

Camp Deerpark

SUMMER 2022

A MINISTRY OF THE NEW YORK CITY MENNONITE CHURCHES

CAMP DEERPARK OWNER CHURCHES

Believers Mennonite Garifuna Ministries
Pastor Andrew Nuñez

Centro Misionero Cristiano
Pastor Aristidez Shee

Evangelical Garifuna Church
Pastor Lilian Flores
Retired Pastor Celso Jaime

Evangelical Garifuna Church of Brooklyn
Pastor Martin Alvarez

Evangelical Garifuna Church of Manhattan
Pastor Margarito Martinez

Friendship Community Church
Pastor Kenneth L. Thompson

Grace and Peace Mennonite Church
Pastor Anita Castle

Iglesia Evangelical Menonita Eben-Ezer
Pastors Julio and Ana Damaso

Immanuel Community Church
Pastor Mark Perri

Infinity Mennonite Church
Pastor Albert Taylor

King of Glory Tabernacle

Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship
Pastor Jason Storbakken

Mennonite Bible Fellowship, CT
Pastor Cedric Smith

Mennonite Evangelistic Tabernacle
Pastor Nestalis DeLeon

Muros de Fuegos
Pastor Maria Teresa Flores

North Bronx Mennonite Church
Pastor Ruth Wenger

United Revival Mennonite Church
Bishop Nicolas Angustia

Valley of Jesus Mennonite Church
Pastors Bernardo & Linda Rodriguez

CABIN DEDICATION

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
~ Matthew 11:28

In June we dedicated the sixth cabin in Promise Woods; Cabin #4, Rest. Construction on cabin #4 began with a crew from Mercersburg Mennonite laying the foundation in the fall of 2016. Cabin #1, Guidance, was being built at the same time in order to make the best use of volunteers. In early spring of 2019 when our construction crew pulled off of the two cabins to focus on the Promise Center, both cabins were 90% complete.

With a shortage of meeting room and dining room space the Promise Center took priority from 2019 through the summer of 2021. With the Promise Center fully in service the construction crew of Ben, Leonard, and Luis moved their focus back to cabins 1 and 4 in the fall of 2021. The supply chain shortage hit us in several unexpected areas with bathroom sinks being the longest delay and consequently the last item to be completed. In June the cabin passed final inspection and was ready for campers and guests.



All of the Promise Woods cabins are made possible with a combination of donors, volunteers, camp staff, and a New York City owner church who has committed to support and maintain the cabin as caretakers in the future. Pastor Linda and Bernardo Rodriguez and the folks from Valley of Jesus Mennonite Church have committed to be the caretakers of cabin #4, Rest. The children's ministry from Valley of Jesus were scheduled for a weekend at camp on June 3-5 so it seemed like the perfect weekend to dedicate the cabin.

Photo: The children from Valley of Jesus Mennonite Church in Brooklyn along with members of the primary donor family gather in front of Rest for the cabin dedication.

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After lunch we all gathered outside the cabin. A representative of the primary donor family read the following words. (We are respectfully honoring the family's desire to remain anonymous.) "In light of today and the cabin dedication, God gets all of the glory! God has done great things for us." Before handing the keys to pastor Linda he concluded with, "Our sincere hope is that this cabin will serve as a place of rest for many decades to come. We hope that campers will experience Christ along with Christian community and be able to make many new friends with at least some of these friends becoming life-long friends."

The water slide was next on the schedule for the children so all comments were kept to a minimum. Pastor Linda Rodriguez shared a few words regarding their church's commitment to take good care of the space for generations to come. Then with much eagerness, Jacob Balmes and Rebecca Morales cut the ribbon and we rushed inside. After a prayer of dedication Rebecca led us in singing:

*May His favor be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family and your children
And their children, and their children.*

We are grateful to the primary donor family, the many volunteers, and our camp construction staff who helped make this cabin project dream a reality.



Enthusiastically entering Rest after the ribbon cutting.

