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Truth Summits @ Woodcrest

A passion of ours is to see youth and teens think more deeply about God so that they can love God more fully. Students need to know how to take every thought captive to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). Woodcrest's Truth Summits are a way for us to come alongside teens in that pursuit. These weekend retreats are packed full of teaching and activities geared to equip teens to live their faith boldly so that they can stand firm and shine the light of Christ. There are two models available. Churches can schedule their own youth group retreat where we partner to provide a life changing weekend. The other option is for teens to sign up for Woodcrest's Truth Summit February 23-25, which will involve students from many local churches. Learn more and register for our weekend online.

Please Pray

- Pray for God to bring us the quality staff needed to run summer camp
- Pray for the Board of Directors as they navigate the ministry through this next phase of growth
- Pray that God would prepare the hearts of the campers who will attend this summer

Fireside Chat Podcast

We continue to produce more informative and entertaining interviews with friends of Woodcrest—both past and present. Learn about Woodcrest's history as well as the impact of the ministry on the lives of those who serve and attend the camp. You can now catch our Fireside Chats on Spotify and YouTube .

School of Wonder Spring Semester

In March will start our next semester of homeschool classes through the Woodcrest School of Wonder. There is another slate of great programming to support and supplement what families are learning at home. Classes on the schedule include Chemistry for Kids, Animal Tracking, What's Wild, Birdhouse Building, a special geocaching course, and a family canoe trip.

Woodcrest is also able to do field trips for Christian and public schools. We have a variety of activities and programs to help students learn more about the creation around them.

www.woodcrestretreat.org/education



The Messiness of Ministry

By Bill Klees, Executive Director

Tug of war into a mud pit. Pie throwing. Color wars. Mud facials. Even being covered in sweat on a hot day hiking a mountain. Camp ministry is messy. I have plenty of shorts and tee shirts splattered with paint or stained with who knows what to remind me of that truth. But camp is also spiritually messy.

Any ministry that is passionate about reaching the lost knows the messiness of ministry. That is only getting truer in our post-Christian culture. Life would certainly be easier if everyone was mature, gracious, and had their lives together. But people aren't that way—especially children and teens.

Reading through the Gospels reveals that Jesus did not avoid the mess, but embraced it. He got His hands dirty touching lepers and healing the blind. He dined with sinners and tax collectors. The religious leaders of the day criticized Him for conversing and associating with

those who were messy. Sure it would be easy if everyone was clean, but then we wouldn't need Jesus.

We have the Gospel because we have the mess. Sin is messy and Christ died a messy death so that He could make us clean. First on the inside, and then working outwards through the power of the Spirit and the support of His Church.

We invite you to this year's Celebration Banquet to learn how Woodcrest is engaging in the messiness of ministry and how God is cleaning up lives through it. We are not shying away from the challenges we face. Like Paul, we are not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power to clean up the mess of sin (Romans 1:16). Join us in celebrating God's faithfulness. It will be a fun and inspiring evening (and not too messy!). Register online or call the camp office to reserve your seats.



Upcoming Events

- Truth Summit (for teens) – February 23-25
- Senior Citizen's Day – March 17
- Woodcrest Prayer Night – March 20th at Alive Church
- Celebration Banquet – April 4
- Ministry Conference – April 16
- Golf Tournament – May 9
- Summer Camps – June 17- August 9 (8 weeks)
- 3D Archery Shoot – August 28
- Fall Family Fun Fest – September 14



Ministry Conference

Partnerships are a key way that Woodcrest is able to fulfill its mission. We view ourselves as partners in the Gospel as we support the local church in the broader mission of taking the Good News of Jesus Christ across the street and around the world. The Woodcrest Ministry Conference is a way for us to come alongside ministries to promote community and cooperation.

This day is designed for pastoral staff, elders, non-profit ministries, and others engaged in Kingdom work. Our keynote speakers will provide encouragement while equipping ministry leaders to thrive where God has placed them. Small group discussions will happen with a variety of topics. Community building will happen around lunch with time available for personal reflection. Attendees can make use of our cabins for a personal retreat the day before or the night of the conference. We will also make meeting rooms available for church staff that want to debrief and extend their time as a ministry team or private pastoral retreat in one of our cabins.

The conference is April 16th. The cost is \$20 to attend. More information and registration can be found online. [We are thankful to Friendship Community, Everence, OneLife, Kirby-Smith & Associates, Good Sipler, Align Life Ministries, and Life Institute](#) for sponsoring this event.

Cabin Project Update

Last September we launched Phase 2 of our Mission 4:12 Initiative. Having successfully funded and built the new shower house, we eagerly moved into the next phase which is the addition of ten Lancaster Log Cabins to replace our current summer bunkhouses. When completed, we will have an additional 140 beds for year-round use as well as a second shower house. This would allow us to double our current Kingdom impact by adding our own winter retreats for youths and families, field trips for schools, as well as rental space for churches. With a commitment to maintaining a rustic environment, the Lancaster Log Cabins will enhance our summer programs, too.

The Cabin Project was the focus of our year-end letter. We raised over \$300,000 in the last months of the year. Included was a generous Legacy Gift from the estate of Lois Martin who sadly passed away in 2022 after many years of faithful service to Woodcrest.

In total, God has provided nearly 45% of the funding for this phase. We will be promoting this project at churches over the coming months as well as meeting with supporters to share the vision behind this phase. You can give toward this project by designating gifts to the "Cabin Project." Also consider how planning for your legacy gift can ensure that Woodcrest is able to shine the light of Christ for generations to come.



Sponsorship Impact

Business & Church Sponsorships Make Ministry Happen

Businesses, Ministries, and Churches can make an impact in the work that God is doing at Woodcrest. Sponsorships for various events help us to raise funds needed to keep camp affordable. The goal is for sponsorships to cover operating expenses for our cornerstone events (Celebration Banquet, Golf Tournament, and Fall Fest). There are various levels to match any budget. Ministry Partners go beyond to financially bless the ongoing work.

To show our appreciation for our sponsors, we provide a plethora of ways to let our community know of their generosity. We served over 350 churches in 2023 and reached nearly 2,000 campers with the good news of Jesus Christ. Over 30,000 people step on the camp property each year, plus social media and print media provide a great way to share what is happening at camp while thanking our sponsors for making an impact. Please consider if there is a business or ministry that you know that would consider partnering with Woodcrest. You can download our Partnership Packet online at www.woodcrestretreat.org/business.

Summer Camp Flourishes

Plans begin for the next year's summer camp almost immediately after summer camp ends. Woodcrest is known for our quality program that provides opportunities for young people to get out of the ordinary and experience the extraordinary. We work hard to combine innovative activities while making sure the heart of our program is the relationships formed between campers and counselors. We don't want to distract from God's creation, but provide time for campers to truly experience the wonder of God by exploring the amazing world He has made. Meanwhile, the whole day is saturated in God's truth through worship, Bible time, nature classes, plus scheduled times at the Outdoor Chapel and learning how to see God through His creation.

Our passion is still keeping camp affordable for everyone. We are generous with our camp scholarships that assist families so that finances never stand in the way of attending camp. Additionally, donations to Woodcrest subsidize camp for many families. God continues to bless that effort by growing the ministry by 30% in the past three years. We anticipate sharing the gospel with 2,000 campers this summer!

