



328 Bethel Road, Fincastle, Virginia 24090

phone: 540-992-2940

CampBethelOffice@gmail.com

www.CampBethelVirginia.org



2024 Bring-Your-Big Camp Confirmation Packet

Dear Camper and Parent,

Thank you for registering for Bring-Your-Big Camp at Camp Bethel! Your spots are confirmed, and we are excited to see you!

Please arrive at Camp Bethel at or before 5:00pm Friday. Check-in begins promptly at 5:00pm inside the Deer Field Gym with important announcements you need to hear. Park in the Ark Parking Lot or in the Deer Field grass lot. Leave your luggage in your car. Always accompany your camper during check-in. The Trading Post (camp store) will be set up inside the Gym from 4:45 through check-in. After check-in, you will drive your camper and your luggage to your cabin or lodge to move in. Your car can stay at your cabin/lodge, or you can park in the paved Ark Parking Lot, but please move your car out of the grass Deer Field after check-in. Once you are moved in, walk with your camper to meet your counselors at the lawn beside the Ark Dining Hall. Dinner will be served at 6:00pm Friday at the Ark Dining Hall. See detailed check-in instructions on page 5 of this packet.

Following a closing celebration at 2:30pm on Saturday, the pool will be open until 4:00pm for all campers and parents. The Trading Post will be open on Saturday from 2:30-3:15pm for families to shop together.

This packet includes important "**Preparations for Your Time at Camp**" with your packing list, "The 7 Camp Rules," information about your time at camp, behavioral expectations, health and safety preparations, and detailed check-in procedures. *Write your name on or label every item you bring to camp.* Please consider donating toward our Wish List (page 2) and our Summer Offering Project (page 4). Carefully read all the enclosed information. If you owe any fee for your camp, please bring payment (or Good-as-Gold certificates or Campership approval) to check-in.

Since you will be responsible for your child's care during your time at camp, we do not require any Health Forms or Medication Forms for you or your camper. Parents can use your phones during camp for photos, alarm clock, and emergency communications, but please be fully present with your child and the counselors. Please don't receive or make unnecessary calls. Make the most of your time together!

Camp keeps getting better and better, and we have an active, on-the-go program planned. Please encourage your friends and classmates to register for summer camp at Camp Bethel in Fincastle, VA! If you have questions, contact us at 540-992-2940 or CampBethelOffice@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you at camp!

Together, in Christ our hope,

Kathleen, Elizabeth, Mickey, Reagan, Ben, Hannah and the Summer Staff of Camp Bethel

PREPARATIONS FOR YOUR TIME AT CAMP:

1. What to pack: Gear list.
2. Hygiene rules to teach your camper.
3. Camp rules and policies.
4. Preparing for camp living.
5. Preventing homesickness.
6. Trading Post open Saturday.
7. Summer Offering 2024.
8. Driving directions to camp.
9. Friday check-in procedures.

#1: What to pack: Overnight Camper's Gear List:

Write your name on ALL items and bags! Pack lightly so you can easily carry all gear by yourself. You will be sleeping in a bunk bed, and your gear space is limited. Cabins have window-unit air-conditioners if needed. Keep your packing simple and minimal. SHARE supplies with a camp friend (shampoo, sunscreen, etc.); anything to reduce your gear load!

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Empty daypack or backpack for you to carry water bottles, hand-sanitizer & disinfectant wipes, and for carrying gear around campus, to the bathhouse, or on a hike. <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag or blanket/sheets for cabin bunk. <input type="checkbox"/> Pillow for cabin bunk. <input type="checkbox"/> Bath towel & washcloth and a pool/beach towel. <input type="checkbox"/> Swim suit or swim clothes appropriate for active play in the pool, for creek play, and active water games. <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom supplies: toothbrush/paste; shower soap; etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing, light jacket; and sleepwear; <i>Hot days, cool nights.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Everyday dry shoes (closed-toe active shoes for running, hiking, games, climbing wall). <input type="checkbox"/> Strap-on sandals (w/ heel-strap) or water shoes to get wet for creek play, rain hikes, pool; <u><i>NO flip-flops.</i></u> <input type="checkbox"/> Large plastic bag for dirty clothes & wet shoes. <input type="checkbox"/> Rain jacket or poncho with hood; no stopping for rain! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle: quart-sized, non-glass, screw-top. <input type="checkbox"/> Hat with brim to block sun, or a bandana. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 small bottle of hand-sanitizer for your backpack. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 soft pack of disinfectant wipes for your backpack. <input type="checkbox"/> Small flashlight or headlamp & extra batteries. <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen (waterproof and at least 30 SPF). <input type="checkbox"/> Summer offering to be turned in at check-in (checks to "Camp Bethel Summer Offering"), or select "Staff Adoption Fund" at CampBethelVirginia.org/donate |
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Optional to bring:

- Watch Shower caddy/bag
- Camera/GoPro Bug repellent
- Cloth or disposable face mask (optional).
- Swim mask and/or swimming ear plugs
- Swim floaties or lifejacket for non-swimmers

Camp Bethel provides all necessary program, camping, first aid & safety gear, and cabins/rooms have A.C. units.

Please consider donating new and gently-used supplies. We ALWAYS need items listed in the Gear List above and items on our Wish List: Skid Steer, tracked or wheeled; Road-worthy pickup truck (2010 or newer); 15-passenger van (2015 or newer); Outdoor Storage Shed (used or new); Amazon wish-list at <https://a.co/5qG5JYq> or CampBethelVirginia.org/donate. *Tax-deductible!*

Things **NOT** to bring:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> electronics, video games, toys, pets, skateboard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vapes, tobacco/nicotine products, alcohol, drugs, cannabis, CBD products, smoking/vaping/drug paraphernalia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> weapons, knife, fireworks, matches, lighter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> clothing with inappropriate language/images or that is too revealing including short-shorts, string bikinis, or speedos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> food, drinks, candy, snacks, gum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cologne, perfume, scented products, hairspray, because these attract biting insects AND many persons have allergies to scented products <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> flip-flops |
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#2: Hygiene Rules to Teach Your Camper:

1. Tell your counselor if you feel sick.
2. Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, and then throw the tissue away and wash your hands.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water after bathrooms, coughing and sneezing, or touching your face. Use hand sanitizer if you cannot wash your hands.

#3: Camp Rules and Policies:

The 7 Camp Rules to teach your camper:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be kind and be helpful. 2. Stay with your Unit. 3. Follow your Counselor's lead. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. No rough play. 5. Wear shoes always (except bed, shower, pool). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Do not throw or kick anything. 7. Walk on paths, pavement, or gravel. |
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Safe Behavior Requirement:

By requesting enrollment into Camp Bethel programs, you and your camper agree to our Behavior Policy and understand that safe behavior is required. Your camper will be with other children/youth and their counselors all day each day. We stay together with our group during our entire time at camp. **Unsafe behavior does not fit and cannot be tolerated.** Behavior deemed dangerous, inappropriate, intolerable, detrimental to the group, or unmanageable by the counselors or directors is grounds for dismissal from camp. Examples include: not following the camp rules; hurting others (verbally, physically, or emotionally); possession of prohibited or harmful item; constant misbehavior; unsafe behavior; straying from your group; etc. The Program Coordinator will inform parents/guardians as needed. Should it become necessary for your child to return home because of unmanageable behavior, homesickness or other reason, you agree to accept the Program Coordinator's decision and arrange for transportation.

Healthy and Ready for Camp:

Health protocols remain as common-sense practices: stay home if you're ill or recently exposed; hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; majority-outdoor activities; sanitizing high-touch surfaces; and symptom screening and testing at check-in, if needed. In the weeks before camp, monitor your child for any onset of symptoms and avoid people who are sick. We continue to follow Virginia Department of Health and CDC recommendations, and we will share any updates with you prior to your arrival at summer camp.

Parents should keep campers who are sick or symptomatic at home. Camper refunds (minus your deposit) are available in case of illness. We prioritize outdoor activities as much as possible. Teach your camper the "Hygiene Rules" on page 2. You should NOT send an injured or sick camper to camp. Also ensure that your camper is free of headlice.

Camper Medications:

Since you will be responsible for your child's care during your time at camp, we do not require any Health Forms or Medication Forms for you or your camper. Please be safe and careful with storage and dosage of any medication.

2024 Policy for Cancellations, Late Arrivals, Early Departure:

Should you pay for camp, and later decide to keep your child home, YOU HAVE OPTIONS:

1. Credit your payments toward another available 2024 program, or
2. Credit all but \$50 of your 2024 payments to 2025 pre-registration, or
3. Donate part or all to help Camp Bethel enhance how we operate, or
4. Refund all your payments minus your \$50 deposit. We just need to hear from you at least 24 hours prior to the start of your camp, and sooner if possible. Please notify the camp office 540-992-2940 or CampBethelOffice@gmail.com ASAP if your camper will not attend this session.

