

Camp Bethel Director's report to the 2017 Virgina District Conference (updated 02/13/2018)

*"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held **together** by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." ~ Ephesians 4:15-16*

"Things are different at Camp Bethel." I hear that truth frequently from campers, from staff, from parents, from guests, and from volunteers. One example of "different" is our round tables in the Ark Dining Hall. Christ is the head of each round table, and **together** around each table sits Brethren and non-Brethren, brown skin and white skin, rich and middle class and poor, country born and city born, speaking English and Español and 普通话 (Chinese), MAGAs and DACAs, reading from KJV and NRSV and NIV and The Message. (*GASP!*) There's even Wahoos and Hokies side by side! Together, we grow and build each other up in Christ's love. Happy 90th Anniversary, Camp Bethel! Here's to continued growth and love and work, **together!**

Our record-breaking 2017 Summer Camps included 7 weeks of Spirit-filled programs with the theme "Branching Out: Connected Through Christ." We registered 1,212 campers (record high) in 88 program choices (1,159 in 2016, 1,209 in 2015), with 274 participants in our 6 Traveling Day Camps (280 in 2016, 229 in 2015) and 44 participants in our Family Fun nights (66 in 2016, 65 in 2015). We are blessed with excellent staff, partners, and volunteers who served as Chaplains, counselors and general helpers. Other data:

- 216 children received Good-As-Gold from Virgina congregations totaling \$50,407, (208 for \$49,934 in 2016).
- 87 received "Camperships" totaling \$25,715, which exceeds available funds by \$8,422, (72 in 2016 = \$19,410).
- 75 campers pre-registered in 2017 for 2018, (63 campers in 2016 for 2017 camps).
- 702 campers registered on-line, (613 in 2016; 622 in 2015), and 561 registered by the May 1 subsidized discount, (593 in 2016; 633 in 2015).
- Of the 782 who answered, 385 identified as Church of the Brethren (49%), 397 as other denomination (51%).
- 1,212 Campers: 429 in 6-day Resident Camps; 127 in 3-day Resident Camps; 65 in Elementary Adventure; 87 in MS/HS Adventure; 71 in Trips; 12 in Specialty/Skills; 72 in P/C Overnight; 274 in Traveling Day Camps; 31 in on-site Day Camps; 44 in Family Fun nights.
- 54 attended our partner Carilion's Camp Too Sweet (56 in 2016, 48 in 2015).
- Camper families offered \$1,735 to our "Seed, Scattered and Sown" financial campaign.
- From May 23-August 19, Brigitte's & Elizabeth's kitchen team served a total of 25,795 individual meals during 193 meal times, not including over 1,000 out lunches and Home-in-the-Woods cookouts, (22,822 in 176 meal times in 2016). EVERY meal was on time and plentiful.
- Announcing our 2018 theme: "Boundless Belief: God's Universe." Registration opens January 8!

Camp Bethel is open all year. In addition to our 1,212 summer campers, in 2017 we hosted Camp Kesem's 108 campers, three band camps totaling 357 campers, and we will additionally host 22,920 guests in retreats, events, special programs, and Your Outdoor Classroom and KinderCritters outdoor education. In 2017 we hosted guests on 46 of 52 possible weeks and weekends!

Fundraising events help pay the bills and keep our ministry viable. Our Sow the Seed Scholarship Banquet on March 2, 2017 raised \$5,415. Sounds of the Mountains Festival April 28-29, 2017 raised \$33,660. Benefit Golf Tournament August 23, 2017 raised \$15,871. Our inaugural "Camp Bethel PEP! 5K" had 89 participants, 24 volunteers, and 13 sponsors raising \$5,363. Our October 7, 2017 Brethren Heritage Day Festival raised \$36,615. Our Christmas Together Banquet on December 7, 2017 raised \$8,558! Big thanks to everyone who attended/participated/volunteered, to our excellent committees and dozens of sponsors! Camp Bethel is very blessed to have so many wonderfully supportive congregations and families!

Brigitte Burton's last day as Food Services Coordinator was July 31. Brigitte entered Law School at Northeastern University, and we celebrated and thanked Brigitte for seven excellent years of service in the Ark Dining Hall. Elizabeth Haley began as Food Services Coordinator on August 1. Elizabeth grew up in Roanoke, graduated from William Fleming High School, and studied at VWCC. She has been cooking since she was a child, and for several years more formally with her own catering business and as the Hospitality/Food Services Leader for Jesus Is Lord Assembly of Love in Roanoke. Elizabeth "loves people, cooking, and singing" and she said, "I'm excited to serve others and use my God-given gifts to meet others' needs through planning and preparing meals." Welcome Elizabeth!

Volunteer work teams and summer campers planted new saplings of shortleaf pine, hazelnut, river birch, persimmon, and sycamore all around main campus. These plantings ensure the future of a healthy tree population for scenic value, shade, and water protection. After leaking for several years, the Ark Pond was dredged and patched. (*Now we need more rain to fill the Vesper Hill aquifer that feeds the Ark Pond.*) Mickey and his team made dozens of repairs to several facilities, bridges and decks. We await approval from Botetourt County to repair the septic lines for Bethel Lodge and Pineview A-Frames in spring 2018.

