she realized the power of her camp connection.

"I was in middle school," she shared. "This will tell both our ages, but I looked over and realized the new visitor sitting in my church was my camp counselor from the summer before. It was Sarah Lang," said Emily. "I couldn't believe *she* was sitting in *my* church." Sarah, now Pastor Sarah Lang from Richmond, VA, was a student at Furman University. "I remember feeling like my regular life and my camp life had collided in this beautiful and seamless way. I realized for the first-time, Sarah was in college. She was a camp counselor. If she could work at camp, then I could too." And so, Emily did. As soon as she completed her first year of college, she served as a counselor on summer staff at Lutheridge.

During her first summer, she met Lee

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

“Well Done, Good and Faithful Servants”

On Saturday, February 1, nearly 500 people gathered in person at the Lutheridge Faith Center, with hundreds more tuning in online, to celebrate what God has done at Lutheridge for over 25 years through the remarkable leadership of Pastor Tim and Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn. This poignant and moving service of Godspeed marked the end of a successful and powerful chapter of ministry here and the beginning of a new one. It also marked the launch of a Summer Staff Alumni Network with Tim and Mary being officially inducted as the first members.



When I joined this mission two years ago, Pastor Tim and Pastor Mary greeted me with such grace and support. And now, having worked with them throughout that time, I have a newfound appreciation for the saying ‘standing on the shoulders of giants.’ So much of what this ministry is able to do now is due to those, like Tim and Mary, who came before us, investing and planting so much.

The most fitting tribute I can envision to their ministry here is what those of us left behind do with what God has graciously given us here at Lutheridge . . . as well as at Lutherock, Luther Springs, and Lutheranch. Therefore, I invite each of you to join me in taking up the baton to build upon the amazing ministry that is now entrusted to us.

I am excited to work with you and the awesome team here at NovusWay as we continue to move into all that God is calling us to be. For each camper. For each guest. For the Church. And for the world. And, just as you have seen here for the past twenty-five years, let hearts be set on fire, let God’s creation be explored, let lives be changed.

Thank you, Pastor Tim and Pastor Mary, for the gifts you have brought to Lutheridge and NovusWay. And thank you to everyone who joins me in honoring these two very special people. Well done, good and faithful servants!

In Christ,

Boyd W. (Bo) Harris IV is Executive Director-CEO of NovusWay Ministries

OPEN HOUSE AT LUTHEROCK

Saturday, May 2, 2020 from 10am-3pm

Free to the public!

Tours of camp and hikes to Crossrock leave at the top of every hour. Take a trip on the new ground to ground Zip Line and get a peek at our new Sky Park. Play games on the lawn. Visit the Camp Store. Play a little disc golf around the Sky Park. (Bring your own discs.) Get sticky at the S'More Campfire station. Bring your water bottles and snacks for your hike. Wear walking/hiking shoes that are comfortable and broken in. Lunch is served from 11:30 to 1:00. Donations accepted.

RSVP so we can plan for lunch at www.novusway.org/openhouse

Bugay. It was Lee's third summer on staff, and he served as the Waterfront Director. Lee went on to finish college and enter the adult world, and Emily served additional summers while in college. In 2007 they married.

"It is a gift to our life and marriage that our foundation was built on camp and church, and that those two things introduced us to each other." Emily and Lee discussed their wedding gift to each other, "what do you get the person who is giving you his life," she asked. Instead of buying physical gifts for each other, they started a tradition of giving to camp. "It has been a theme for us to make a gift to camp to honor and mark special moments in our lives together - our wedding, the birth of our children, their baptisms," she said. "Now our family honors us in the same way."

Emily and Lee maintained their connection to camp after their wedding. They served as C3ARE Leaders (volunteers who teach Bible Study) at Lutheridge and were excited to say yes to serving as OAP C3ARE Leaders for a couple summers. Emily went on to attend seminary at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary and has served in leadership roles in non-profits for much of her career. She credits her connection to church and camp for the calls and places she has felt led to serve.

When they moved to Greenville, SC nine years ago, they started looking for

a church family. "Looking back, one reason St. Michael Lutheran felt like home is because of the church's intentional connection to Lutheridge. It felt like an extension of our family as soon as we arrived." St. Michael hosts their Youth Sunday at the Lakeside Pavilion at Lutheridge each year and the entire church attends. Annually, St. Michael hosts a council retreat at camp, a Lutheroad in their congregation, and a group attends Wild Women.

