

# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



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— *Intro*

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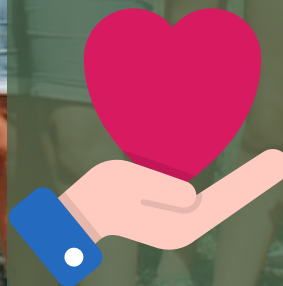
Summer 2023 Stats



50% of Campers dedicated or rededicated their lives to Jesus



3 of our Staffers renewed their faith in Jesus



37% of Campers received scholarships

# Fun Facts



Our Summer 2023 theme was Mosaic. Where campers and staff learned the journey from broken to restored.



46% of our Staff were campers turned Staff Members



2023 marks our 70th anniversary here and we are excited to see what God has in store for us next!



Our New Zip Line is complete and is a 1000ft ride! The campers enjoyed it this summer and said that it goes way faster than our old one.

# Letters to God from Campers

We ask campers during their week to write letters God. Hope they warm your heart as much as they warm ours!



Dear God,  
Thank you so much for this amazing camp.  
Also, Thank you for creating all of us. You are  
the best God to ever exist.  
Love your creation,  
A Camper

Dear God,  
Thank you for everything. My family, friends,  
and everyone else in my life. So I thank you  
one million times over - I am forever thankful.  
Sincerely,  
A Camper



## Thank you letters to Staff

Staff never know the impact they make on campers, so we invite our campers to write them letters to remind them how fantastic and amazing human beings they truly are!



Thanks for being the best counselors ever.  
You guys are the best, this was my first time  
at camp and you guys made it a great  
experience. I really got closer to God.  
From,  
A Camper

Dear Staff,  
Thank you for watching over us this  
week and feeding us.  
From,  
A Camper





## New Program Highlight: LIT Program

By: Kenai

This year marked the inauguration of our Leaders in Training Program (LIT), a significant milestone in our camp's journey. The LIT program was thoughtfully designed for campers aged 14 and 15 who aspire to transition into staff roles. These young individuals were highly recommended by our staff members, as they exemplified the principles expressed in 1 Timothy 4:12—serving as exemplary role models in faith, purity, love, and speech.

During the LIT week, these campers embarked on a transformative journey of servant leadership. Throughout this week, they undertook various challenges growing their faith and leadership. They learned the main components of running summer camp including kitchen, housekeeping, maintenance, and program.

Each day was an adventure, whether it involved canoeing, engaging in a spirited mud fight, a hike through Cuyahoga Falls, or leisurely floating down the river on inner tubes. This particular cohort of LITs comprised 11 remarkable individuals, and it was truly a joy to witness their growth during their time here. I often walked into the chapel to find them onstage, dancing with exuberance, or engaged in pivotal conversations with campers, showcasing their willingness to step in wherever needed throughout the week. One parent even shared that their LIT camper not only enjoyed the LIT week immensely but also found it more fulfilling than being a regular teen camper. Furthermore, they noted that it struck an ideal balance between fun and providing valuable insights into how our camp operates.

I want to celebrate these remarkable LITs for their unwavering dedication and hard work, as well as extend congratulations to those who have been invited to apply for staff positions next summer. Their journey has just begun, and we look forward to seeing them continue to shine brightly in their roles within our camp community.



# A Heartfelt Adieu: Celebrating Our Director's Legacy

By: Kenai

I have vivid memories of the day Matt Grant first became a part of our Pleasant Hill team. He arrived as the new guy, and the uncertainty about what to expect from him filled the air. Yet, no amount of words can truly capture the essence of his contribution to our camp. It was evident right from the start that Matt held a deep love for our camp, and this passion was infectious, spreading to everyone on the staff. Being an Executive Director is a role that comes with immense challenges, often involving relentless hard work and the courage to tackle problems that others might shy away from. Most of their efforts take place behind the scenes, unseen by most. However, Matt embraced his role with grace and humility throughout his time here. I can still recall his first year when he showed unwavering dedication to the camp. Instead of retreating to dine privately at home, he frequently brought his family down to eat with campers and staff, becoming a beloved part of our family.