Late arrival and early departure are discouraged, but allowed if needed. However, because staff, food, and supplies are already secured, we cannot provide pro-rated refunds for partial camp attendance once your camper has arrived unless Camp Bethel cancels your child's program. If programs are cancelled, you will be notified ASAP of your options, including full refunds.

Caring for Campers:

We take the safety and care of your children (our campers) very seriously. Allowing us to care for your child is perhaps the greatest act of trust a parent can engage in. That makes Camp Bethel not just a fun place, but also *a sacred one*. We do everything we can to honor your trust, including our voluntary adherence to over 300 standards of health, safety, staffing, and programming. We know we cannot do this without our excellent counselors who, by joining our summer staff community, are trained and committed to providing a safe and fun week of learning and growth. Consider supporting our counselors at www.CampBethelVirginia.org/adopt. During Bring-Your-Big Camp, we need YOUR help caring for ALL campers and our Counselors too!

Emergency Preparedness and Parent Notification During the Camp Week:

Using smart phones, our directors and staff receive and communicate instant updates on summer storms or emergencies, and your counselors are trained for safety during storms and emergencies. In case of any emergency in which we request parent action, our leaders will contact you. Otherwise, **NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS**, and everyone is safe. In case of a family emergency that must be communicated to you during your stay at camp, persons should contact your phone OR 540-992-2940 or e-mail CampBethelOffice@gmail.com. For after-hours emergency call 540-992-2940 and our answering machine message will prompt you to our on-call staff number.

Visitation is NOT allowed during camp week:

DO NOT arrive at camp unexpectedly! Our site is closed to visitors/guests during camper weekdays. While supervising campers, all staff are trained to stop and question anyone they don't recognize on site. If you need to visit camp prior to the official pick-up time (see "Pick-Up Procedures"), you must call ahead AND check in and wait at the camp office when you arrive.

#4: Preparing for camp living away from home:

Good parent preparation can give campers the knowledge they need to fully succeed during their camp week.

Physical expectations of living in a cabin:

1. No bathtubs here, only individual showers. Before camp, teach your younger camper how to take a shower.
2. We have several bathrooms around main camp. Remember, you can ask your counselor to use the bathroom ANY TIME. Hikes on camp property often venture away from bathrooms, so remember to “go” before you go; counselors will also remind you.
3. Living in a cabin or bunkroom with other persons (same gender) may challenge our need for individual privacy, especially when changing clothes. We discourage nudity or disrobing directly in front of others. All cabins and bunkrooms have access to private changing areas. In a pinch, teach your child the “sleeping bag” clothes-changing method.
4. We walk everywhere, and we’re on-the-go most of each day. Comfortable (dry) shoes & socks are very important. Take good care of your feet, and prepare for a highly active program.
5. On hot summer days it’s important to drink lots of water and apply sunscreen. Pack your water bottle: quart-sized, non-glass, screw-top, and remember to hydrate often and apply sunscreen 20 minutes before outdoor activity. Cabins have window-unit air-conditioners if needed on the hottest days/nights.

Social/Behavioral/Spiritual expectations:

1. You will be with other campers and your counselors all day each day. We stay together with our group during our entire time at camp, so we have little to no “alone time.” Unsafe behavior does not fit and cannot be tolerated. See “Rules” on page 2.
2. Group living: We’ll experience all our daily activities **together** as a Unit, including our daily group duty and eating meals together.
3. Make new friends: Even if coming with a cabin-mate, you are expected to be friendly, courteous and helpful to others in the group. Cabins are single-gender, but Units are co-ed unless we need to create an all-male OR an all-female group because one gender of campers registers more than the other. You will share your group with youth of different backgrounds and abilities. We believe Jesus’ message of love and unconditional acceptance, and at camp, “Love your neighbor” is part of daily living.
4. You **MUST** learn and follow the Camp Rules and Hygiene Rules (page 2) to ensure a safe and fun week. Most of each day is active and boisterous. Also there are times and events during the day when we’re expected to listen and participate calmly and quietly, (Bible study/worship, meals/announcements, counselor explaining an activity, bed/quiet hours).
5. Try new things: Camp is a great place to taste different foods, sing different songs, try and practice new skills, play new games, and grow in our relationships with God, with each other, and with Creation.