This year, Emily and Lee will bring their children, John Thomas, age 6, and Adeline, age 3, to Family Camp for the first time. "They already know and love camp because we talk about it and go there with our church," said Emily. "My hope is that they develop their own personal love of camp this summer as Family Campers; the Spirit works in magical ways at summer camp."

This is Emily's hope for all children who attend camp. "I have served in non-profit calls where I provided services to at risk children and families. **We put a lot of resources and time into providing support that doesn't always have the impact that a single week of camp can have on a child.**"

Emily's life has been shaped by her church, camp and the connection they have maintained with each other. She is grateful for the ways in which church and camp have shaped her life, her marriage and even how she parents. "Those things cannot be separated," she shared.





PARENTS SAY IT BEST

A letter from a Camper Parent

Dear NovusWay,

My 9-year-old son, Jude, spent three weeks at a NovusWay camp this summer, and I want to share a little about his experience. I was introduced to Lutheridge as a volunteer by my college friend, Sarah, a few years ago. Over time, Jude has become so comfortable there.

This last winter, 2019, we received the NovusWay camp catalog in the mail. Jude grabbed it and plopped down on the couch to peruse. At this point, we knew he'd return to Lutheridge again and hoped he could attend Lutheranch since it's right around the corner from us in Atlanta. We wanted to support new camp endeavors. From the couch he exclaimed,

"I'M OLD ENOUGH FOR LUTHEROCK!"

Each camp, of course, offered different experiences. Lutherock was Jude's favorite. It's definitely more rustic and he enjoyed the off-site activities. The smaller size was also a perk for him feeling connected. He was the youngest camper that week, yet he felt included and had fun getting to know the bigger children. I

loved that he came home curious about backpacking and the Appalachian Trail having seen the OAP'ers head off to their adventures.

Lutherock was not an easy drop off as a parent. Jude knew no one and had never been on site. It was out of our comfort zone. Even still, I have always heard amazing things about Lutherock and knew he'd have a blast. And I know the NovusWay expectations of excellence. When I picked him up off the shuttle at Lutheridge, he was over the moon. He had a great week of adventures and was full of stories. I could tell he really got to know the staff and his program campers well.

Lutheranch was a whole new experience as well. It was a blast for Jude because he enjoyed the small size of the group. The activities were new to him. The size of the Ranch property and resources like the lake, pond, open land, and animals were a plus. He liked that the group had a lot of flexibility with their activities each day. They decided daily activities as a group and explored each day. Everyone got to know each other well. I felt safe dropping him off as the program

directors had hired a stellar staff with lots of experience. Again, we observed the NovusWay way of high expectations for programming, safety, and faith formation.

I'm so grateful for the invitation my friend extended years ago. It has been a blessing to me as a volunteer and a great way for us friends to connect. But the benefit I hadn't expected as much is getting to know a reputable camp institution in my denomination and watching my son thrive in a variety of environments. I cannot imagine the faith influence this will have on Jude as he grows. Our church community is central in our lives and I see how powerful camp is to our son too.

As I was thinking about this, I feel like this is a very privileged story. We are a middle-class family but as parents of an only child, I recognize it is much easier to send our child to 3 camps than the average family (travel time, finances, etc.). I hope families (and donors!) know that even one week of camp is a powerful experience.

We are already planning our 2020 summer.

Thank you,

Kate Elkins

**Kate and her family are active members of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Atlanta, GA.*

A CAMPFIRMATION WITNESS

Following each new campfirmation program at Luther Springs, campers are asked to respond to several questions as part of their witness from their time at camp. In a camper's words:

What does it mean that I am baptized and that I am a follower of Christ?

