

# MOURNING WHAT WAS. ANTICIPATING WHAT WILL BE.

We didn't have camp in 2020.

It doesn't seem real.

No children came to know the love of God more deeply through a week at Stony Lake or on Day Camp. Summer staff were not hired, trained, and developed into leaders. Adults with developmental disabilities weren't able to share their joy with us. Stereotypes weren't destroyed through our anti-racism and leadership training program called Bridge Builders, or through our Multicultural Youth Leadership Academy (MYLA) shared program. We were unable to host children in foster care and families experiencing homelessness. Children with incarcerated parents were not able to begin their new journey as part of the Living Water Ministries family.

At a time when division and discord feel as though they are running rampant in the world, the loss of our 2020 summer season seems all the more costly. Without a shadow of a doubt, I believe the need for what God is doing through the work of Living Water Ministries is more crucial now than ever. Unfortunately, this pandemic has put us on the sidelines.

The work we do at Living Water Ministries is centered around bringing all of God's children together in community. It's about promoting unity while also celebrating difference. It's about finding God in the face of our neighbor who likewise finds God in ours. While it isn't possible right now to provide these in-person experiences of faith, our year-round staff continue to do the work of preparation so that when the opportunity presents itself, we will be ready.

2020 has been an unprecedented year, but what has made it most unprecedented has been the generosity shown to Living Water Ministries by our donors. We are incredibly grateful. At the onset of our decision to cancel our 2020 summer season, Living Water Ministries was forecasting approximately \$200,000.00 in financial loss this fiscal year. Through the generosity of people like you those losses have been significantly reduced, however they have not yet been eliminated. I have absolute confidence that Living Water Ministries

will endure until a time when we can again gather all of God's children together for in-person experiences of faith formation, service, leadership, and community. However, it remains unclear when that time will present itself. While no decision has yet been made regarding the viability of our 2021 summer season, many of the factors that led to our cancellation of the 2020 summer season still remain.

As Living Water Ministries continues to navigate our way through the challenging realities of this pandemic, I invite you to pray for and with us. I also invite your continued support. At a time when the world feels frustrating, broken, and uncertain we have found peace, restoration, and comfort in the kindness and generosity extended to us by the Living Water Ministries community.

Soon fall will turn to winter, and the Christmas season will be upon us. The birth of Jesus is an opportunity to mark a moment that changed everything; a moment that redefined "normal." What had been was no more, and what would be was beyond our wildest imagination. As we find ourselves mourning what was and anticipating what will be during this time of pandemic, may we savor the gift of new life we receive in Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Peace,

C.J. Clark
Executive Director
Living Water Ministries

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Living Water Ministries...



The hardest part of this pandemic year is not witnessing faith come alive in the campers who attend our programs. This summer, we asked some of our former campers to share about how camp has impacted their faith. Hanisi's words were particularly humbling and serve as a reminder of the work God is doing and has done through Living Water Ministries.

I used to believe God could only be found at church or in the Bible. I was blind to the multidimensional parts of faith that bring God to life. I felt insecure in conversations about Christ because I measured my faith with my ability to memorize Bible verses. I struggled to connect with my faith and I felt like an outsider when I went to church. Because of this, I often felt unsure of my relationship with God.

The first time I felt sure of God was on a beach during Bridge Builders. Holding hands with people who had turned from strangers to family in a matter of days I looked out at the crashing waves. As we stood in silence I remember being moved to tears as I listened to the water roar. Wild and free, I could feel God's presence and I relished in it, knowing this was a rare moment of absolute confidence. God was here and I felt it in every fiber of my being.

I have always believed in God but my ability to recognize and nurture that relationship often varied based on life events. When life gets busy and we get caught up in the chaos it is easy to become disconnected. But going to camp established a connection to my faith that would remain constant throughout my life.

I remember arriving at camp and hearing an elated cheer as a girl came over and welcomed me with a hug. I had never seen her before in my life and I assumed she was a counselor, because welcoming people like this is probably their job. But to my surprise she was just another camper like me, and her bold ability to shamelessly love a stranger astounded me. Throughout the week this girl would continue to be bold in her affection and I watched as everyone around her matched her energy. That week a community was formed, one designed specifically to lift each other up and embrace one anothers uniqueness. I remember thinking this is how the world should be. God loves us unconditionally and embodying that love to share it with others was something I wanted to do.