#5: Preventing homesickness:

Good parent preparation is essential to give campers the confidence needed to fully enjoy a camp experience:

1. Set realistic expectations for the camp experience based on our information and the activities listed in the program description (CampBethelVirginia.org/camps and CampBethelVirginia.org/ParentInfo). Reinforce positive camp aspects; encourage new learning.
2. In the days before camp, hold one or more “practice” overnight sleepovers in another room of your home with your child.
3. With your child, come and visit Camp Bethel. Call us to arrange a self-guided pre-tour.
4. Don’t force a child to camp who has no desire to go. Only send a willing-and-ready child to back-to-back camps.
5. Don’t tell campers how much you will miss them. Instead encourage new friends and new experiences.
6. Don’t tell campers they can call home. Instead, encourage your camper to talk to their counselor if they are sad. If a camper is sad or if there is an issue, injury, illness or emergency the Director WILL contact parents.

Camp Bethel will never force a camper to stay at camp who does not want to stay.

#6: Trading Post camp store open Saturday 2:30-3:15pm:

Parents can shop with campers from 4:45-5:00pm in the Gym prior to check-in and 2:30-3:15pm in the actual Trading Post store on Saturday after dismissal. Camp Bethel t-shirts cost \$10-\$20; bottles \$20-\$25; sweatshirts & blankets \$30-\$50; and other items range from \$2 to \$50. Earnings directly support the programs of Camp Bethel.

#7: Summer Offering 2024: “Tip” Your Counselors with our Summer Staff Adoption Fund

We LOVE our Counselors, and we strive to recruit the *best leaders* for Summer Staff ministry service. *It is a tough ask.* They commit eight-to-ten weeks of intense training and 24/7 leadership to care for your campers. We pay them, but not as much as we wish we could and not as much as they need to afford college and textbooks. Some young adults want to serve, *but cannot afford to serve.* Families often ask, “Can we tip our counselors?” Answer: YES, by donating toward our Summer Staff Adoption Fund to help these young adults accept the call to serve in Outdoor Ministry!

Donations toward our Summer Staff Adoption Fund are divided equally among all summer staff upon completion of their summer contract, and your gift is paired with congregations, groups, families, and individuals who are “adopting” our staff with additional funding, prayer support, letters of encouragement, care packages, and church visits.

Please donate toward our Summer Staff Adoption Fund online at www.CampBethelVirginia.org/adopt or mail check payable to “Camp Bethel Summer Offering”. 100% of your gift goes directly to this fund.



#8: Driving directions to Camp Bethel: *Physical address is 328 Bethel Road, Fincastle VA 24090.*

1. **I-81** to Exit 156: At end of exit ramp turn towards Brughs Mill Store onto Route 640, Brughs Mill Road, and go 0.2 mile to stop sign at Route 11. Green "Camp Bethel" signs point you in from here.
2. Turn left (North) onto Route 11; go approximately 2 miles.
3. Mill Creek Baptist Church on left; just across from the church turn right (southeast) onto Route 606, Blue Ridge Turnpike.
4. Go 1.6 miles on Blue Ridge Turnpike to stop sign at T-intersection.
5. Turn right onto Nace Road (Route 640) and go less than 1/10th mile to left onto bridge at Bethel Road (606), a gravel road.
6. Drive under railroad trestle. Camp Bethel entrance is 0.3 mile straight ahead along Bethel Road on the right. Follow signs to Check-In.

