

Sugar Creek Bible Camp
Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting
February 18, 2024

The 2024 Annual Meeting began with a devotion, 'Wrapped in God's Love,' offered by Pastor Lori Kleppe, where those gathered were reminded of the many ways guests at camp are embraced by God's love at Sugar Creek Bible Camp. The time of devotion continued as we sang 'All in All,' led by Jesse Klosterboer, Executive Director. The meeting continued with introductions of the Board of Directors and camp staff. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting were approved.

Executive Director's Report

- Jesse expressed pride and gratitude for all God has done this year in our ministry, and for the many faithful hands among our staff, campers, volunteers, and supporters who made it so.
- The biggest obstacle to growth seems to be the lack of knowledge about the power of camp among the public and also many constituents. Hearing "I had no idea," as guests react to touring the facilities and hearing about programs, is what staff often hear when involved in outreach.
- Camper numbers were down this past season (down 15%) but staff numbers were improved from the previous year. International camp staff highlighted.
- Research shows empathy skills in young people have declined over the past decades but have been proven to be enhanced by a summer camp experience to the 'pre cell phone' level.
- Dr. Jake Sorenson's research shows ELCA church leadership has been enhanced by young people who have had camp staff experience.
- 50,734 contact hours of Christian education provided by Sugar Creek this year.
- Sugar Creek Bible Camp had groups at camp 51 weeks out of the year.
- Jesse requests prayers that we are equipped in every way to do this ministry and thanked those in attendance for their support.

Committee Reports

Program Committee: Lindsay Colwell, Program Committee Chair, offered this report which highlighted the LEAD (Leaders Engaged As Disciples) program and its impact on a young person's faith development. Lindsay celebrated the growth shown in campers when they participate in activities back in their home congregations. A week-long day camp, a second tier of Jr. Wranglers, Trailblazers, Valley Olympics, and the HS Elevated program were mentioned as expanded offerings. The theme for the upcoming summer is 'Created to Be' based on Psalm 139 which goes along with the ELCA Youth Gathering theme.

Marketing and Development: Addison Arndt shared growth in the use of social media and that a tv commercial will go out on local stations. Electronic e-appeals were sent and resulted in a positive response. The camp website was updated. Largest and most important role is to spread the word about camp. Addison made a call for volunteers and that this support is welcomed. Jesse and Deacon

Stephanie Engel, program director, will visit congregations to teach and preach as they spread the word of this ministry. Finally, Addison asked that we 'like and share' camp news on social media.

Property: Jody gave this report. The work of the Tuesday volunteers was highlighted and all of the staining work completed by that small crew. Thrivent Action cards were used to purchase the stain and Jody encouraged donating these cards for those with Thrivent accounts. The SIT-LIT Cabin is being renovated for use as housing for barn manager Miranda Arelt. This included adding a septic system, a kitchen, and a bathroom. The Saint Paul's log house is now being used as a rental as electricity and plumbing projects have been completed. Settler Cabins are receiving needed improvements and the goat prairie was burned. An invitation was made to everyone to participate in the volunteer weekend. Jody welcomes donations especially of construction materials. A thank you was offered to the volunteers who keep the camp up and running.

Executive: Bryce offered this committee as a sounding board for Jesse regarding financial reports, to set board agendas, and assist with personnel matters.

Sugar Creek Bible Camp Trust Foundation: Paul Arena, Treasurer of the foundation, directed attention to the report included in the packet. There were no questions for Paul. There is a need for membership on the Foundation Board.

Financials

- An audit of the records showed no concerns.
- Proposed 2024 Budget: Kristin Swedlund directed attention to the budget discussing various line items. Jesse compared with pre-pandemic numbers and explained future funding of positions.
- Motion to approve 2024 Financials made by Pastor Harald Bringsjord with second by Pastor John Twiton. Motion passed.

Elections

- The assembly was directed to the bios for candidates included in the packet. HR experience was an identified need which Katie Hunt would bring to the board. Jeff Mink, a retired plumber, offers his gifts to the board. No nominations were made from the floor.
- A motion for a unanimous ballot was made by Suzanne Bartels, second by Kristin Swedlund. Motion passed.

Homework

Delegates were joyfully reminded of their stewardship call to care for camp, spread the word of *their* camp and invite others to share their gifts with Sugar Creek Bible Camp.

The 2024 Annual Meeting concluded with prayer and a prize drawing.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Lori Kleppe, Secretary