

August 18, 2016

Camping and Youth Report September 2016

Westminster Spires Camps

We had a great summer season of camps at Westminster Spires. We have developed a very solid core of leadership with five returning counselors joined by three new staff members. Bill Scott returned as cook for his eighth year. George Goodrich has provided leadership for training and teaching for seven years and Curt Kochner has been in the role of Camp Registrar and background support for six years. Cynthia Kessler has been with the staff leading crafts, playing guitar and providing first aid for five years. Will Johnson from Terry joined us this summer to lead and teach during Junior High week.

The six Whitworth Fellows participated in some parts of Staff Training, Senior High and Junior High camps. Many thanks to Katy Schlata, Tyler Stitt, Jacob Gallegos, Samantha Cobb, Hannah Beard and Annette Peppel for their enthusiasm, leadership, music and presence. Kara Todd was at camp for the third summer along with Eli, Ella, Evelyn and Annelise to add to the multi-generational flavor. Brandon and Kristin Willett along with Graham, Micah and Levi joined us for Elementary camp and helped with teaching, camp repairs and additional adult presence.

We had 20 campers for Senior High, 16 for Junior High and 16 for Elementary camp. Three of our Senior High group came back for one more year of camp although they graduated this past spring. Campers participating in camp represented churches in Billings, Butte, Dillon, Manhattan, Miles City, White Sulphur Springs and Seattle.

Many thanks to the churches that provided a total of \$3,020 in scholarships for campers! Thanks to generous donations from the Yellowstone Presbytery offering collected in Miles City and other friends of Westminster Spires we were able to provide \$4,415 in Yellowstone Presbytery scholarships for campers.

Revamp the Camp

Volunteers gathered at camp on the weekend of June 3-5 to get the camp ready for the season and to install new shingles on the two girls' cabins, the Booth cabin and one of the outhouses. We only need to replace the shingles on the second outhouse, the Dean's Cabin and the Patterson Cabin to have new roofs on all buildings at Westminster Spires. Many thanks to all the folks that helped during Revamp the Camp. Special thanks to Sandy Welch who provided leadership and excellent food for the weekend and stayed on for several days to complete the cleaning of the buildings. Also, special thanks to Lori Schweigert from Advanced Employment Services for donating professional roofers to help complete the work.

Fall Retreat

The Fall Youth Retreat will take place at Rockhaven on October 20-22. Fall Retreat will take place on Thursday evening through Saturday lunch during the Montana PIR days. Registration forms will be available on the Yellowstone Presbytery website in early September.

Westminster Spires Summer 2017

We have two family reunions scheduled for next summer, and we have a possible lead on renting the camp to another denomination for two weeks of camp in June.

Camp Schedule for 2017

Staff Training	July 6-8
Elementary Camp	July 9-13
Junior High	July 16-21
Senior High	July 23-28

Presbyterian Youth Triennium

17 youth and adults from the Yellowstone Presbytery traveled to Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, from July 17-26 to attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennium (PYT) conference. We had youth from First Presbyterian in Billings, St. Andrew Presbyterian in Billings, and Community Presbyterian in Terry. This conference is geared for youth ages 15-19 and is held every three years. Triennium is the signature youth event of the Presbyterian Church (USA). We joined about 5,500 other Presbyterian youth from around the world. Most of the youth are from the United States, but some are international. We had a group of guys on our dorm floor from Puerto Rico and it was fun to interact with them during the week. We joined in large worship experiences, small group times, recreational events, and designated times with each other from our own Presbytery.

I have attended the last five Trienniums and am proud of the way this group conducted themselves. We traveled 2,942 miles, traveling from Billings through North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana. On our trip to Purdue we stayed at the United Presbyterian Church in Jamestown (ND) and the First Presbyterian Church in Janesville (WI). On our return home we stayed at the First Presbyterian Church in Wisconsin Dells (WI), Oak Grove Presbyterian in Minneapolis (MN), and once again at the United Presbyterian Church in Jamestown (ND). We enjoyed some play time at Noah's Ark Waterpark in Wisconsin Dells and packaged food with the Feed My Starving Children organization in Minneapolis on our way back.

We would like to thank the Presbytery for financially and prayerfully supporting this great trip. We will organize another trip to Triennium in 2019 and would love to take a larger group with more churches from our Presbytery represented. Special thanks to the chaperones who assisted me on this trip: Pastor Katie Emery (Terry) and Heather McLean (1st Billings).

Thanks,

Dave Thompson, Pastor
First Presbyterian-Billings