



Ninnescah News



Camp: Rooted in Community

By Lizzie Schrag



I love the Old Testament for many of the same reasons I love camp: it is earthy, rooted in tradition and community, and interwoven with encounters of God. One of my favorite books in the Old Testament is Exodus. What book—set in a desert place and full of movement—could Camp parallel more accurately? In its 40 chapters, Exodus sets up traditions of the Abrahamic faith to follow God out of systems of oppression and into the transient wilderness of grace. Camp, too, prepares each camper, guest, and staffer for this walk.

Staff and campers strive to bring and receive a message of universal love and acceptance. Simple lodgings, limited electronics, and appearances defined by sweat, sand, and silliness create a culture of intentional living in community defined by relationship. At camp, like Israelites harvesting manna in the desert, we have enough and are enough in a broader world that feeds on our shortcomings. As a temporary, annual routine, camp shows how change and movement accompany ritual and tradition in a life with God.

Like Jethro mentoring Moses, intergenerational interactions at camp allow us to be welcomed by and learn from those before us. In the tradition of the

midwives and Miriam, camp is a place where strong female leadership is welcomed and praised. And consistent doing of what we doubt we can do—whether that is joining a game of ga-ga ball or engaging in deep faith chats—is proof of God’s continual belief in and empowerment of people.



Yet, like the Israelites worshipping a golden calf as they await Moses’ return from the mountain, at camp we are not always open to grace and beauty. Camp follows in the tradition of a sacred place set aside for meeting God: where humanity accompanies us. Camper’s trauma, abuse, depression, anxiety and grief come to camp right alongside their bug-spray and Bibles. While this may seem frustrating—that camp experiences are not perfect—the longer I work there the more grateful I become. Sorrow—met by the grace of Christian community—makes camp profoundly real. Perhaps more than anything else, that is the message the Exodus story and a summer at camp teach us: that life with God is not easy but it is always and incredibly worthwhile.

2018 Summer Camp: By the Numbers

Camp Mennoscah had an incredible summer! Praise God for the youth who attended, and everyone who contributed to such a fun, meaningful summer! For those of you who are numbers people, here's how the Summer 2018 season looked:



Youth Campers	
Largest camp	
Volunteers	
Plates of food served	
Minimum minutes needed to prepare a meal	
Feet of nametag yarn	
Balls borrowed in Borrow the Balls	
Campers and staff we were disappointed to see leave	

Summer 2017	Summer 2018
551	609
130 (Sr. High)	163 (Sr. High)
239	254
12,455	13,118
50 (old kitchen)*	5* (new kitchen)
1,867	2,035 (.39 mi.)
138	147
800	872

*This extremely bold claim, made by head cook Les Schrag, has not been tested or verified for accuracy.



Camper Stories from Summer Staff



On the final night of worship, I was able to just be in the moment. Sitting in front of the campers, watching them come together and seeing the Spirit touch their hearts, was one of the most humbling experiences of my life. Little moments like that help me to see the power of camp. – *Addie Regier*



During Borrow the Balls at a pre-junior week, two staff were going around and giving random “interviews” to people and one interview stuck in my mind. They asked [the camper] what she thought, and the first thing she said with much excitement, was, “I don’t like it in the Bible when it says ‘mankind.’ God speaks to ladies too!” I was surprised at her confidence.

– *Jeff Kauffman*



I was impressed with how eager these young campers were to talk about their faith. Several times throughout the week, campers would start telling me about what they’d discussed/learned in input or at campfire. Sometimes I just assume that the younger campers come here just for the fun games and excitement. I was pleasantly surprised to have this group of kids challenge that assumption.

– *Roxy Gehring*



During evening singing on one of the last nights, we were singing “Zephaniah 3:17” and I saw one of the boys pull out his Bible and start searching for the verse and then reading it right then.

– *Carley Sullivan*



Your Gift Helps Camp...be Camp!



If you saw the “By the Numbers” article on page 1, then you know that Camp Mennoscah was a full and busy place this summer! Each of the campers had the opportunity to retreat from the distractions and busyness of ordinary life, grow in their relationship with God, and form new friendships in the wider faith community through fellowship with one another. This could not have been possible without prayer, volunteers, and financial support. We are already excited about what the 2019 summer camping season will bring! Your donation helps Camp Mennoscah make the preparations necessary for a meaningful summer.

Send a gift today to the address on page 4 or make a one-time or recurring gift online at campmennoscah.org.

The Whale is nearly complete!

Due to a recent generous donation, the slides and climber arrived in mid-August and by the time you are reading this, they may already be installed on the new Whale! Praise God for camp supporters who have been generous with their prayer, time, and gifts to help bring this project to completion.



Dates available at Camp Mennoscah for your next meeting, retreat or gathering!