Ricky wrote: "I have been going to camp since I was in the 1st grade. When I was younger, the bible studies and devotion times were my least favorite part of camp. But this past summer, that changed. We really had some great conversations with our counselor. We would sometimes even end up on the dock at the lake talking late into the night about God and our faith and how all that intersected with our lives. By the end of the summer, I truly understood what it meant when he would say that God is with us... always. A few weeks ago, I really needed that message. On September 15, 2018, I lost one of my greatest friends, Matthew. He was killed in a car accident on his way to homecoming. We met at Luther Springs many years ago and usually ended up at

camp the same weeks every summer. Matthew was always that kid who made everyone laugh, even in the most inopportune time. I was really angry at God. How could He let this kid that everyone loved, just die? But then I remembered those nights at the lake and our cabin devotions. God is with us...always. He was there beside Matthew in that car. He was there to welcome Matthew into his kingdom and he is here with me to help me accept it."





WHERE SKEPTICISM MEETS PEACE

“I signed up for this retreat with skepticism,” said Amy Carpenter. “I didn’t believe I could let go of my incessant planning, worrying and analyzing. I knew there would be no way I could turn my mind off and listen to God.”

Amy has been struggling with how to listen for God in her personal faith life. “I read my Bible and pray for others, but I just don’t feel like I can listen for God and hear him. I have been wrestling with how to do that for a long time.”

So, with little hope, she took a chance. She registered for the Labyrinth Creation and Mediation Retreat at Lutheranch in January. She didn’t know anyone except Christina Yarnold the Executive Site Director.

“We spent the first half of the retreat in solitude and meditation. No one spoke from Friday until 11:00 am on Saturday.” This was a first for Amy. She wasn’t sure how she would handle it. “I could have gone on,” she felt.

On Saturday, each person gathered rocks and intentionally placed them along the path of the new Labyrinth that together they created at Lutheranch for future use. “There was no prescribed structure to the process, but a flow and balance was found. We each found the perfect place for each

stone.”

After completing the Labyrinth, they began their walk.

“We began walking the 1000 feet of the path. Within a few seconds, time stood still or rather there was no time. Phrases of Psalms and hymns flickered in my thoughts and then left. When I reached the center, I found I was disappointed to turn and leave. We had built a bonfire there the night before and I found listening for God became real. I reluctantly continued out and felt the wind touching my skin. I heard the wind in the trees and the birds. I was, for the first time, hyper aware of God’s wonderful creation. God was right there all along the way saying, ‘this is how you find me’.”

Pastor Craig Storlie, the retreat leader, referred to what Amy was experiencing as “God time.” When everything else, worry, analyzing, doubt and time disappear and you are fully in the presence of God, able to listen. It was a first for Amy and she didn’t want to leave the retreat.

“The challenge for me now is to continue this practice at home,” reflected Amy. Each participant received a handout with ideas for how to continue their new spiritual disciplines when they return home. “I am finding I am leaving my cell phone

Visit www.novusway.org/category/impact-stories
to read additional reflections from the retreat.

at home more,” said Amy. “I thought anxiety would come from leaving it, but rather it comes from carrying it. Being unplugged is better. I am looking for a Labyrinth I can trace with my finger. I know now it is possible to listen for and hear God and I have more tools to help me.”

PS. We asked Amy for a picture from the retreat and she laughed. “I left my phone on my charger in my room the entire weekend, so I don’t have any pictures.”

Amy Carpenter is an active member at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta, GA.

HEY SUMMER STAFF ALUMNI

A new intentional network of summer staff alumni from all four camps is forming now. **The purpose of the NovusWay Alumni Network is to keep the summer staff of Lutheridge, Lutherock, Luther Springs, and Lutheranch connected to the ministry and to each other.**

If you served on summer camp staff you are already part of an elite group of awesome individuals. Were you on staff in the 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, 90’s or the 2000’s? You paid your dues by staying up late with campers, singing camp songs and leading activities. Stay connected to your camp community by joining our official Summer Staff Alumni Network. You will receive alumni news from camp and information about upcoming summer staff alumni gatherings around the southeast.

Reunions are already being planned for 2020 and 2021.

Join today by visiting the new NovusWay website and signing up to be a member at www.novusway.org/summerstaffalumninetwork.

Join the Network! Stay Connected!

Recognize these faces from the front page? This picture was taken during Mid-Summer Pause nearly 20 years ago. Camp relationships, like baptism, are forever!

Left to right: Rachel Dasher Hymes, Bishop Kevin Strickland, Lee Bugay, Emily Matthews Bugay. Emily is our new volunteer Alumni Network Chair.





REGISTER FOR

Summer Camp

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MARCH 15TH.

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www.novusway.org



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