



CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

**GUIDE FOR
CAMPERSONS**

THE MOUNT LUTHER CAMPERSON PROGRAM

A camperson is a congregation member who serves as a liaison between Mount Luther and the congregation. Anyone interested in camp who wants to share our news with others should be a camperson including parents of campers, past campers or staff, or someone with a genuine interest in outdoor ministry. Camp Mount Luther is an extension of your ministry in the local congregation. It is the camp of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and we want every member of our synod to know what is happening with this important ministry. We can't do it alone, and we know our pastors are very busy. With a camperson, your congregation will be informed and Mount Luther will be reaching the people.

Campersons should think about how they can:

- Promote our programs and facilities, encouraging your congregation to take advantage of these and communicate enthusiastically with persons of all ages.
- Inform members of our goals, objectives, programs and needs
- Share camp information in church bulletins, newsletters, and bulletin boards from our newsletter, website and mailings.
- Observe Mount Luther Sunday and/or schedule a presentation and/or Temple Talk at your church (you can do this or we can help!)
- Create a camp bulletin board in a prominent place.
- Visit potential campers and parents; talk to Sunday School classes or youth groups.
- Seek funds for camperships for those children whose families will find it difficult to send their children to camp. Most congregations include an amount for camperships in their budget. Some congregations pay the deposit, others pay half of the camper fee and some pay the total fee. Also, the WELCA, men's groups or Sunday Church schools promote camperships in some congregations and provide funding.
- Conduct a brief dedication service at the beginning of the summer for all those children and families who will be attending camp.
- Promote summer camping employment opportunities
- Reports any problems, suggestions or information to the camp to help improve our ministry
- Encourage individuals and your congregation to make special gifts designated to the camping ministry. This can be through a donation made payable directly to Camp Mount Luther and sent to the camp, or it can be part of your church's benevolence giving to the Upper Susquehanna Synod. If you send donations through the synod, please make sure they are clearly marked, designated for Camp Mount Luther. Gifts may be designated either way for one of several funds including our Youse Campership Fund, Annual Fund for general operating expenses, Capital Campaigns or to a specific area of your choice.
- Do you work, understanding you are receiving the satisfaction of knowing that you are advancing God's kingdom through outdoor ministries!

Other Ideas

United in Christ, West Milton has a term called "Youth Stockholders." The individuals of the congregation specifically direct giving in their offering to reduce the expense for families sending youth to Camp Mount Luther. In return the youth and their parents prepare and serve a dinner to the stockholders as their way of saying thanks. They sit with stockholders talking about CML memories. Afterwards, the parents clean up while youth sing songs and talk about favorite parts and special memories. They've also had campers stand up during Sunday morning announcements and say to the whole church, "Thank you for helping send me to camp."

Start a Camp Mount Luther Angel Program! The program was developed at St. John, Espy by their former Christian Education Director Susie Spaid. In the past, they had always held a challenge for the congregation to match what their "Children of God" Sunday School class (3-4th graders) gave for Camp Mount Luther with their offering. They would raise approximately \$200. Susie then started the Angel program. Each participant is asked to sign up to give at least \$5 per month. If they are unable to give \$5 they are encouraged to give what they can. In a year, they raise approximately \$2,000. It is designed to currently go to the 40 By Faith campaign to pay off the Evergreen Center debt. St. John's purchased a stamp with the camp logo for minimal cost and stamp envelopes for folks to use. They also purchase small angel pins and those participating get a pin to wear. A running tally of money collected is posted in the bulletin (don't keep track if people fulfill their commitment- that's up to them and the Lord). The financial secretary keeps track of donations for giving statements. The money is then sent into camp- you could do it monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.

Other Ideas:

- Designating a week or two of the summer camp schedule for your congregation to participate in as a group
- Planning adult, family, and youth retreats throughout the year
- Offering Day Camp programs for children and youth during the summer
- Making confirmation camp and retreat experiences an integral part of your catechetical program
- Developing programs for older adults
- Planning a wilderness or high-adventure program at the camp

Guidelines for a Camping Presentation

If you wish to do your own presentation on our camp's summer program, here are some guidelines:

- (1) Contact the church and set up the date and time for the presentation. Ask to have all Sunday School classes present for grades 1-11 and also their parents and other adults. Arrange for a TV/VCR (with an extension cord). If you wish to have campers wear Mount Luther shirts, bring photos or other mementos for your presentation, make arrangements to have that put in the weekly bulletin. Check to see that the church has brochures. Each congregation was mailed those early in the year.
- (2) Call the camp office and arrange to get one of our summer promotional videos and/or more brochures.
- (3) Make sure the church is promoting your talk. You may want to go around to the various Sunday School classes yourself and talk up the presentation a week or so beforehand. Make sure announcements about the presentation are published in the bulletin and/or newsletter.
- (4) Arrive early the day of the presentation to set up.
- (5) Introduce yourself and your association with the camp.
- (6) Talk about why campers should come to Mount Luther. Mount Luther is different than other camps. It's special because we offer Christian education and Christian community in an outdoor setting. Coming to Mount Luther will give you an experience you won't get at other camps!
- (7) Give basic facts about Mount Luther (we can supply you with a fact sheet).
- (8) Have former campers tell what they like about camp.
- (9) Show the video.
- (10) Go over brochure highlighting the various program offerings for each age group. A suggestion would be to play charades as you do this, having the children act out the various specialty and

trip offerings (pretend to be fishing, canoeing, etc.) Also, remind them of the age groups:

- Pioneers for those who have completed Grades K-2
- Juniors for those who have completed Grades 3-5
- Intermediates for those who have completed Grades 6-8
- Senior High for those who have completed Grades 9-11

- (11) Tell about church payment participation (check ahead of time to learn how much the church pays towards the campers. Again, we can make up a sheet for you to pass out on what the church provides towards scholarships) Also, discuss discounts as outlined in the brochure.
- (12) Discuss Staff Needs if older senior high or parents are in attendance.
- (13) Answer Questions
- (14) Close with a camp song if you like. (You could also begin with a song) Some suggestions: Mother Sarah, I Will Call Upon the Lord, Long John, Buzzard Song, Psalm 150.

You could also do a Temple Talk during worship. Some guidelines:

- Introduce yourself if the pastor does not do that first
- Thank congregation for the opportunity to be with them today.
- Talk about the summer camp program
- Remind them that Mount Luther is a year-round outdoor ministry facility with events throughout all seasons
- Tell them you'd like to give them information on some upcoming camp events and tell them about those events (especially our spring events)
- End by thanking them again for their support of Mount Luther, both with prayers and financially and by sending kids to camp!
- You can also share an anecdotal story about a camper or a camp experience if you'd like.

Some Blurbs to Use in Church Newsletters and Bulletins

Our congregation has a valuable resource in our backyard. At Camp Mount Luther you will find accommodating staff, valuable programs, and great facilities that will bring added life, creativity, and opportunities to you and this congregation. Partnering with this ELCA Outdoor Ministry gives us an easy way to expand our opportunities for Christian education and growth on a year-round basis. For more information on Mount Luther, visit www.campmountluther.org

_____ is serving as our congregation's camperson with Camp Mount Luther this year. *(S)he* has information on programs for the summer and other events throughout the year. If you have additional questions, you can contact *him/her* or the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org. Since our congregation has a camperson, each camper from our church will receive a \$15 discount toward a week of summer camp! For more information on Mount Luther, visit www.campmountluher.org

Summer brochures are now available for Camp Mount Luther. It's going to be an exciting summer, with traditional, specialty and trip camps part of this year's schedule. Church camping is an important faith developer of our young people. Encourage a child to go to camp! For more information on Mount Luther, visit www.campmountluher.org

Did you know that Camp Mount Luther does more than just hold a summer camp each year? The camp is used for retreats, outdoor education, and events throughout the year. They have programs for all ages. Get to know Camp Mount Luther by visiting their website www.campmountluther.org and see what is happening there today!

Blessing Service for those going to Camp

Created by Pastor Kerry Aucker, you could use this each week when you have campers going to camp or you could adapt it to use at the beginning of the summer with all your campers

We are honored to celebrate with

{insert names}

as they leave for Camp Mount Luther this afternoon for a week of Church camp. There you will learn about Jesus and his love for you; you will learn about God's creation, and have fun while doing it. As you gather in your cabins and make new friends, gather in your small groups, participate in Bible studies, camp fires, make crafts, and go swimming; may your faith in Jesus Christ grow deeper. May this be a time of new opportunities as you go out on new adventures with the camp staff. We pray for your time while at camp, your safety, and for your parents while you are away from home, and for your return.

Let us pray:

As you go on your way, may Christ go with you.
May He go before you to show you the way,
May He go behind you to encourage you;
Above you to watch over,
Beside you to befriend you,
Within you to give you peace.

Lord, watch over our young people this day as they leave for camp and this week while they are at camp. Keep them in safety as they study your Word and enjoy all the activities at Camp Mt. Luther. Assure their parents as they are away that your presence will remain with them.

Amen.

A final note...

Please also publicize for your congregation what the church is willing to pay toward the camp experience. If a camping presentation is done at your congregation, this information should be shared then as well.