

# THANK YOU!

- New office chair with arms for Ashley
- To ALL of the 2024 volunteers and donors!



## Camp Deerpark

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



Thanks to the Bowmansville Mennonite Youth and the Mercersburg Mennonite Youth woodcutting volunteers who have been such a blessing to Camp Deerpark for many years.

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

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

# Camp Deerpark

WINTER 2025

## A MINISTRY OF THE NEW YORK CITY MENNONITE CHURCHES

### CAMP DEERPARK OWNER CHURCHES

Believers Mennonite Garifuna Ministries  
Pastor Andrew Nuñez

Centro Misionero Cristiano  
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Evangelical Garifuna Church  
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Pastor Cedric Smith

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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

### CAMP SITUATION BY GINO RODRIGUEZ



A brief introduction. My name is Gino Rodriguez, and my wife is Eivy Rodriguez. I am the new Facilities Director, and my wife is the Housekeeping Manager here at Camp Deerpark. We are faithful and dedicated members of the United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, New York. Yes, New York City, a completely different world coming up from the city to camp. This was one of my biggest battles in understanding God calling me into this position and me submitting to the calling that God was whispering to me for the last two years. In 2015, I reconciled with Christ and since then God has been revealing His word in Mathew 6:33 to me, showing me that when we seek His kingdom

and His righteousness, we will not lack anything. This was the word of encouragement that I slightly forgot to apply in my heart when this position as Facilities Director first opened up two years ago. Struggling with NYC's everyday living, school, and a new job, everything that had to do with embarking on a new and foreign job at camp, I was in complete doubt.

In mid-2023, even with the excitement of hearing of this job opening here at camp, the demand of "city life" was kind of distracting me from listening to God's voice telling me to apply for the job. After 15 years in the automotive field God put in my heart to excel in obtaining my CASAC to become a substance abuse counselor. I did that for 7 years and again God put in my heart to pursue a degree in psychology to serve young adults. With finishing my degree in psychology and starting a new job in foster care, it seemed like camp's opening had nothing to do with what God put in my heart to do in 2010, which was to mentor young adults. Little did I know, everything that God was preparing of me was for this exact thing. I began a meaningful job at Rising Ground as a youth coach in 2023, right after leaving the informative field of substance abuse and for some reason still having an urge within to apply for this opening at camp. Having one more semester to complete my degree, we had questions for God about what my wife and I would be doing here in Westbrookville, NY. Her being a home health aide and me being a substance abuse counselor mentoring young adults in the city did not seem to fall into the description of Camp Deerpark's Facilities Director. However, at a camp church retreat I began to speak with Camp's Operations Director and the conversation began to shift and align with what God has been telling me for the past year and a half. Upon speaking with our pastor, my wife and I were able to step outside our comfort zone and observe what camp mission is and truly understood what God is calling us to do.

Continued on page 2



Without boring you with the details of my applying for the job and being accepted, it is a huge privilege to work here at camp. The list of gratitude continues with God providing a job for my wife to work in housekeeping and assist me with my job functions, showing that seeking God and His righteousness allowed everything to fall into place. Going from questioning God since 2023 in how my wife and I would survive at camp, to what was the point in pursuing the field He asked me to pursue and how would that benefit me in camp. Here it goes, my questions were answered on my first day at camp after relocating here. I conversed with God while serving with a volunteer youth group that came to camp from Maryland, and I was able to see this was exactly where God wanted me and my wife to be.

Today, as I work to keep our camp facilities and vehicles in functioning order and my wife works with keeping our facilities clean and presentable, the most important value that I understand happens when our Mennonite churches send their youth to volunteer at camp. There I have the privilege and honor to assist them by working alongside them, learn from them and disciple them to my best ability. To God be all the glory and honor.

### CAMP HAS SOLAR PANELS

A long-time friend of Camp wanted to make a tangible impact on sustainability here, at an organization they knew personally. That is how the Promise Center now has a solar panel array on its roof, which generates the power needed for all of Promise Woods. Incredibly, this gift will do many things: First, it will save literally tons of carbon emissions. Second, it will save camp some funds that can spent on advancing its mission. Third, it will be a focal point in our stewardship education during Summer Camp and beyond. Truly, these panels are a gift that keeps on giving, and we look forward to more projects at Camp that mirror God's care for the Earth united with his deep care for people.



