

# Parent's & Camper's Handbook



IT IS OUR MISSION  
to provide for quality camp, retreat, and conference  
experiences in which Christ is offered to as many as  
possible to raise up faithful disciples so that the  
world is transformed.



## Statement of Priorities

### 1. Do No Harm

Our efforts to provide a safe environment for positive growth include:

- American Camp Association (ACA) accreditation is required at all our UMC sites. This means that our sites are living up to the highest standards in the land in all aspects of the program and site: health & wellness, facility, meals, program development, operations, transportation, and more.
- We seek committed adults (no counselors under 18) both as volunteers, full-time professionals, or seasonal summer staff. They must demonstrate a love for campers, the out-doors, and for the vision/mission of our church.
- We require training for all staff and volunteer leaders. For staff, this includes specialized training in areas related to their program or location: lifeguards, wilderness first-aid and related camp skills, risk management, appropriate boundaries, understanding our campers, United Methodist theology, and much more. Our summer staff, each season, are asked to spend 2 weeks and more training for their role at camp.
- Well over half of our camp program staff are Red Cross certified CPR/AED/First-aid providers.
- Staff and volunteers are evaluated by supervisors and the people they serve.
- We seek all the information we can related to each camper's needs and abilities. A completed health history form along with a doctor's physical within the past 24 months is required for all campers 17 & under. Completed health history forms are required for those campers 18 and older.
- We want to ENCOURGE YOU to inform us of any concerns or issues you might have related to your camper or yourself. Past evaluations have helped to make changes that help us to maintain the best possible program for you and your camper. Thanks for your prayers & support!

### 2. Do Good

This pamphlet is designed to inform those we serve of the multiple policies and procedures that we maintain to provide a safe and positive experience for all. Our overall Core Values include:

- Abundant hospitality to everyone
- The United Methodist ideals of scripture and social justice - "Do no harm, Do good, Grow in love with God"
- We seek to embody respect, reverence, and wonder for the whole of Creation

We also seek to embody the multiple aspects of camp/retreats that imbed in each of our campers or leaders the desire to return again next year, to have fun, to grow in some way, to make or renew friendships, and more!

### 3. Grow in love with God

- We seek to embody the Gospel Imperatives of our Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in:
  - Reaching out to others
  - Cultivating spiritual vitality

We strive through positive relationships and shared experiences to instill a sense of wonder, a meaningful connection, renewed hope, and a heart of gratitude for all that God has given us. We seek to introduce others to the love of God and a desire to walk with the grace of God.



## Getting ready for camp things you should know

- A **completed and signed Health Form** must accompany all campers to their event. Information related to camper's diet and other special accommodations need to be shared in advance of the first day of camp, so please indicate special needs on your registration or contact the camp prior to your event.
- Please share **ALL** important information related to your camper or yourself to allow our staff a chance to better meet your needs. We seek to provide the best possible experience and need your help in this effort. Please put this information on the Health Form.
- There is **more information** to help in your preparations for camp in this flyer. Please read and understand the information shared here along with the information found in your Camp Dean's letter. If you still have questions or concerns, contact your Camp Dean, Site Director, or the Conference Camping & Retreats Office at (612) 230-CAMP (2267) or [camps@campminnesota.org](mailto:camps@campminnesota.org).
- Go to [www.campminnesota.org](http://www.campminnesota.org) and click on "Sites & Facilities" for more information about the camp site.



### Health Forms

All campers **MUST** have a completed and signed health history form to attend a conference camp. Campers under 18 need a physical within the past 24 months (school/sports apply).

### Insurance Coverage

Camp fees include secondary medical insurance coverage, which covers over the family's insurance. Coverage is subject to the terms and conditions of the policies held by the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

### Campership Information

To help off-set the increasing costs of our events, need-based camperships are available. Please contact the Camping & Retreats Office for more information if the need for financial support is still there.

### Photo Permission

Photos and videos taken at camp may be used by the Minnesota Annual Conference for camp promotions. If you would rather not have photos of you or your child used for this purpose, please check "NO" on the Health Form.

## Safety & Transportation

Campers/Parents/Guardians are responsible both prior to and following the event for getting yourself or your camper to camp and home safely. In the case of some camps, this would be to a designated pick-up or drop-off point. Please follow the road signs and information in your camp dean's letter related to safety procedures while dropping-off or picking-up at camp. See your camp dean's letter for information related to directions, arrival and departure times, and dates. It is the responsibility of the Camp Dean and/or Site Director to advise each camper of any changes related to these times and locations. Your event leaders will go over any safety rules or procedures while at camp. In the event of immediate travel needs after check-in, these rules and procedures should be included in your camp dean's letter as well.

