



Ideas to Promote Camping in Your Church

Celebrate Camp Sunday

- ❖ Have fun promoting this life-transforming ministry.
- ❖ Invite a camp director, site board member, or committee on outdoor and retreat ministries member to share the story of United Methodist camping in Nebraska
- ❖ Involve past campers!
 - Select one or two enthusiastic campers from past summers to share their experiences at camp with your congregation.
 - Campers could wear their camp t-shirts to church.
 - Campers could create posters, collages, banners, etc.
- ❖ Make a special appeal for individuals who would be willing to volunteer as camp counselors, deans, or nurses, those who could transport campers, and those who would help with other projects at camp.
- ❖ 2012 Scheduled Camp Sundays in Nebraska – call the camps to request an ambassador (board member, camp director, volunteer) to come for a Camp Sunday. If youth/children gather on other days of the week, Ron, Valerie, Derek or Trent will gladly come any day of the week as time allows.
 - January 8 Camp Sunday at
 - January 15 Camp Sunday at
 - January 22 Camp Sunday at (Derek Gone)
 - January 29 Camp Sunday at
 - February 5 Camp Sunday at
 - February 12 Camp Sunday at (Trent Gone)
 - February 19 Camp Sunday at (Trent Gone)
 - February 26 Camp Sunday at
 - March 4 Camp Sunday at
 - March 11 Camp Sunday at
 - March 18 Camp Sunday at
 - March 25 Camp Sunday at
 - April 1 Camp Sunday at Easter Family/Gaga
 - April 8 Camp Sunday at **EASTER**
 - April 15 Camp Sunday at
 - April 22 Camp Sunday at
 - April 29 Camp Sunday at
 - May 6 Camp Sunday at (Trent Gone)
 - May 13 Camp Sunday at
 - May 20 Camp Sunday at STAFF TRAINING –
 - May 27 Camp Sunday at

Bulletin Board Displays

- ❖ If your church had children, youth or adults participating last year, get photos from them to use for your display. You might also add notes, pictures, or craft projects, etc.

- ❖ Use the brochures to make copies of camping opportunities available by grade.
- ❖ 11" x 17" posters available @ clergy session and upon request

Display the Camp Brochures in Prominent Places

- ❖ Make additional camping brochures available (Extras can be requested from the camps).

Use Your Church's Weekly Bulletin and Newsletters

- ❖ Give the 2012 Camp Bulletin Blips to the person in charge of the Sunday bulletin.
- ❖ Give the 2012 Newsletter Articles to your newsletter editor.
- ❖ Have past campers write short articles to describe what a week of camp means to them.
- ❖ Promote camp opportunities to a different age-group each week.
- ❖ Provide information about scholarships and how to request or how to provide support.
- ❖ Ask returning campers to make a picture or share a story about their camping experience—“what going to camp was like for me.”
- ❖ Develop your own promotional display.
- ❖ Promote the Nebraska UM Camps Website
 - Conference Website: www.umcneb.org (UM Camps Camping section)
 - Camp Comeca: www.campcomeca.com
 - Camp Fontanelle: www.campfontanelle.com → Visit “Register For Camp” and “Camp Resources” link to find info about summer camping. Photo gallery has pictures to share.
 - Camp Norwesca: www.norwesca.org

***Camp Fontanelle's “Camp Resources” link has LOTS of information/posters that can be printed or copied and pasted into your own literature!**

Talk to People

- ❖ Person-to-person is best! Talk with a prospective camper and/or parent. They tend to delay acting. Continue to encourage them!
- ❖ Visit your church's groups such as Sunday school classes, youth groups, etc.
- ❖ Ask your pastor for a few minutes for you or a camper to speak during one or more Sunday worship services.
- ❖ Coordinate car-pooling for camps sessions to save gas and time for working parents

Fun(d) Raising

- ❖ Provide information about scholarships and how to request or how to provide support. (Many churches provide local scholarships through the church, UM Women, and UM Men's groups. Limited conference scholarship can be made available in instances where a camper could not attend without assistance. Conference scholarship money if requested not to exceed 1/3 of cost of camp.) If money is the only issue blocking attendance and funds can't be secured, contact the camps where “no child will be denied”.
- ❖ Consider planning a meal for your church to share on Camp Sunday to raise money for camp scholarships
- ❖ Consider taking a special offering on Camp Sunday for camp.