## WISH LIST

- Computer monitor
- Heavy Duty full size pick up--\$18,000
- Hot water tank for admin house--\$600
- Backup generator for kitchen--\$5,000
- Hot water heaters for Spruce Lodge (x2)--\$1,200
- Lights for game room
- Spot lights--\$150.00
- LED strips--\$150
- Cues for new pool table in the game room--\$75
- Chalks for new pool table in game room--\$25
- Ping-pong ball machine for game room--\$150 - \$500
- Dryer for staff house--\$650
- Dump trailer--\$10,000



## SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULE 2025

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO SERVE CHRIST IN THE CITY

### SESSIONS

- Children's Camp Session 1
- Children's Camp Session 2
- Children's Camp Session 3 & Teen Discipleship 1
- Children's Camp Session 4 & Teen Discipleship 2
- Children's Camp Session 5
- Teen Camp

### DATES

- June 29-July 4
- July 6-11
- July 13-18
- July 29-25
- July 27-Aug 1
- August 3-8

Register online at [www.campdeerpark.org](http://www.campdeerpark.org) or call the office for a paper registration.

### CHILDREN'S CAMP

For ages 8-13 Cost: \$200-300\*  
Early discount rate may apply

Children's camp provides safe, fun, and Christ-centered activities that helps young people build character by using a set of core values as a guide. Activities may include hiking, swimming, rafting, and lessons in the Bible, nature, and art. Each night the entire group gathers around a fire to worship and be encouraged by a message about God's love. By the end of the week, campers will return home exhausted from camp's excitement and singing camp songs about the promises of Christ. The general schedule of the program is similar week to week, though the activities and curriculum will vary weekly. This makes camp appealing to all campers, whether they come for one week or five.



### TEEN DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCE:

For ages 14-16 Cost: \$200-300\*  
Early discount rate may apply

This program allows older campers to continue to enjoy the camp experience at a young adult level. It is limited in quantity to create a personal and focused Teen Discipleship Experience with mentoring counselors. In addition to journaling, swimming, and creative work projects, this program may include fun teen camp activities like visiting Freedom Farm, rafting, hiking, the Ice Caves, etc. Our maximum is 4 female and 4 male campers.



### TEEN CAMP

For ages 14-16 Cost: \$200-300\*  
Early discount rate may apply

Teen Camp meets youth at their level with a schedule full of fun, deep conversations, and Christ-centered community living. This week is designed to combine discipleship with activities such as swimming, hiking, field games, and rafting. Each evening around the campfire, teens will be challenged to think critically about their faith and what it means to be a follower of Christ.



### Summer Camp Discounts

- \*Based on when registration and payment are received in the office
- \$200/week if received in March or April
- \$250/week if received in May
- \$300/week if received in June



# 2024 CAMP DEERPARK DONORS

## Annual Support:

Alexie Torres-Fleming  
 Daniel & Karen Angustia  
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 Ashley Smith Jr  
 Gary Smith  
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 Leon & Nancy Stauffer  
 Edgar Stoesz  
 Sunnyside Mennonite  
 Church  
 Medeli Taverez  
 Isaac & Thelma Thomas  
 Charles & Ruth Torielli  
 Andy & Joan Torres  
 The Torres Family  
 Steve & Kathy Troyer  
 Donald & Carole Tuttle  
 United Revival Mennonite  
 Church  
 Valley of Jesus Mennonite

Church  
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 Ana Villanueva  
 Steve & Irene Villanueva  
 Carolyn Wakefield  
 Jo Ann Walczak  
 Bill & Mei-Yee Wang  
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 Barry & Barbara  
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 Anna Mae Weaver  
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 Glenn Weaver  
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 Joel & Crystal Yoder  
 Michael & Katrina Yoder  
 Darcey Zahaykevich  
 Pearl Zehr  
 Jeryl & Bethany Zimmerman  
 Anonymous  
 Anonymous  
 Anonymous

## Promise Circle 2024

*Committed to contributing monthly:*

Lois Arnold  
 Tom August  
 Michael & Dorothy Barth  
 Errol & Coletta Bontrager  
 Zuleika Caballero  
 Mark Clapper  
 Cheryl Coles  
 Edisa Elsie Curto  
 Salvatore Curto  
 Phyllis DePaul  
 Robin Farr  
 Jim & Sandy Gingerich  
 Isaac & Barb Grable  
 Grace Fellowship