## Carpooling

Within two weeks of the start of your camp those who indicated interest will receive names, locations and phone numbers of campers interested in carpooling. If you are interested in carpooling, please indicate so on the registration form. If you would like to be added please contact the Camping Office.

## Illegal or Prohibited Items

MN Conference camps and campsites do not allow the use of any illegal drugs, alcohol, fireworks, firearms, or other weapons. Site program directors will advise if a specialized item (such as archery) can be allowed. All campers under 18 are not allowed to carry a knife. Please check with the campsite you are attending about smoking policies. Smoking by under-aged campers is not permitted anywhere. Please also check with your Camp Dean or Site Director for information concerning appropriate usage of any specialized recreation equipment for land or water. All illegal substances are strictly banned from our sites.

## Anti-Discrimination Policy

All United Methodist Church camps are open to everyone. In the operation of these camps, no child, as defined by the program regulations, will be discriminated against because of race, color, age, sex, disability or national origin.

## Call home policy for campers

Routine phone calls from campers to home are discouraged, and staff should attempt to delay the campers desire to call home if possible. Campers who wish to call home should get permission from the Dean of the camp to use the phone. The camper should have a calling card or be able to call a toll free number. If a camper has received permission from the dean to call home, a time will be arranged so that both the camp dean and a counselor can be present.

## Send home policy for campers

When a situation occurs where a camp dean feels it is necessary to send a camper home due to prolonged behavior that negatively impacts the rest of the camper group, the camp dean will discuss the situation with the Site Director, and also with the parent or responsible party when possible. Each situation is handled on an individual basis. The Site Director (or Conference Director in the absence of the Site Director) reserves the right to make a final decision should it be necessary. If it is determined that the camper is not able to stay, the parent(s) is (are) notified and a time arranged for the camper to be picked up. The camper is notified that he/she will be going home at least one hour prior to the arranged pick up time. The Conference Director is also notified when a camper is not able to stay for the full camp time.

## No Cell Phone Policy for Campers

Cell phones will not be allowed at camp. If a camper arrives with a cell phone, the camp dean will hold the cell phone until the end of camp. In the case of an emergency, the camper may receive permission to call home from a camp phone.

## Recommendations on Money

It is recommended that campers bring only a limited amount of money with them to camp. Extra money while at camp is not necessary as everything needed is provided. The only use for extra funds would be at the camp store, where the camper may purchase candy or various t-shirts/sweatshirts, etc. Generally speaking a T-shirt is provided for most camps.

## Refund policy for campers

Your deposit is refundable up to 30 days prior to the start of camp unless otherwise indicated in event description. In case of emergency, deposits may be refundable less than 30 days prior on a case-by-case basis. In the event that camper doesn't show up at camp and does not notify the camping office/other leadership, the camper fee is kept. In all cases a refund will be issued only if requested, minus the deposit.

## Campers with Disabilities

Our camping ministry welcomes persons with disabilities and is working toward full inclusion of children, youth and adults with disabilities in camps it sponsors. Off-site and wilderness-based camps present more challenges; arrangements are made on an individual basis. All program staff hired by conference campsites receive training on disability issues and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The staff will be available to assist camp leaders in facilitating the inclusion process. A specialist is available based on a mutual needs assessment to help in your camper's integration to a camp of your choice at no additional cost. A camp representative will contact you regarding your specific needs. One to two weeks prior to camp, a member of the camp staff may contact you if further information is necessary. However, if you need assistance for personal care, you will need to bring an assistant with you. There will be no extra charge to have this person at camp. If you are able you may make a contribution toward the camp's cost for this person. This may range from \$25 to \$75. Please notify the camping office if you are planning on bringing a personal care attendant.

## Insect Bites & Ticks

Mosquitos, flies and other biting critters are abundant in the woods of Minnesota. For this reason we suggest that you send non-aerosol bug spray with your kids to camp.

## Swimmers Itch

Swimmers Itch is caused by a parasite that normally infects water birds and mammals. Reaction tends to be itchy red spots on skin. Avoid by toweling dry immediately after swimming. Applying oily suntan lotion before entering the water may also help prevent swimmers itch. Treat with calamine lotion or similar ointment.

## Lyme's Disease

Lyme's Disease is caused by deer ticks, is a concern whenever in the woods of Minnesota. While we will do what we can to protect your child from deer ticks, it is ultimately your responsibility to be vigilant about possible signs once your child returns home. To find out more about this disease including what to watch for you can check out any of the following websites:

MN Department of Health  
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/lyme>

or

MN Department of Natural Resources  
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/insects/deerticks>