As I returned home from camp I arrived with a new ambition. I wanted to make everyone I interacted with feel loved. This was a large goal, and I am still working at it everyday but it changed the way I practiced my faith. Now I see God come to life, I find God in the faces of other people. I may still struggle to memorize Bible verses and I am inconsistent with attending church, but now I see God everyday. When I greet a neighbor on a walk in the morning or I pause during a bike ride to say hello to a friendly dog I am reminded that I am not alone. God's creation is beautifully and wonderfully made and we are surrounded by this phenomena all the time. Camp showed me what it means to love your neighbors and it gave me a community who will walk with me as I journey through life. As I experience new highs and new lows I know God is with me, often in the form of a call from a camp friend.

God was here and I felt it in every fiber of my being.

# RUNNING THE RACE TO RESTORE MOMENTUM

September 25-26, 2020 a mighty group of runners ran a 200(ish) mile relay race to benefit Living Water Ministries. Some of our runners ran remotely from home, while other runners and volunteers convened at Stony Lake for a physically distanced experience of community running the roads near camp.

Beyond the commitment to run a noteworthy amount of miles, each runner also committed to raising \$2,000.00 each to help support Living Water Ministries during this pandemic year. Not only did each runner meet their individual fundraising goal, but our team vastly exceeded our initial goal of \$48,000.00 raising \$82,238.31 to restore momentum!

As you can imagine, it's been a weird year at Living Water Ministries without the beautiful sounds of campers learning, playing, and growing in faith with one another. While these runners helped to replenish some of the financial losses we've experienced this year, their real gift was replenishing the joy that comes when community gathers

#### **MULLETS WERE BORN**

Our Executive Director and Program Innovator threw down the challenge to raise \$5,000.00 in exchange for cutting their pandemic hair into mullets for the duration of the race. Our donors responded by contributing \$6,785.42, bringing into existence the most glorious blend of business and party the world has ever seen.







# RUN THE RACE BY THE NUMBERS



24 RUNNERS, 200 MILES, 36 HRS



706 DONORS ENGAGED



770 INDIVIDUAL GIFTS GIVEN



456 NEW DONORS WELCOMED



\$82,238.31 RAISED FOR LWM

#### **SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

Special thanks to Russ Milne Ford in Macomb, MI for sponsoring our race, helping us to exceed our goal!



# BE A LEADER. FIGHT RACISM.

Racism is real. Racism is also sin. As people of faith compelled by Jesus to love our neighbors, the work of fighting racism runs parallel to the liberation we find in the cross of Christ. Against the backdrop of rising racial tensions, the work of Bridge Builders, our faithbased leadership and anti-racism program, has never felt more necessary than it does today. Once this pandemic settles we will be amplifying the important work of our Bridge Builder program and we need your help. Proceeds from a \$30 donation made to support our Bridge Builder program will go to offset travel expenses for campers that attend from all over the United States, and other program costs. In return for your \$30 donation, you will receive an exclusive "BE A LEADER. FIGHT RACISM" t-shirt usually only obtained through attendance at Bridge Builders. To learn more and to donate, please visit elcalivingwater.com/fightracism/





Code Pink is the name of our camp store, and during the summer months campers have an opportunity to purchase snacks and camp memorabilia on almost a daily basis. Code Pink is a little moment of sabbath time nestled into each camp day where the clamor of conversations is a holy sound.

We know first-hand the challenges of this year of pandemic. While the pace of the world has changed, it's been hard to make sabbath time where laughter, play, and relaxation are achieved. We also know that amidst virtual learning and screen time overload many are experiencing, stepping away to engage hands-on activities "off-line" can be a breath of fresh air.

With that in mind we've created Code Pink boxes filled with a variety of camp-style activities and Living Water Ministries swag. Tie-Dye a shirt, engineer the best way to protect an egg being dropped from various heights, go on a scavenger hunt, build a spoon catapult, and enjoy items from our camp store including an exclusive "Year Zero" button that commemorates this pandemic year.

2020 happens to be the 75th year for our facilities at Stony Lake, and we're offering to send you one of the 75 Code Pink boxes we've assembled for a donation of \$75 in support of Living Water Ministries.

#### WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

- Three activities that promote creativity and problem solving off-line
- Two styles of bracelets
- Two stickers (including an updated "I don't get homesick, I get campsick" sticker)
- Two buttons (including an exclusive "year zero" button to commemo rate the pandemic)
- A coupon for \$10 off future purchases at our camp store

- A community devotion and two camp-style meal graces to be used before and after a meal
- A pair of Stony Lake sunglasses
- A LWM Journal
- A LWM Lanyard
- Tie-Dye kit complete with dye, t-shirt, latex-free nitrile gloves, and instructions
- Camp Songs Volume 2 CD

Please visit *elcalivingwater.com/lwmtogo/* to learn more and to donate.

