

Camping and Youth Committee Report

Submitted for the Yellowstone Presbytery's November 6-7, 2026 meeting in Deer Lodge

The 2026 camping season at Westminster Spires went well. We offered 3 Christian camping experiences.

- Elementary Camp July 12-16 for students entering grades 3-5. Lisa Evans was the spiritual leader. The cost for each camper was \$325.

- Middle School Camp July 19-24 for students entering grades 6-8. Jamie Rowe was the spiritual leader but a family tragedy caused her to need to leave early. Thankfully Kara Todd was able to step in and finished the week. The cost for each camper was \$375.

- Senior High Camp July 26-31 for students entering grades 9-12. Jake Lawson was the spiritual leader. The cost for each camper was \$375.

Hunter Skov and Nichole Bodalski were camp co-directors and did very well. We have received and reviewed evaluations of Hunter and Nichole from: Lisa, Kara, Jake as well as Jeff & Cynthia Kesler. All evaluations were affirming. They were at a slight disadvantage with not being hired until mid-February 2026. We advertised the director position for 2027 across the Presbytery as well as in the Wyoming and Glacier Presbyteries September 20 - October 9. Hunter and Nichole were our only applicants and unanimously hired at our October meeting. Their goal is to start advertising early in 2027 and gain more campers for each week of Christian learning and fun. This year we welcomed approximately a total of 50 campers. The camp can house 40 each week! Please pray that we can reach more in 2027!

Under the direction of Russ Kline, Hunter and Nichole we celebrated 90 years of summer camp at Westminster Spires. This was held on August 1 at camp. It was a great time of sharing and reminiscing as well as looking to the future.

At our August 10 meeting Ric Tieman helped with planning our budget. Debbie Earnst was also present. We were asked to reduce our budget in October so at a special meeting on October 22 with Debbie's help we reduced it from \$56400 to \$52700. This was done by reducing the special events line from \$3500 to \$500. The projected utility bill from \$6000 to \$5000. (In the past it has been ~\$3000.) There was quite a bit of discussion concerning how much to pay our camp counselors. They have been paid \$1000

for 4 days of training then 3 weeks of camp the past 2 years. In the end we felt it important to keep it as it has been. To increase camp income, we will raise the camper's registration fee by at least \$25.

Throughout 2026 Russ, Ric and Curt Kochner have been working to set up an Endowment for Westminster Spires Camp. This has been accomplished thanks be to God! The first board meeting was held August 31. Russ Kline will serve as board chairman, Curt Kochner as Secretary and Ric Tieman as treasure. Melissa Bell and Nancy Pehl are members at large. We will meet on the last Monday of the month on a quarterly basis. Please pick-up several of our letters which explain the fund and then help spread the news.

The youth and camping committee is in the process of planning the winter retreat. The date has been set for March 5-7. The 1st Presbyterian Church in Bozeman has okayed us to use their basement. Their generosity is very much appreciated. We have found that renting a winterized camp for the winter retreat to be very expensive and beyond our budget. Skiers will enjoy Bridger Bowl. Many plans still need to be made. Nancy will organize the event with much help from committee members. We plan to get advertising out by the end of December.

Respectively Submitted,

Nancy Pehl, Camping & Youth Committee Moderator