Danielle Hayes-Colon  
 Jim & Judi Hewell  
 John & Linda Horst  
 Zac Hummel  
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 Vernon & Yvonne Kauffman  
 Jerry & Leonor Kennell  
 Krista LaRuffa  
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 Kevin & Danica Lefever  
 Dale Lopez  
 Carmen Lora  
 Nancy Maldonado  
 Rich & Sarah McCullah  
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 Tom & Janice Mortenson  
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 Steve & Judy Ponchot  
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 Flossie Shaw  
 Cedric & Adrienne Scales  
 Smith  
 Marcia Stoesz  
 Eliezer Torres  
 Eubaldo Torres  
 Dale & Deborah Weaver  
 Earl & Heather Weekes  
 Keith & Lisa Yoder  
 Naomi Yoder  
 Anonymous

## Tributes 2024

**In Honor of:**  
**Ken Bontrager's Service**  
 Daniel & Karen Angustia  
 John & Ruth Bare  
 Ethel Bontrager  
 Mark & Sue Breneman  
 Laura & Mike Burkholder  
 Andrew & La Ree Eby  
 Frank & Barbara Freeman  
 Frances & Norman  
 Gallagher  
 Mike & Cindy Gingerich

Dean & Jeanie Glick  
 Isaac & Barb Grable  
 Grace Fellowship  
 Marilyn Gunden  
 Mark Hickson  
 John & Linda Horst  
 Michael & Gwen Hurst  
 Lowell & Ruth Jantzi  
 Nancy LaRuffa  
 Krista LaRuffa  
 Kevin & Danica Lefever  
 Nancy Maldonado  
 Michael & Shayna Mark  
 Charlie & Joyce Martin  
 Robert Martin & Judy  
 Ebersole  
 Cliff & Joyce Martin  
 Carl & Marian Metzler  
 Thomas & Carol Miller  
 EdV & Carol Miller  
 Dan & Marlene Miller  
 Leon & Joy Miller  
 Les & Jane Mininger  
 James O'Neal  
 Steve & Judy Ponchot  
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 Anthony & Valerie Robinson  
 Paul Ryneski  
 Denise Sharp  
 James & Carol Showalter  
 Sharon Smith  
 Gary Smith  
 Andy & Joan Torres  
 United Revival Mennonite  
 Church  
 Valley of Jesus Mennonite  
 Church  
 Bill & Mei-Yee Wang  
 Glenn Weaver  
 Dale & Deborah Weaver  
 Michael & Katrina Yoder  
 Jeryl & Bethany Zimmerman

**Glenn Weaver's  
 90th Birthday**  
 Donald & Linda Good

**In Memory of:**  
**Hadassah Bontrager**  
 Michael & Shayna Mark

**Ben Clark**  
 Anonymous

Wilma F. Kauffman  
 Anonymous

## THE NUMBERS

In 2024  
 Camp Deerpark  
 hosted  
 145 retreat  
 groups for a total  
 of 8,699  
 retreat days.  
 6 sessions  
 of summer camp  
 with a total  
 of 875  
 camper days.  
 194 volunteers  
 working  
 1,106.75  
 volunteer hours.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Camp Deerpark  
 Homecoming  
 Festival**  
 September 6, 2025

## WANTED

Quality new or  
 hand-made items  
 for the September's  
 Homecoming Auction.