# INSPIRING GENEROSITY

Living Water Ministries has welcomed 635 new donors in the last 12 months. In the midst of this sea of support, we were particularly humbled to receive a donation from one of our repeat campers named Teague. Most recently attending our Multicultural Youth Leadership Academy during the summer of 2019, Teague made a personal donation that put her in the \$250-\$500 donor recognition category this year!

While Teague loves the music and fun activities at camp, she missed meeting people at camp this year and cites camp as the source of one of her closest friendships. Teague feels that camp has been a pivotal place where she has "grown so much as a person."

We asked Teague what inspired her generosity. Her response says it all. She states, "My family tries to give an amount of our earnings to something. Camp has given so much to me in my life. I just felt like I needed to give back to camp." Truly inspiring! Thanks Teague!

Camp has given so much to me in my life. I just felt like I needed to give back to camp.



# PANDEMIC UPDATES

#### **GREAT LAKES GATHERING 2021**

Our hotel-based event for high school students has been postponed from January 2021 to January of 2022 at the Sheraton in Novi, MI.

#### **CHARGE 2021**

Our hotel-based event for middle school students has been postponed from March 2021 until March of 2022 at Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City.

#### **SUMMER 2021**

The path to our 2021 summer season remains unclear amidst concerns related to COVID-19. At the time these words were written, case counts are on the rise in Michigan and the rate of transmission in our state still indicates the virus is spreading rather than diminishing. The timeline for vaccine implementation and distribution is still relatively unclear, with some reports placing widespread access to vaccinations in the third quarter of 2021.

While we'd like to be sending out our 2021 summer brochures, we are not certain what shape our 2021 summer season will be taking just yet. The Living Water Ministries Board of Directors will be meeting via Zoom before the end of the year to discern together our options and next steps. At the forefront of the board's conversations has been and will be the safety and well-being of our campers, and the families to which they return at the close of any potential camp sessions.

The work Living Water Ministries is called to do brings together all of God's children in community. Navigating how to accomplish this amidst a global pandemic while serving participants in vulnerable populations, as well as people from all over the country, is a significant challenge. As the Living Water Ministries Board of Directors engages this work, we ask for your continued patience and for your prayers.

# The Table

a place for everyone

Every summer Living Water Ministries hosts campers, both youth and adults, from across Michigan and the United States at Stony Lake. Creating intentional Christian communities rooted in faith, leadership and service, LWM exists to share the good news of the gospel while creating a place at the table for all of God's children. We do this visioning a world transformed by the work God is doing through our programs, our campers and the grace of Jesus Christ.

Living Water Ministries is now embarking on its first major facilities renewal project and capital campaign in its 75-year history at Stony Lake. When complete, the camp will have 6 new duplex style state-of-the-art cabin facilities providing innovative design for better camper comfort, privacy and supervision, along with the opportunity for shoulder-season use. In addition, significant renovations will take place on the current dining hall, featuring an expanded dining room to increase capacity, updated kitchen facilities, an ADA bathroom, and air conditioning.

#### PHASE ONE

LWM's facility refresh begins with the building of our first duplex cabin. Once funds are raised for phase one, ground breaking can commence. Construction is estimated to begin late summer 2022. Phase One completion is expected in the spring of 2023.

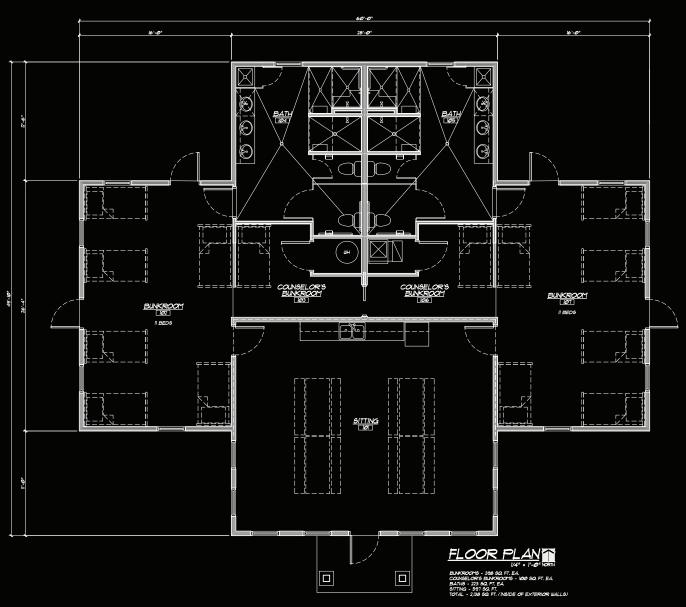
While COVID-19 has placed our programs temporarily on the sidelines, this facilities renewal campaign serves as a beacon of hope for the future beyond this pandemic where children will once again grow in faith on the shores of Stony Lake.

