

**Camping and Youth  
Council Report  
October 11, 2012**

Overview:

We had a very successful and meaningful camp season at Westminster Spires. We hired five counselors and five counselors in training (CITS). Our staff members were from five different churches including Miles City, Billings 1<sup>st</sup>, Billings St. Andrew, Butte and Dillon. The strengths of our staff members were demonstrated through a very strong music program, excellent interpersonal skills in working with campers, sharing of personal testimonies, and leading most of the activities of the camp program. Our decision to hire a larger staff will have benefits in the future as we develop the adult and youth leadership for our camping program. The camp staff provided very positive role models for the campers, and we heard many campers express interest in becoming involved in CIT positions in the future. This was very encouraging for the future of our camping program.

One of the most dramatic outcomes from the 2012 camp season was seeing the power of the Holy Spirit working through young people as they experienced God's presence and discovered the joy and wonder of living in Christian community.

Staff:

Training, Elementary and Senior High Camp Leader	George Goodrich	Co-Presbyter
Junior High Camp Leader	David Andrew IV	Dillon
Camp Registrar	Curt Kochner	Billings St. Andrew
Counselors	Kristin Kochner	Billings St. Andrew
	Ruth Letson	Billings First
	Shawn Pattee	Billings First
	Dani Repka	Billings First
	Payton Wulff	Billings First
Counselors in Training	Taylor Cashmore	Dillon
	Stephanann Costello	Butte
	Rebecca Jones	Butte
	Heather O'Brien	Miles City
	Tanner Robison	Butte
Cooks	Bill Scott (Belinda/Mara)	
Caretaker	Simon Hill	

Campers: (From 9 different churches)

Elementary Camp	July 8-12	11 campers
Junior High	July 15-20	12 campers
Senior High	July 22-27	23 campers

Funding:

Camper Registration	\$6,032
Church Scholarships	3,708
Presbytery Scholarships	1,630

Budget:

I have attached a proposed Camping and Youth budget of 2013.

Facilities:

-The well installation was finished and final approvals of water quality were completed the day before we opened the camp for Revamp the Camp on June 15.

-We have been working very closely with the Forest Service on removing a number of trees that hazards and/or dead due to spruce beetle infestation. Our caretaker, Simon Hill, has considerable experience in cutting down trees due to his experience as a firefighter. We have paid Simon additional compensation beyond his caretaker duties to cut down trees, form brush piles and work with the Forest Service to have the wood removed from the camp grounds. More than 20 cords of wood were removed this year. We will continue to work with the Forest Service on improving the health and safety of the forest.

#### Camp Schedule 2012:

I have attached a copy of the camp schedule for 2012. We had an increase in usage this summer, and we are working with groups interested in renting the camp for the 2013 season.

#### Camp Schedule 2013:

The Youth Triennium will be held at Purdue University on July 16-20, 2013. Since we have a large number of young people attend Youth Triennium from Yellowstone Presbytery, we will need to make some adjustments in the camp schedule for 2013.

#### Program:

Our Bible studies this year were based on the parables of Jesus. We used the curriculum entitled Secrets of the Kingdom: The Parables of Jesus published by New Earth Publishers. This curriculum was developed in cooperation with the Committee on Outdoor Ministry of the National Council of the Churches of Christ. Our leaders, George Goodrich and David Andrew led the Bible studies, counselors presented skits to help illustrate the point of the parables, and counselors presented personal testimonies to share how their lives have been impacted by their relationship with Jesus Christ. Morning and evening Bible study were followed by small group discussion and personal "Holy Ground" time.

We had a very strong music team with Kristin Kochner playing piano and guitar, Shawn Pattee, Ruth Letson and Zach Kessler on guitar and Heather O'Brien on drums. These counselors organized all the music for energizers and worship and their leadership and attention to connecting the music to the themes of the day were a very valuable addition to the program.

One of our counselors worked closely with George Goodrich regarding her interest in being baptized, and Stephanann Costello was baptized following worship on July 22. Communion was held as a part of closing worship during senior high week on July 26.

#### Activities:

Crafts/ Group games/ Night Games/ Tent Camping/ Sledding on Beartooth Pass  
Recreation/Trips- Swimming, Trip to Beartooth Pass, Rafting on Stillwater River, Hikes, Beartooth Nature Center, Talent Show

We purchased three large tents this summer, and the Elementary and Junior High camps each included one night of tent camping. Sleeping under the stars has been a request of past camps, and we are able to include this with the addition of the tents.

#### **Revamp the Camp**

Sandy Welch and Jim Tarr once again provided outstanding leadership for the Revamp the Camp weekend. The camp was thoroughly cleaned; a new roof installed on the Cook's cabin, new stairs installed on the Craft cabin, painting in the bathrooms including the floors, and brush from the tree removal project was moved into brush piles.

#### **Highland Holy Days**

St. Andrew held their annual Highland Holy Days at Westminster Spires on September 7-9. The weekend included a series of workshops looking at the fruit of the Spirit using The Fruit of the Spirit study guide by Stuart Briscoe as the resource. Activities were presented for the young people. We had excellent weather, a large turnout for worship on Sunday and a very meaningful time of study and fellowship.