



CAMP LAKE STEPHENS UNITED METHODIST CAMP & RETREAT CENTER 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

While life at Camp Lake Stephens (CLS) in 2017 has been full of what you might expect - fun, faith, spiritual growth, a commitment to excellence, the year has also brought some significant changes. Yet still, despite the changes, campers of all ages continue to encounter God, respond in faith, and work to transform the world.

If you haven't come by in a while, put CLS on your upcoming list of destinations. We would love to get reacquainted.

DEPARTURE OF DARRELL WHITAKER HEADLINES STAFF CHANGES

Chief among the changes at CLS has been the departure of Executive Director Darrell Whitaker. After serving as Executive Director for 15 years, Darrell has said, "Aloha!" to take the Executive Director position at Camp Mokule'ia on the north shore of Oahu in Hawaii. The Camp family said farewell on Dec. 10th at a gathering in the Chapel building, sending the Whitakers forth with well wishes and some tears too.



Also leaving the CLS staff was Property and Facilities Director Brandon Gooch. After serving Camp Lake Stephens for 14 years in a variety of capacities, Gooch left at the end of January to assume duties as the Executive Director of Bellwether Farm, a new Episcopal camp facility in the Cleveland, Ohio, area. We wish Gooch, Candace, and Ellen well as they adjust to those northern temperatures!



CAMP BOARD STRUCTURE CHANGES

The year has also seen the transition of the camp's Board of Directors away from a more programmatic/managerial type of board toward a more visionary/advisory type of board. The board's primary functions will include setting the vision for the ministry of the camp, employment and evaluation of the executive director, financial oversight, recruitment of the most talented and gifted members of the CLS community to board membership, representation of the camp to the larger community, and support of the ministry of the camp through their own commitments of time, talent, and treasure.

In this type of board structure the board's work is more streamlined, the board is smaller in size (though with higher expectations), and the executive director and other members of the staff are freed to pursue the board's vision for the camp's ministry at a faster pace.

ANOTHER GREAT SUMMER OF CAMP

Camp Lake Stephens hosted 1,350 summer campers in 2017, who experienced this place as it was intended - a camp "committed to being a place where children, youth, and adults can encounter God and respond in faith to God's call to transform the world."

The fastest growing area of summer camp participation was in the Mini-Camp for younger elementary children, which showed a 20% increase over 2016. This is great news for CLS to have an increase in a whole new generation of campers, despite a modest decline in overall summer camping numbers for the year.

RETREATS AND USER GROUPS ON THE RISE

The camp experienced an 8% increase in "camper days" in its retreat and hosting ministries in 2017. A camper day consists of an overnight stay plus three meals. So, if a group of 100 stays overnight and eats three meals, that adds 100 camper days to the camp's total. However, if a group of 100 spends the night and eats only one meal, that is computed at a fraction (.67) of a camper day, resulting in 67 camper days being added to the total.

In 2017 Camp Lake Stephens totaled 3,161 camper days for retreat and user groups in addition to camper days related to summer camp.



Camp Lake Stephens, a United Methodist Camp and Retreat Center, is committed to being a place where children, youth, and adults can encounter God and respond in faith to God's call to transform the world.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The year 2017 was not a year of much change to the program at Camp Lake Stephens. While the camp sought to accommodate the busy holiday schedule of families by moving the Overflow retreat to the MLK weekend, perhaps the most significant change came in the expansion of the Travelling Day Camp program from three to seven weeks. This enabled Camp Lake Stephens to offer its ministry in places that had perhaps not "camped" before and to connect with churches with whom it could deepen its relationship.

Here is a list of churches that hosted the CLS Travelling Day Camp in 2017:

Buford Chapel UMC, Oxford
First UMC, Greenwood
First UMC, Gulfport
First UMC, West Point
Providence UMC, Abbeville
Raspberry UMC, Indianola
St. Paul UMC, Clarksdale

The summer camping program continues to be built on the solid foundation of an outstanding summer staff, and CLS continues to be a tremendous avenue of spiritual leadership growth and development, raising up young ministry leaders for the local church and annual conference.



FISCAL REPORT

Camp Lake Stephens showed revenue of \$959,233.40 in 2017 with expenses of \$933,757.55, giving the camp a net income of \$25,475.85 to carry forward into the early lean months of January and February in 2018 before funds for camp registrations begin to arrive in March.