Another vivid memory is the year when Matt introduced us to his love a popular card game. I once walked into the office around midnight during the summer to find Matt and others engaged in a duel with the summer staff. This exemplifies his commitment to fostering relationships and getting to know the staff. I want to acknowledge Matt's outstanding leadership during critical times. Under his guidance, we successfully navigated the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Additionally, in 2022, our camp faced a tornado. The entire team had to adapt swiftly to ensure the safety of our campers. I distinctly remember Matt rushing to camp from his home that night, ensuring that all staff and campers were safe.

Each person reflects God's characteristics in a unique way, and Matt is undoubtedly a remarkable reflection of God's grace. Having witnessed various leadership styles among directors over the years, none compare to Matt Grant. Regardless of the hour or the complexity of the challenge, he made it a point to be available and present. Over the years, he transitioned from being just a boss to not just a friend, but family. Today, I want to celebrate him and his incredible contributions to our camp during his tenure as Executive Director. While it saddens us to see him go, we know that wherever he is called, he will continue to fulfill his mission for God. We eagerly anticipate the next chapter of his journey, confident that it will be filled with remarkable achievements & blessings.



## Thanks to our Summer 2023 Staff

As we wave goodbye to another epic summer, it's time to give you a huge high-five and a big shout-out for making this season a total blast to our summer staff. Seriously, they are the real MVPs! Their endless energy, goofy antics, and all-around awesome vibes have turned this summer into a wild rollercoaster of fun. We know that your hard work often goes unsung, but we want you to know that it's not unnoticed – it's celebrated as an act of devotion that glorifies God with every laugh, every song, and every adventure. Being part of the summer staff can feel like a whirlwind of wild challenges and long days. But they tackled it all with a smile, turning every challenge into an opportunity for laughter and adventure. Their dedication to creating a place where campers can seek God, be their goofy selves, and have the time of their lives is nothing short of legendary. We definitely hope to see them next year.



### How Camp impacted Staff:

“I want to just start off by saying I love this camp and it means the world to me that they gave me the opportunity to be here this summer. I love all the people that work here and don't know what I would do without them. This year was the year I grew the most with God and making friends and memories along the way. Even though I might be here next year, I love you all and will not be here without you. I just want to talk about how I grew this summer and how it changed my life. I think my relationship with God grew 10x more this summer.”



“It was the most fulfilling thing I have done in my life. I still remember every campers name and pray for them every night”

“This summer, i only worked here for 2 weeks, However... it was the most beautiful, impactful, & best 2 weeks of my life:”



# Camper Story from a Staff Member

Staff members write weekly stories about how they witnessed God's impact on a camper

At the beginning of this week, I had a camper who arrived with a group of six other campers. From the very first day, this camper sat on the sideline refusing to participate in games and activities. Whenever the cabin walked as a group, this camper walked very slowly and distanced herself from us. I had to ask her several times to keep up, yet she refused. So, as she was sitting out of one of our activities, I went to sit and talk with her. In talking with her, I got to know her and understand her situation a bit more. It turned out that she had recently been placed with a new foster family, the people she had arrived at camp with. She had not wanted to come to camp, just as she had not wanted to be taken from her home.

She was not even Christian period she and her family were Muslim, and she missed both her hometown and her home mosque. She had some resentment about being sent to camp, so naturally, she did not want to participate. I let her know that I understood and then we talked about our favorite things to do. After we had that discussion, the camper started participating in more activities in interacting with other girls in the cabin. By the next day, the camper seemed like she was genuinely having fun at camp she painted the other campers' nails, participated in activities, and even led some of the camp songs! If after visiting Pleasant Hill, campers are able to say that they had fun, felt heard, and felt the love at a Christian camp, I say it's a job well done.

-A 2023 Staffer





We believe everyone should go to camp! We know that camp is special and believe that every kid should be able to have the experience to go camping. We wanted to praise God for how God has connected us to serve all different types of campers from different backgrounds.



### **Ashland Parenting Plus**

We have been connected with this organization for a while. They provide families with educational opportunities but also give camp scholarships so they can enjoy camp.



### **Angel Tree**

You may know them as the organization that gives children of incarcerated parents presents during Christmas, they also fully scholarship the same kids to camp for free. It is exciting to see some of these children are becoming staff this summer! This was our 2nd summer working with them!



### **Norwalk**

Since 2019, we have been connected with this particular Norwalk community where children of Mexican Refugees reside. Along with a church we are able to provide about 25 camp scholarships for the families within this community.



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Praying for you!