

April 2025

Temple Talk

Theme Registration for Summer Camp

Good morning! (*Introduce yourself as needed*) I'm one of our congregation's Delegates to Sugar Creek Bible Camp.

Sugar Creek has been creating spaces for generations for children and youth to experience something special. Camp gives youth a break from screens, busy schedules, and everyday pressures. It also provides an opportunity to slow down, connect with others in person, and experience God's love in genuine, tangible ways.

Now more than ever, **kids need camp**. They're growing up in a world filled with anxiety, noise, and constant change. Camp gives them room to breathe, to ask big questions, to be silly and safe and seen. It's a space where they're not measured by grades, sports, or social media—but simply embraced for who they are: beloved children of God.

I want to share one story from last summer. Two middle schoolers, both first-time campers, were completely homesick on the first day. They were ready to pack up and go home. But through the support of their counselors, some goofy games, a little encouragement, and lots of campfire songs, something shifted. In the morning, they told the year-round staff they no longer wanted to go home early. By the end of the week, they didn't want to leave. They made friends, found courage they didn't know they had, and discovered how deeply loved they are by God. Their parents told staff afterward: *"This week changed everything."*

This is why camp matters. It's more than just hiking and horse rides (though those are pretty great, too). It's about building lasting faith, confidence, and connection—something our kids desperately need right now.

The ripple effect keeps going. I've seen young leaders return from camp and step up in big ways here at church—mentoring younger kids, helping with VBS, and bringing their joy and leadership into every part of our community.

Here's my encouragement today: **send someone to camp**. Invite your neighbor. Sponsor a camper. Volunteer your time. Pray for the staff and campers. Because when we invest in camp, we're helping shape a generation of young people grounded in hope, community, and the love of Christ.

IDEA: Have summer brochures with a cover letter (template on the Congregational Resources webpage) about your congregation's camperships and camper testimonies.