

The Link to a Place Apart

 Lutheridge

 Lutherock

 Luther Springs

 Luther ranch



VITAL

On Sunday afternoons in the summer, cars roll down the dirt road into Luther Springs with children who are full of excitement for a week of camp. Some of them have been to camp before, and some of them are new campers.

Brother and sisters Josh, Karlee, and Julia* were new campers last summer. Luther Springs counselors love new campers, and they were eager to see what Josh, Karlee, and Julia's first impressions of camp would be. As the siblings began to settle into camp, the staff noticed some things about them. They didn't seem to have enough clothes for the week, and they were very hungry at mealtimes. "It seemed they didn't have all the same privileges in life that many other campers carried," remembers Assistant Program Director Macy Kennedy. "But boy did they exemplify joy, awe, and wonder!"

Camp staff eventually learned that a family friend had paid for the siblings to come to camp for some time away from a difficult home situation. During that time away, Josh, Karlee, and Julia thrived. One of their favorite parts of camp was their counselors, who were fun, attentive, and listened to them. "God was at work in those relationships, revealing kindness, gentleness, and security," Macy

Continued on page 3

A Message From INTENTIONAL INTERIM CEO



Greetings Camp Friends,

During this Season of Light, as I pause to reflect on how far we have come operationally as a ministry in the last year, I acknowledge that the one constant is change. While that is our reality when it comes to our day-to-day operations, it is also true for our campers like Jacob.

“Jacob has always been able to sense what others are feeling,” his mother shared when she called me at the end of the summer. “If he thought his teacher was upset, he would try and use humor to make her laugh. That would often upset her more, and he would get in trouble. Once we identified what he was doing, we talked to him often about alternative ways to help people feel better when they are sad.”

Today, Jacob is a strong, caring, and fun-loving 17-year-old with a cell phone and high school friendships that can get complicated. He had already spent a week at Lutherock, but toward the end of the summer, he was dragged into the middle of a social media battle within his friend group. “As we talked about how to handle the situation maturely,” his mother said, “he looked at me and said, ‘I wish I could just get rid of my phone for a while. It is too tempting to keep looking at it.’ He was actually asking me to ground him. Jokingly I told him it was too bad he couldn’t just spend another week at camp. His eyes lit up. ‘Could I?’ The next morning, a Wednesday, we called Lutheridge. They made a space for him to be a camper for the next week. “Knowing he was safe on the mountain, surrounded by the camp community, and away from his cell phone while the drama continued to play out back home was a true gift to me as a parent. When I picked him up, he acknowledged that being away and in God’s creation was also a gift to him.”

Our world has changed so much in the 70+ years of our Lutheran camping ministries, but the constant is how the Holy Spirit shows up in the lives of campers and counselors each summer, meeting them in our sacred spaces. Children and youth need camp. Parents need camp for their children. You make camp a reality. Thank you for all the ways you fan the flame of camp and make us stronger. Your generosity, your volunteer time, sending children from your church or community - friends, these are all ways you fan the flame of God’s love at Lutheridge, Lutherock, Luther Springs, and Lutheranch. The NovusWay team and I are truly grateful for your part in this ministry we share.

Dick Peterson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Peterson".

Intentional Interim CEO

says. Luther Springs was a place for these new campers to feel safe and happy and not have to worry.

At the end of the week, when it was time to check out, Josh, Karlee, and Julia joyfully told their mom how much they loved being at camp. Knowing how vital their week of camp had been, the Luther Springs staff offered the siblings' mother a camper scholarship to allow them to return for a second week. She accepted gratefully.

When their car rolled down the dirt road for their second week of camp, the siblings were so excited to see the Luther Springs counselors again. Now, they were experienced campers. They welcomed others, including some new campers.

Thank you for your gifts to NovusWay Ministries, which allow new campers to become returning campers and allow all to experience a place of safety and happiness regardless of need.

**Camper names have been changed for their privacy and protection.*



JUMPING FENCES

As an 11th grade student, Lily is a member of the local Future Farmers of America program. She was looking for a place to do hands-on equestrian work for her supervised agricultural experience, but that wasn't the only aspect of the site that was important to her. "I researched the motto of Lutheranch," she shared, "and it aligned with my beliefs."

As a barn volunteer, she was exposed to various experiences feeding and caring

for horses, helping with trail rides, and assisting with pony parties. “I even got to use a leaf blower for the first time,” she said. Lily enjoyed the personal relationships she developed with like-minded peers and the excellent guidance she received from Lutheranch staff.

She excelled in her work at Lutheranch during the school year. “I learned to get out of my comfort zone. I did everything from jumping fences to leading others on trail rides,” Lily shares. “I believe Lutheranch has led me to develop life skills that I will most certainly use in the future.”

Lily’s experience is just one example of Lutheranch intentionally growing in relationship with its neighbors. Lutheranch Executive Director Clare-Marie Hannon also points to leadership development programs with the local Chamber of Commerce and new collaborative work with the local school system.