The Outdoor Ministries Committee met quarterly and guided all aspects of the camp's administration, personnel, programs, property and finances. The OMC continued reviewing the Master Site Plan priorities in order to continue forward implementation in 2017 and through funding received from our District/Camp mission resourcing campaign, "Seed, Scattered and Sown: Reaching Beyond This Generation."

We are truly blessed by an excellent management team at Camp Bethel, including Elizabeth Haley (Food Services Coordinator), Beth Heaton (Guest Services Coordinator), Mickey Nichols (Facilities Manager), and Jenna Stacy (Program Coordinator). David Flora is our part-time Maintenance Assistant, Melissa Browning is our part-time housekeeper, and Abby Brubaker is our part-time Administrative Assistant.

Thank you, Virlina District congregations, for your extraordinary giving, volunteerism, and participation in Camp Bethel's ministries. Pray for the staff, the Virlina District Board and the Outdoor Ministries Committee, and all our campers, volunteers and supporters as we joyfully continue the work of Jesus, *together*.

TOGETHER, in Christ our hope,

Barry S. LeNoir, Camp Director
www.CampBethelVirginia.org



March 2-3, 2018 (Fri-Sat), Virlina District Junior High Retreat at Camp Bethel.
March 5, 2018 (Mon), 8:30am, Northern Area Ministers Breakfast & Program.
March 8, 2018 (Thurs), 6:30pm, Sow the Seed Banquet, RSVP by March 1.
March 24 (Sat), 3,00pm OMC meeting at First CoB.
March 24, 2018 (Sat) 5:00, Rke, First CoB Chili Cookoff and Cake/Pie Bakeoff for Camperships, 540-344-8196.
April 7, 2018 (Sat) 7:30am Spring Workday & 1,00pm Vol Appreciation Luncheon.
April 7, 2018, 10a-4p, Camp Bethel booth at the Virginia Family Expo, Salem Civic Center.
April 20-21 (Fri-Sat), Calling the Called (ministry discernment workshop) at Camp Bethel.
April 27-28, 2018 (Fri-Sat), 17th Sounds of the Mountains Festival.
April 28, 2018 (Sat) 11:00am-4,00pm, Camp Bethel booth at YMCA at VaTech Healthy Kids Day.
May 5, 2018 (Sat), Camp Bethel at Ministry & Mission in Virlina Day.
May 12-16, 2018, ACA Canoe Instructor Certification Course.
May 26-28, 2018, ACA Kayak Instructor Certification Course.
May 22-25, 2018 (Tues-Thurs), Summer Coordinators Training.
May 25-28, 2018, Memorial Day Family Weekend & Concerts, RSVP meals.
May 26, 2018 (Sat), Family Day/Summer Camp Open House, 1,00-4,00pm.
May 28-June 8, 2018, Summer Staff Training.
June 1-2, 2018 (Fri-Sat), Parent-Child Overnight Camp.
June 2, 2018 (Sat), Camp Bethel booth/sponsorship at Botetourt Children's Fishing Carnival in Buchanan.
June 2-3, 2018, ACA Canoe/Kayak Trip Leader Course.
June 8, 2018 (Fri) 5:30pm, Summer Staff Commissioning Dinner & Service.
June 10-August 3, 2018, Summer Camps & Family Adventures, "Boundless Belief, God's Universe"
June 12-15, 2018 (Tues-Fri), CIT Training and Practicum.
June 19 (Tue) 5:30pm OMC dinner with campers, then meeting.
August 22, 2018 (Wed), 24th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament.
August 24 (Fri) 5:15pm OMEC & 6:00 OMC budget meeting at the DRC.
August 25, 2018 (Sat), Camp Bethel PEP! 5K Run/Walk.
August 31-Sept 3, 2018, Labor Day Family Weekend, RSVP meals.
October 6, 2018 (Sat), 34th Brethren Heritage Day Festival.
October 12-14, 2018, Camp Bethel at Roanoke GO Outside Festival.
November 3, 2018 (Sat), 7:30am, Fall Workday, RSVP meals.
November 9-10 (Fri-Sat) Virlina District Conference & OMC reorganization at Bonsack Baptist.
November 11-15, 2018, OMA National Conference at Camp Bethel.
November 12, 2018 (Mon), Crisis Management Workshop.
December 1, 2018 (Sat), Virlina District Board & OMC Retreat/lunch at Camp Bethel.
December 6, 2018 (Thurs), Christmas TOGETHER Banquet.
December 3-21, 2018, Schedule your Christmas Banquet at Camp Bethel!
December 28, 2018 (Fri), Summer Staff & CIT Reunion.
December 29-30, 2018 (Sat-Sun), Winter Camp New Year Party & Program.