# 2024 CAMP DEERPARK VOLUNTEERS

- |                    |                          |                   |                              |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Jeremiah Amstutz   | Brent Horst              | Phillip Mendez    | Madeleine Shenk              |
| Danny Angustia     | Cole Horst               | Victor Mendez     | Michelle Shenk               |
| Karen Angustia     | Hope Horst               | Evan Meyers       | Tim Shenk                    |
| Dicxy Arzu         | Keenan Horst             | Joe Miedema       | Grace Smith                  |
| Allan Arzu Jr.     | Lindsey Horst            | Debbie Millette   | Gray Smith                   |
| Jamila Ayala       | Mary Horst               | Lanny Millette    | Jaynelle Smith               |
| Micah Bayer        | Mitch Horst              | Lito Mitchener    | Quincy Smith                 |
| Tania Z. Bernardez | Morgan Horst             | Sandra Monroy     | Paul Smith                   |
| Rudy Bonilla       | Tyler Horst              | Katrina Mow       | Dante Smucker                |
| Nehemiah Bontrager | Cameron Johnson          | Leonard Mow       | Hans Smucker                 |
| Javier Caicedo     | Dequisha Johnson         | Ashley Moyses     | Kate Smucker                 |
| Noelle Casteline   | Sherman Johnson          | Theo Moyses       | Megan Smucker                |
| Jorge Castillo     | Dana Joseph              | Bryce Neusch      | Oran Smucker                 |
| Jeysel Chavez      | Eric Kanagy              | Kevin Oberholzer  | Paul Smucker                 |
| Jerry Christy      | Beau Kellogg             | Zach Oberholzer   | Zariah Smucker               |
| Tracy Christy      | Chord Kipe               | Nicanora Palacios | Alexi Solano                 |
| Fatheema Coleman   | Sarah Kolb               | Anabelle Perri    | John Song                    |
| Gustavo Diego      | Jay Kreider              | Hannah Petersheim | Jordan Stevens               |
| Brookelyn Eby      | Jeinor Lamber            | Liz Petersheim    | Jason Storbakken             |
| Cooper Eby         | Junior Lamber            | Mark Petersheim   | Vonetta Storbakken           |
| Joy Eng            | Krista LaRuffa           | Mike Petersheim   | Steve Sunnick                |
| Melba Eshleman     | David Lee                | Mylin Priest      | Billy Talbert                |
| Leon Eshleman      | Emmanuel Lindsey         | Yakira Priest     | Ayla Thomas                  |
| Shane Eshleman     | Pamela Lindsey           | Al Pulcini        | Gavin Turri                  |
| Levi Forrester     | Samantha Lino            | Scott Reichert    | Katie Umble                  |
| Sheila Forrester   | Carrie Long              | AC Reyes          | Crescencia Isidro Victoriano |
| Aiden Foss         | Eric Long                | Daino Reyes       | Kathy Waite                  |
| Parker Foss        | Tyler Long               | Brayan Rochez     | Bill Wang                    |
| Barb Freeman       | Carmen Lora              | Lesmas Rochez     | Mei Yee Wang                 |
| Trent Gaerthe      | Conner Louis             | Mariano Rosales   | Kerick Weaver                |
| Adam Gallagher     | Cameron MacNeil          | Trinty Rotz       | Anthony Weber                |
| Bob Gallagher      | Aime Madeau              | Shelly Sanchez    | Merle Weber                  |
| Johan Garica       | Aiden Maldonado          | Mark Sandor       | Rosene Weber                 |
| Vino Garica        | Nancy Maldonado          | Mark Jr Sandor    | Elizabeth Whang              |
| Barb Grable        | Brian Martin             | Matt Sandor       | James Whitiker               |
| Isaac Grable       | Brock Martin             | Rachel Sandor     | Sincere Williams             |
| Manuel Guzman      | Chet Martin              | Nayely Santos     | Arianna Woods                |
| Yeisy Guzman       | Paisley Martin           | Hazel Saravia     | Benjamin Woods               |
| Jordan Haller      | Renee Martin             | Angela Sauder     | David Woods                  |
| Julianna Haller    | Aurelia Martinez         | Zach Sauder       | John Woods                   |
| Ashley Hankins     | Evelyn Martinez          | Jacob Sensenig    | Elizabeth Yopez              |
| Michael Hankins    | Gabriel Cirenio Martinez | Jayden Sensenig   | Michael Zahaykevich          |
| Madhel Harry       | Morian Martinez          | Joseph Sensenig   | Jeryl Zimmerman              |
| Justin Helman      | Meylah Martinez          | Magaly Sensenig   |                              |
| Bob Horning        | Porifirio Medina         | Nathan Sensenig   |                              |
| Alyssa Horst       | Lourdez Mendez           | Lydia Shenk       |                              |

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S HEART BY BEN CHEEK

For me, this year began with a funeral. Our NYC community said goodbye to John Smucker (2/25/30-12/19/24), one of the founding generation of Camp. John planted and pastored churches and invested himself in generations of urban workers through his teaching. I didn't know John well -- we met once or twice -- but his work affects my life on a daily basis.