Special Events

- ❖ Plan a camp sign-up day. Invite parents and potential campers.
- ❖ Set a goal of how many campers you want your church to send to camp this summer – make a “thermometer” to show the progress being made toward your goal of camper sign-ups.

- ❖ Pick a week (or weeks) for children and youth in your church to attend camp at the same time.
- ❖ Organize a trip to a camp site for a meal or worship service.
- ❖ Plan a family camp weekend at a campsite to help acquaint the people in your church with the camps.
- ❖ Tie Sunday School attendance to church support – perfect attendance = 100% church scholarship, etc.

Video

- ❖ Set up a television set and run the 2011 camping video. Use the video during worship or to share apportionment dollars at work. This is an excellent way to share the camping story. A DVD or CD with camp pictures set to a contemporary song can be directly requested from Camp Fontanelle at 402-478-4296 or Fontanelle@umcneb.org



A Letter of Encouragement from Jean Pancharoen – Board Member

PREPARING TO “SELL” CAMP TO THE CONGREGATION

Speaking in front of the congregation may not be your favorite activity...in fact, it may rank right up there with cleaning the garage or scrubbing the grout in your tile floor! But it's not so hard to “sell” something you really believe in, so let your passion show. Remember, we're not just trying to get kids to camp...we're bringing them to Jesus. We know camp can change lives; we know many young people “discover” Jesus and his love for us at camp. We know many people working in the church – both clergy and laity – came to Jesus through a camp experience. We want to share all this with children. And we know we're up against lots of competition. There are many options for kids' summer activities, so we want to stand out.

This is a multi-pronged sale. Kids are looking for fun, of course. Parents are looking for value – not just “bang for the bucks” but also what benefits their children will derive beyond the fun. And we want to sell congregations on the value to families and how that benefits the congregation, too. Kids gain self-esteem, gain new skills and experience new activities and make new friends. Parents get a week “away” from the kids with the assurance that their kids are getting an exciting Christian experience.

So remind yourself of why you are doing this. Remember this is a way to share your faith with others. Remember you love camping ministry and the kids. And even if you no longer want to sleep on the ground under the stars or trot around with a bunch of 9-year-olds for a week...you have lots to give to this ministry. Let your passion show...it is truly contagious.

Some benefits of camp:

- Making new Christian friends
- Having a chance to be “yourself” at camp...not necessarily who you think others expect you to be.
- Getting to know people from different backgrounds
- Taking responsibility within a new community
- Learning life lessons from others with different life experiences
- Learning Christian values
- Trying new things
- Being part of a Christian community that encourages and doesn't judge
- Developing new skills and knowledge
- Spiritual growth
- Leadership development
- Developing self-esteem and self-confidence
- Being away from home and learning to adjust to new routines
- Sharing your own experiences with others
- Having a chance to speak up, share your own ideas
- Learning from the example of young Christians (those exciting camp counselors!)
- Having something to look forward to returning to next summer

- Exciting activities (ponies, tree climbing on rope, treeboats, corn maze, laser tag, pets)

And for the congregation to keep in mind:

- A week of camp is about as much time as a year in Sunday School
- Proverbs 22:6 – Teach a child when he is young and when old they will not stray from it.
- 65% of Christians find their faith by age 18
- Remember the parable of the firm foundation: camp can lead them to Jesus the “rock” for our young people to build their lives upon.
- Children who attend church camp generally come home with a new feeling of connection to their home church
- Majority of pastors and church leaders attended camp where God called them to leadership, service, and action.

So go out there and have fun. You’re selling a great product. Let your love show!