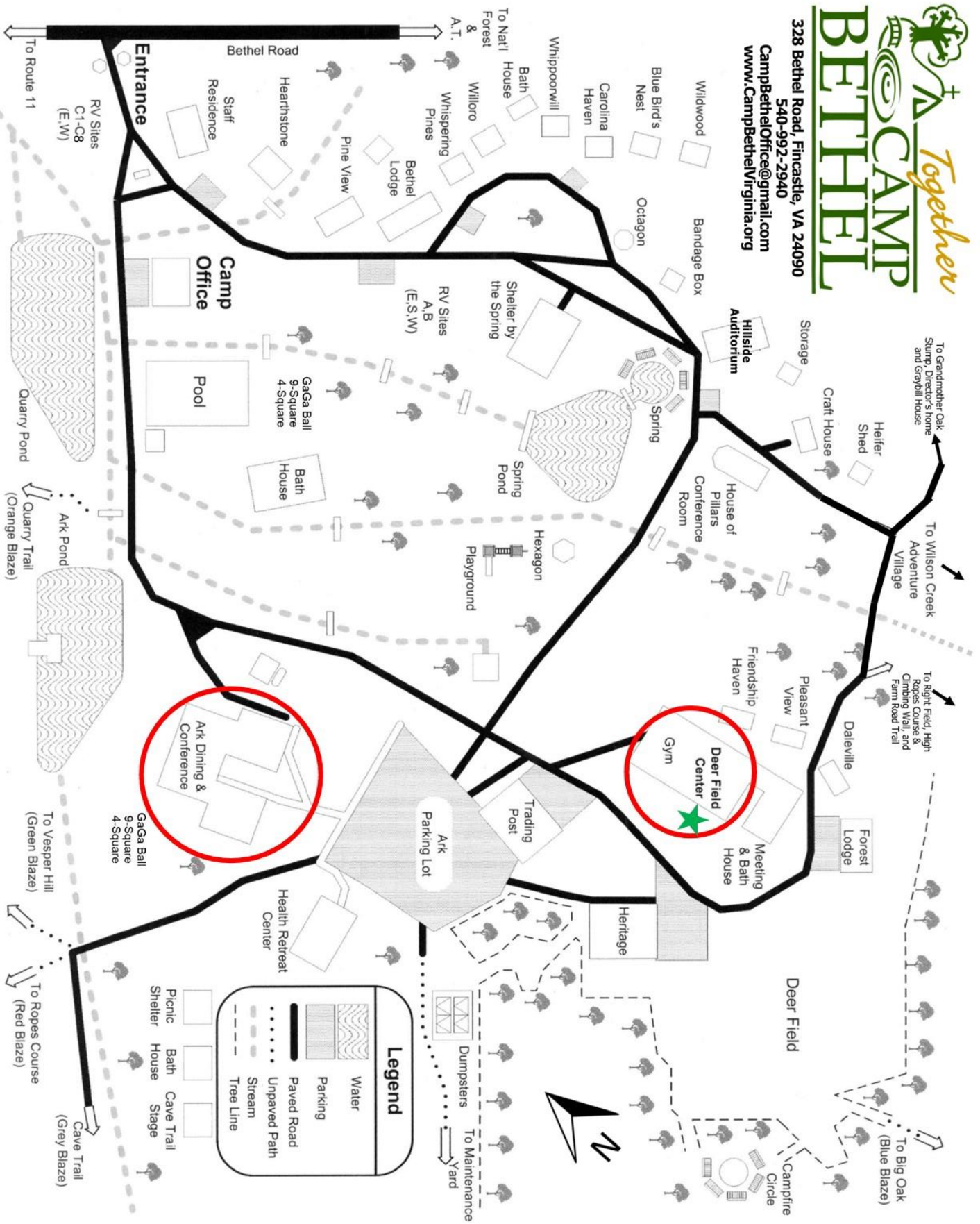
#9: Friday Check-In Procedures

1. Check-in begins promptly for everyone at 5:00pm Friday inside the Deer Field Gym with important announcements and introductions for all families. Arrive at or before 5:00! Registration does not begin until 5:00; cabin entry is not allowed until you check-in. The Trading Post Outlet (camp store) will be set up inside the Gym from 4:45 through check-in. Park in the paved Ark parking lot or in the grass Deer Field lot beside the Gym. Follow directional signs. Always accompany your camper during check-in.
2. **Don't unload your luggage yet.** We'll give you your cabin assignment during check-in in the Gym. After you check-in, parents and campers will move luggage into their cabin. PLEASE pack lightly enough so that the camper can easily identify all her/his gear, and please write your camper's name on all their possessions.
3. Proceed to the check-in tables in the Deer Field Gym (there may be a line). Check in with the registrar and turn in offering donations to the offering box near the registration table.
4. Our staff will then give you a packet and site map with highlighted directions to your assigned cabin or lodge. Drive your luggage to the cabin or lodge, move in, and help your camper make their bed and get settled/arranged.
5. You may leave your car near your cabin/lodge OR you can drive back with your camper to the paved Ark Parking Lot or Heritage Parking Lot, but please move your car out of the grass Deer Field after check-in.
6. Once you are moved in, walk with your camper to meet your counselors before 5:45 at the lawn beside the Ark Dining Hall. Dinner will be served to everyone at 6:00pm Friday at the Ark Dining Hall.

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Legend

- Water
- Parking
- Paved Road
- Unpaved Path
- Stream
- Tree Line
- Picnic Shelter
- Bath
- House
- Cave Trail
- Stage