“These relationships are important because we are part of this community,” Clare-Marie says. “Building bridges is a good way for us to share what we do at Lutheranch. But more important than that, it also helps us learn how we can support our community and help it address its needs.”

Lily also understands how vital those bridges are for addressing needs. “The FFA motto is Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, and Living to Serve, and Lutheranch provides students with the opportunity to do just that.”





ESCAPE

Wendy still remembers the night she got the phone call telling her she would be a Lutherock counselor. Deacon Wendy (Engelhard) Roberts was a student at Appalachian State University and had applied to be on the 1992 summer staff. Though she had only been to Lutherock once, she had fallen in love with the place.

“I was elated to be invited to be on staff,” Wendy says. “I was so excited to get to spend a summer outdoors with this special community of people.” Wendy worked for three summers at camp as a counselor and, during her last summer, as an environmental educator. “My summers at camp were so formational for me,” Wendy recalls. “Camp kept me connected to faith during my college years and instilled in me a lifelong love of God’s creation.”

Wendy still relies on many of the formational experiences she had while working as a counselor. Her summers taught her about responsibility, persistence in the face of adversity, and the value of being trusted by others. “I’ll never forget the pressure of having to start a fire and cook a hot meal for a group of waiting campers,” Wendy said. “But I’ll also never forget how young people supported each other with love and grace, and you could feel God in action.”

After serving in congregational ministry for many years, this summer, Wendy was called to the position of Candidacy Coordinator for the North Carolina Synod. In her new role, Wendy works with candidates for ministry and the Synod’s lay ministers. “It’s a joy connecting people with their passions and helping them go the places God calls them,” Wendy says. “I love affirming that God is calling some to rostered ministry but also affirming that some are called to lead in other ways.”

“Earlier this week, I was in conversation with someone entering the candidacy



process, and their experience at camp was an important part of their story,” Wendy shares. For many, serving on summer staff at a church camp is a step toward a vocation in ministry. “I think camp helps us escape the noise of everyday life,” she says. “It gives us ways to be in relationship with God and each other that help us hear things more clearly.”

Wendy is still grateful she got the call to be a summer counselor at Lutherock, and she looks forward to continuing to walk with those who are answering all kinds of

calls in their lives. Your generosity to our NovusWay camping ministries serves to raise up new leadership for the church by clarifying vocation and building responsibility, persistence, and trustworthiness. Thank you for your generosity to this ministry we all share.



TOURISTS

James and his family made the long drive from Pheonix, AZ to Arden, NC to spend a week at Lutheridge. The self-described “talkative” high schooler was excited for his 11th summer as a camper. He was an Asheville Adventures Program camper for the previous two summers and loved it.

“My mom explained that the program would be slightly different this year,” he

said. “I didn’t really have expectations for this summer. I just knew that we would go into Asheville one day and tubing one day.”

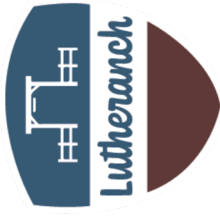
In previous years, campers went into downtown Asheville to shop and explore. “I was hoping for that again this year,” he said, “but I got a whole lot more. This year was more fulfilling. It felt like we had an impact. Normally it feels like we are tourists.”

This year, James felt like a servant. “We went to a church where they have a food pantry and a garden,” he said. “We were very hands-on, picking fresh food. The garden has a strong impact on the community. We also visited the Cherokee Reservation to learn about their culture and experiences. That was really personal for me. My best friend back home in Phoenix is Navajo. During the day trip to the Reservation, I got to play a hand drum and eat fry bread and Indian Tacos. I am so going to gloat and rub that into my friend because he has never made me fry bread.”

James is looking forward to going back and sharing his experiences with others at his school. “When I tell people in Phoenix, I am going to church camp the language really freaks them out. They think it is crazy to spend a week with no phones like I was being kidnapped. But the experiences of this week have helped open my eyes to certain things other people have to deal with and it has been very spiritual and personal week. I look forward to sharing that with my friends and helping them better understand why we make the trip each year. This week has really felt like the most impactful and fulling summer yet. Each day was a feel-good day.”

Like others from the group, James looks forward to serving on summer staff just as soon as he is old enough. Until then, he will continue to share with others in his community and friend circle the power of being in this place apart.





NovusWay Ministries

Change Service Requested

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

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
ASHEVILLE NC
PERMIT #575

In an effort to be good stewards, we ask for your help maintaining accurate records to minimize unnecessary postage.

Make corrections on the label. Mail it back to us or send an image to give@novusway.org.

- ☐ Name Change
 - ☐ I receive more than one copy
 - ☐ Address Change
 - ☐ I'd like to receive this publication by email
- Email: _____
- ☐ Please remove me from the mailing list