The Board of Directors will complete an audit of the finances in the spring of 2018.

CAMP LAKE STEPHENS ANNUAL FUND CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2017 OF \$125,141 ENABLE MINISTRY GROWTH

At the end of 2017 we found ourselves still in pursuit of our goal of \$175,000 in annual fund giving, finishing the year with \$125,141.00 in annual fund donations. While the vast majority of the camp's budget is built upon receipts from camper fees and user groups, approximately 17% of that budget is underwritten by friends of the camp just like you.

A thriving Annual Fund allows us to offer the

highest quality camping experience possible, including quality, caring summer staff, scholarships for campers who need assistance to attend camp, enhanced opportunities for spiritual growth, expansion of our program options, and improvement of our facilities.

While we are still working to reach our \$175,000 goal, in the summer of 2017 campers prepaid their store accounts as they entered their respective weeks of camp, and at the end they could choose to donate any remaining funds. Many did exactly that, adding 1,018 new donors to our growing list of ministry partners and

2017 STEPHENS SOCIETY (Lifetime Contribution of \$100,000 +)

Mississippi Annual Conference
North Mississippi Annual Conference

Vesper Hill Society (\$5,001 +)

Joyce Rhodes Barrett
Don Davis
First UMC, Cleveland
Mississippi Annual Conference
The Orchard Church
2017 Summer Campers

Campfire Circle (\$2,001-5,000)

Richard Barrett
Amy & Michael Dennis
First UMC, Kosciusko
First UMC, Ripley
First UMC, Tupelo
Getwell Road Church
Catie & Dexter Haynes
Hernando UMC
Brian McClellan
Bill & Carolyn Mitchell
New Albany District of the UMC
Oxford-University UMC
Joshua Randle
John & Mary Lee Reed
David & Susan Rozier

Tree Planter (\$1,001-2,000)

David & Laura Carroll
William Lay
Palestine UMC, Coldwater
Lori & Brandon Seifert
United Methodist NOMADS
Darryl Winstead

Hill Climber (\$601-1,000)

Mike Addington
Animal Care Center, Oxford
Coffeetown UMC
Create Foundation, Tupelo
Mark Culley
Susanne Lindsey
Richard & Sonora Maharrey
Mt. Olivet UMC, Batesville
Jim & Mary Sharp Rayner

Taylor UMC

Trail Blazer (\$301-600)

Bethlehem UMC, New Albany
Max & Sarah Billingsley
Cathron Camp
Chrystal Coleman
Ryan England
Melanie Hunsberger
John Laurenzo
Kelsey Maharrey
Chris McAlilly
Steve McAlilly
Kathryn & Ken Nance
Jack Reed
Brad and Kelley Robison
Ed & Jeanie Umstot
Linda & Ray Weatherly
Ed & Rosemary Woodall

Fire Builder (\$101-\$300)

Shellie Antey-Thompson
Calhoun Co. UMC Cluster Council
Bonnie Colbert
Katie Dorrough
Sharla Edwards
Karen Forgette
Kenneth Freeman
Amanda Gordon
Byrd Hillman
Ruth Ann Kelly
Mark Monroe SS Class
Don Meyer
Doyle & Betsy Moore
Robert & Jane K. Nance
Endowment
Old Bethel UMC, Belmont
Palestine UMC, Pontotoc
Carrie Beth Randall
Rob & Linda Rice
Pat & Patty Tatum
Bill Terry
Anita Tyler
UM Men, Wesley UMC, Tupelo
UM Women, Independence UMC

Friend of the Camp (up to \$100)

Julia Bannister
Charles Bannon
J.M. Boyd
Jim & Margaret Brooke

Robert J. Bruss
Clarksdale Board of Realtors
Brad Corban
Katie Cox
Alice Day
David & Laurie DuChaine
Billie Fite
Susan Goldberg
Adam Gordon
Erin Grant
Henri Grantham
Jo Anne Harris
Katie Heckel
LaFaye Hidingier
Rebecca Hood
Patsy Kerr
Beckie McCullen
Thomas & Kathleen
Nunnikhoven
Carolyn Perry
Carla Proctor
Sandra Rains
Linda Reich
John Rhea
Laura Robertson
Beth & David Rogers
Brent & Laura Smith
Pat Swindoll
Amy Taylor
Nancy Thomson
UM Men, Marks UMC
UM Women, Booneville UMC
UM Women, Coldwater UMC
UM Women, FUMC, Columbus
UM Women, Sardis UMC
Amy Woods
Susan Young

If we have inadvertently left your name off this list, we sincerely apologize. Please contact us at 662-234-0655 so we may update our records.