September 7-9 Bluestem

September 14-16 Main Camp, Bluestem

September 28-30 Bluestem

October 5-7 Retreat Center, Bluestem

October 12-14 Retreat Center, Bluestem

October 19-21 Bluestem

October 26-28 Main Camp, Bluestem

November 2-4 Main Camp, Bluestem

November 8-11 Bluestem

November 16-18 Retreat Center, Bluestem

Nov 19-Dec 27 Main Camp, Retreat Center, Bluestem



Versatile Volunteers: Darrin & Karen Hiebert

By Kevin Wilder



Darrin and Karen Hiebert of Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston have a long history at Camp Mennoscah. Darrin attended camp regularly in elementary and middle school, and Karen attended camp a couple times as a child.

Their daughters Aryn and Terin also attended camp. Darrin and Karen decided to cook one week while Terin was there, and that's where their time as consistent camp volunteers began.

In addition to being camp cooks, they have completed projects at Work and Play Camp, landscaped with a Whitestone service project, helped with the pool, bathhouses, and kitchen, and prepared meals for the summer staff's orientation week. Darrin has served on the Camp Mennoscah board and on the committee that planned the new main camp kitchen. Because they both work at Excel Industries in Hesston, they have helped camp make connections for



mowing equipment. They have also chosen to support camp with regular financial and in-kind contributions.

Darrin and Karen have started participating in Work and Play Camp, where they are younger than most others, so I asked why they like to attend. They said, "We enjoy helping maintain and serve camp. We also enjoy hearing the stories from folks about their lives and growing up." Darrin and Karen are fine examples that Work and Play Camp is for people of any age!



Darrin and Karen use one week of vacation each year to serve Camp Mennoscah.

Karen said, "Volunteering at camp has been rewarding and fulfilling for me. Camp has helped my children and others grow in their faith. I enjoy hearing about camp at baptisms." We are grateful to have Darrin and Karen as volunteers for all the gifts, skills, and enjoyment they bring each time they come to Camp Mennoscah!

Be part of Camp Mennoscah's future!

Volunteers are one of the mainstays of Camp Mennoscah and part of what keeps our camping ministry thriving. You can be part of this awesome group of people by coming to our **Work & Play Camp, September 21-25!** We'll work on projects that make Camp Mennoscah the amazingly fun place to experience God, nature, and others—and spend time sharing stories and enjoying all that camp offers. All ages invited, under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Register online!



Camp Mennoscah Turns 70!

Come out to camp on Sunday, September 23, as we dedicate The Whale playground and celebrate our 70th Anniversary at the Camp Mennoscah Annual Meeting! **All are welcome to attend.** Events are part of Work & Play Camp which starts on September 21. Here are some activities we have planned for the celebration and gathering on Sunday:

- 10:00 a.m. - Sunday morning worship
- 12:00 p.m. - Lunch
- All Afternoon - River Play, Fishing, Canoeing, Disc golf, Gowling, other games*
- 3:00 p.m. - Buddy Burners: making pancakes!
- 5:00 p.m. - Dedication of The Whale playground
- 5:30 p.m. - Picnic-style BBQ chicken supper, Annual Meeting to follow
 - Sign a 70th Anniversary T-Shirt for display at camp
 - Take home a 70th anniversary commemorative gift!

*These activities not organized or supervised by camp staff/volunteers



Register online at campmennoscah.org to let us know you're coming to celebrate with us!



Camp Mennoscah

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Camp Mennoscah Wish List

Items can be purchased at smile.amazon.com, your favorite local store, or wherever you find them.

- [KitchenAid Professional 6000 HD KSM6573CWH Stand Mixer, 6 Quart](#)
- 1/2" Air Impact Wrench \$99.00
Harborfreight.com #62627
- Rubber Mallet 1 lb. w/Fiberglass handle \$6.99
Harborfreight.com
- sets of flat & fitted sheets and pillowcase for twin, full and queen beds--preferably white or off-white
- Twin size quilted mattress covers
- [Graco DuoDiner 3-in-1 Highchair](#)
- [Cuisinart DLC-2ABC Mini Prep Plus Food Processor](#)

Thank you!



Family Weekend



It was fantastic! Ten families attended Family Weekend June 30-July 1, 2018, reconnected and focused on family, enjoyed Camp Mennoscah and had a blast. Hope you can join us next year!



Camp Sing

What a fun celebration! Over 215 campers, staff, parents, and friends joined us at Hesston Mennonite Church on August 12 for Camp Sing 2018! We sang joyously, jumped up-and-down, and enjoyed meaningful fellowship with each other through worship, popcorn, and generic pop. The offering raised \$2,313 to sponsor nearly 37 of next summer's campers, woohoo! Enjoy these pictures!



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