Before the funeral, I did what Gen-Xers like me do: I Googled John. The result was a 1987 Speech John gave to the Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelism. While I listened I thought two things: this is still a word for New York City and the Anabaptists and I think I like this guy!

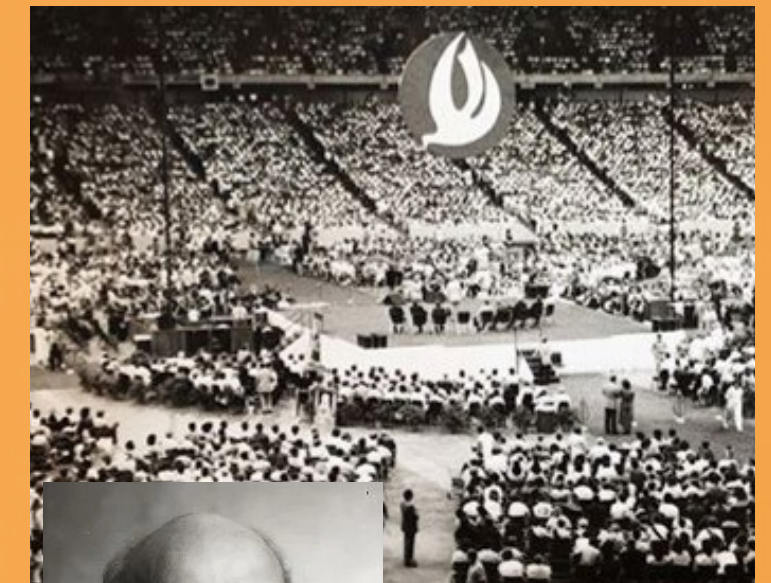
Weaving his way through scripture and then stories of the Holy Spirit's leading in his own life and ministry, John made powerful point after point: We need to follow the Spirit if we want to reach people. The Spirit revealing Jesus is our only hope for real unity in the church and between churches. God will do most of the work if we let him, and the story will be humanly unbelievable but God glorifying.

This week I also had a conversation about being "Spirit-led" with Pastor Mark Perri of Immanuel Community Church -- one of Camp's owner churches. Mark gave the eulogy for John and John inspired some of our talk. Just as Mark and John met by divine appointment, I met Mark by divine appointment and began my journey with the Mennonites. After a while, my family left the city for Saint Louis, but it was the Spirit that led us back -- this time to Camp Deerpark. While we left again to follow the Spirit into planting work, I can also say that the Spirit led us back to take the Executive Director role. Remembering all this with Mark really built my faith for the season ahead.

What does Spirit-led ministry look like at Camp? I brought this question as the topic at our staff meeting and the conversation was rich. Spirit-led means staying in tune with God as he impacts lives -- like this camper, or that young-adult staffer. It means doing your job and walking forward while you wait on God, but doing this with flexibility so the Spirit can direct you at any moment. It means people being led by the Spirit

into love, conflict transformation, and the manifest fruit of the Spirit. The leading of the Spirit means walking by faith and not sight, moving in step with God, and allowing the personal fire within us as individuals to join into a movement.

Though the world is in chaos, the Spirit can still be heard over the noise inviting those who will listen to his call into holy adventure. In my opinion, in this moment, there is nothing more important than this. This requires us to reveal to each other what Jesus, through the Spirit, is doing in our lives and where he may lead us together. This is the season when we need to be a little bolder to share the Spirit when we talk and a little more supple when we listen so we can be completely united in Spirit and on mission with Jesus.



*John Ivan Smucker (2/25/30 – 12/19/24) was a foundational leader among NYC Mennonites and a thought-leader on the Holy Spirit and mission. He addressed the 1987 Congress on The Holy Spirit and World Evangelism.*

## CAMP DEERPARK PA Benefit Banquet at Shady Maple Restaurant East Earl, PA

**Friday, April 4, 2025**

Appetizer 5:45 p.m.  
Dinner 6:30 p.m.--Buffet Style

To RSVP or to sponsor a table, please call:  
Janice Barrett at (845) 754-8669 or  
email at [deerparkguests@gmail.com](mailto:deerparkguests@gmail.com)