FACILITIES REPORT

Of course, 2016 brought significant changes to the entry area of Camp Lake Stephens, and 2017 brought a season of “settling in” for much of that previous work. The entry gate and drive, parking for the office building, parking lot expansion and walkways were a great renovation to the public face of the camp. Grassy areas and new plantings have taken root, adding aesthetic quality and beauty.

In addition, the United Methodist NOMADS made their annual visit and renovated the private rooms in the Clyde and Mary Hall Lodge (Administration building). And the CLS Property and Facilities crew added a connecting deck/porch area to the Leaders in Training (LIT) area near Cabin , as well as a new boathouse at the lake.

CAMP LAKE STEPHENS WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RICH SWARTWOOD

Effective February 5, the Camp Lake Stephens family was pleased to welcome Rich Swartwood as the new Executive Director. Rich brings 24 years of camp directing experience having previously served at Clearwater Forest Camp in MN (4 years) and at Pyoca Camp, Conference & Retreat Center in IN (20 years). He also serves as a Camp Visitor for the American Camp Association as well and is well respected in the ACA. Other members of Rich’s family will join him at the end of the school year—wife Caroline, and children, Ryan, Caitlyn, and Eric.



CONNECT WITH CAMP LAKE STEPHENS

Come take a new look at the recently revamped CLS website. We would love to stay in touch! You can find us at: WWW.CAMPLAKESTEPHENS.COM or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/camplakestephens. OR just put 117 Camp Lake Stephens Dr., Oxford, MS into your GPS and let it guide you into the front gate! It’s always good to see camp friends!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Spring Fling	March 10
Spring Backpacking Trip	March 10-13
Open House	March 25
Early Bird Registration Ends	April 6
Youth Leader Sabbath Retreat	April 9-10
Staff Training Begins	May 15
Camp Begins	May 28
Camp Rainbow	July 2-6
Children’s Spiritual Life Retreat	October 13-14
Junior High Spiritual Life Retreat	October 20-21
Senior High Spiritual Life Retreat	November 9-11
Overflow	January 19-21, 2019
Confirmation Retreat	February 1-3, 2019

WISH LIST

Below is a partial listing of items that would be fantastic to have for this summer to continue to provide new activities for our campers and guests.

- New Bibles for campers
- Rainy day games
- Paddleboards (5)
- Zip line renovation
- Technology upgrades for office
- Internet networking hardware
- Display boards for church visits
- Camper scholarship Funds
- Sponsor a summer staff member
- Chapel sound system
- Chapel lighting
- Chapel retreat decor (ex. banners, sound panels)
- Portable Gaga ball pit for traveling day camp
- Archery equipment
- Sand volleyball court
- Day camp hub (arts and crafts renovation)
- 9 square in the air for Snack Shack
- Pool updates (Shade structure, electrical upgrade, fence repair and backboard, and lifeguard stands)
- Side-by-Side Gator
- Drone for videos

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Gardeners to help manage our garden program
- Bee keeper and bees for our two hives
- Hobby/tinkerer/handyperson to assist with maintenance and grounds projects
- Day work groups to help prepare the cabins / grounds for summer

WEIRD BUT NECESSARY ITEMS

Barnyard critters to borrow for short-term stays (Summer camp and environmental education programs) including sheep, goats, llama, or other barnyard animals for temporary housing.*

*We prefer to have loaner animals as we are not equipped with long term care.

If you are interested in supporting Camp Lake Stephens developing long-term, sustainable income, please consider adding Camp Lake Stephens in your estate planning. For additional information on how you can assist our ministry grow, please contact either [Rich Swartwood](mailto:Rich.Swartwood@cls.org) or [David Carroll](mailto:David.Carroll@cls.org) at (662) 234-3350.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR MINISTRY.



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A ministry partnership with the Mississippi United Methodist Church