2022 SUMMER CAMP IN REVIEW



Thanks to the Smith brothers for organizing the Rafael Hidalgo memorial flag football game. Rafael was a camper as a child and a beloved counselor the summer of 2016. He tragically passed away on April 17, 2022. Rafael was part of United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn. A stand out athlete, Rafael attended the University of New Mexico on a football scholarship. A flag football game at Camp Deerpark was a meaningful way for all of us to remember Rafael. (Above)

Thanks to Tovin Sannes-Venhuizen for taking great photos this summer.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S HEART BY KEN BONTRAGER

Persia Perez sat on the small porch of motel #8, "Goodness," where she had been enjoying an August week with her children at family camp. She was giving her three children instructions to pack up their things and move upstairs in Spruce Lodge. Her church was coming to camp for their annual weekend retreat and her family had to move out of the motel to make room for others. When asked why she had to move she explained, "My husband is the one who assigns the rooms for our church and we always take the worst room upstairs. I have never stayed in a motel for our church retreat."

I told Persia the story of Ray and Annie Pacheco. For many years Ray and Annie provided pastoral leadership to First Spanish Mennonite in Brooklyn. When they came to Camp Deerpark, Ray and Annie were also responsible for assigning rooms and always insisted on staying in room #23 in the Annex. He used to say, "Don't let anyone take my favorite room." Everyone knew that room #23 was absolutely the worst room at Camp Deerpark. Ray and Annie were servant leaders. Taking the worst room at camp was as natural to them as preparing for a mid-week Bible study.

Those who have been given the task of assigning rooms for a weekend at Camp Deerpark know that it is almost impossible to make everyone happy. Grace Smith once found herself with a highly dissatisfied church member. After some angry words the parishioner started walking down Brandt Road with suitcase in tow. Without hesitation, Pastor Michael Banks jumped in his blue Plymouth to bring her back. "You can stay in our room," was all she needed to hear.

I am grateful for the example of folks like Michael and Addie Banks, and Ray and Annie Pacheco. Camp Deerpark has a rich tradition of servants and servant leadership. I am also grateful that the tradition of servant leadership continues with folks like Tony and Persia Perez. May God be honored as we all strive to put others ahead of ourselves.



2022 SUMMER CAMP PAID IN FULL!

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing: it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

PROMISE CIRCLE

The Promise Circle is comprised of members of the Camp Deerpark family who have made a commitment to give monthly. A monthly gift is convenient for you and a great way to bless the ministry of Camp Deerpark. There is a place for you. Join the circle and experience the joy of a monthly gift.

Please contact Nancy at deerparkdevelopment@gmail.com if you have any questions.

STAY CONNECTED!



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AMAZON SMILE

AmazonSmile is very simple to use—all you need is an Amazon account. On your first visit to the site, you will be asked to log in to your Amazon account with existing username and password (you do not need a separate account for AmazonSmile).

You will then be prompted to choose a charity to support.

May we suggest **Camp Deerpark**.

PEACE CAMP

Peace for the weary at Camp Deerpark

January 2-7, 2023

With rising violence in the US and its pervasive systemic nature, our young adults are grappling with deep pain and trauma as they are simultaneously called to forge a different course ahead.

This week-long peace camp will offer spaces and strategies for personal healing, repairing harm, participating in nonviolent intervention and finding hope when we feel surrounded by violence and destruction. Travel expenses will be covered and registration will cost \$200. Registration information coming soon.

CONGRATS!



Congratulations to Abraham and Kayla Guerra who welcomed Elias Jayce Guerra into this world on August 8th.

Abraham and Kayla are both former campers and summer staff. They are members of United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn.

Editor: Ken Bontrager

The newsletter is published four times a year and is distributed without charge to members and friends.



Camp Deerpark is owned by the Mennonite Churches of New York City.

P.O. Box 394
Westbrookville, NY 12785
(845) 754-8669
Email: info@campdeerpark.org
www.campdeerpark.org



WISH LIST

- Minivan
- Disc Golf - \$600 per hole (nine holes remain)
- Tree saver maple syrup spiles \$3 each (need 50-200)
- Replacement maple syrup evaporator pan. Used if we can find one \$2000; new \$7000.

THANK YOU

- The first nine disc golf holes have been sponsored
- Treatment for the three Ash trees in the front lawn
- Two new freezers in the kitchen
- Two new washing machines in the laundry
- Sound system for Promise Center

SAVE A TREE!

Would you like to receive your newsletter by email? Printing and mailing newsletters can become costly. It is cheaper, greener and easier to receive newsletters via email. If you're interested, send your email address to guests@campdeerpark.org or call 845-754-8669.

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