Square Feet: 2,183

Construction Costs: \$400,000.00







# UNPRECEDENTED SUPPORT IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES.

While it's been an unprecedented year with the cancellation of our 2020 summer season, it has also been an unprecedented year of support from our donors. At the onset of our decision to cancel our 2020 summer season, Living Water Ministries was forecasting approximately \$200,000.00 in financial loss this fiscal year. Through the generosity of people like you those losses have been significantly reduced, however they have not yet been eliminated. We give God thanks for the hundreds of people that have supported Living Water Ministries in 2020 so far.

#### \$1,000 & UP

#### **Individuals**

Kimberly & John Birmingham Jr. Kay Butler & Mark Berkesch Amanda & C.J. Clark Steve & Sharon Clark Sean & Krista Ewbank Erick & Delia Johnson Nicole & Kristin McCarthy Douglas & Beth Paulo Vivian Phillips Brian & Nancy Schroeder Steve & Amy Stephan Lynn & Carol Whittaker

#### **Congregations & Organizations**

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church - Bloomfield Hills

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

- Lansing

Christ Lutheran Church - Monroe Christ Lutheran Church

- Sterling Heights

**Emmanuel Lutheran Church** 

- Livonia

**Episcopal Diocese of Michigan** Feast of Victory Lutheran Church

- Acme

First English Lutheran Church

- Grosse Pointe Woods

Lutheran Church of the Master

Northwest Lower Michigan Synod

Russ Milne Ford Inc.

Southeast Michigan Synod

The Right Place, Inc.

Trinity Lutheran Church

- Grand Rapids

University Lutheran Church

- East Lansing

Zion Lutheran Church - Ann Arbor

#### \$500 TO \$999

#### **Individuals**

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- Sterling Heights

Grace Lutheran Church

- Hastings

Harbor of Grace Lutheran Church

- Muskeaon

Immanuel Lutheran Church

- Grand Ledge

**OPEX Consulting** 

Peace Lutheran Church

- South Haven

St. Thomas Lutheran Church - Sterling Heights

Trinity Lutheran Church - New Era Trinity Lutheran Church

- Brown City

Waters Family Eyecare

Zion Lutheran Church - Cadillac Zion Lutheran Church - Chelsea

Zion Lutheran Church - Ann Arbor

#### \$250 TO \$499

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**Butzel Long** 

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

- Muskegon

St. Paul Lutheran Church

- Port Huron

Metropolitan Chicago Synod Immanuel Lutheran Church- Ida St. Paul Lutheran Church- Casco Gethsemane Lutheran Church

- Wyoming

#### **Up to \$250**

#### **Individuals**

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Alexandria Alati Heidi Albertson

Kaye Alden Catherine Aldrich

Janet Aleo M Katherine Allen DeeAnn Allen

Susan Allison Leanne Allvin

Silvia Aluia Jeffrev Amlotte

Julie Anderson Carl Anderson

J Clarke Anderson **Judy Anderson** Kristen Anderson

Rosanne Anderson Traci Anderson

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Dwight Wyse Derek Wyse Mackenzie Young John Zaccardelli Anne Zaccardelli

Ellen Zaccardelli Gerald Zaccardelli Mary Zahabi Michael Zahabi

Lee Zandstra Michael Zeller Stephen Zeller Martin Zimmann Rana Zoma Carol Zorn

#### **Congregations & Organizations**

St. Peter Lutheran Church

- Battle Creek #FindDani

American Wood Moldings Bethany Lutheran Church - Kaleva Bethel Lutheran Church

- St. Clair Shores Better Woodman LLC

Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

- Detroit

Faith Lutheran Church

- Shelby Township Faith Lutheran Church- Okemos inFaith Community Foundation

Inner City Youth Group Little Point Sable Association Prince of Peace Lutheran Church - Ida

St. Peter Lutheran Church

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

- Lansing

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by Lalene Klink for Pastor Travis Wilson birthday by Rodney Hill Ronald K Justian & Victor C Peper by Mary Justian-Murray The faithful camp staff

The kids at St Paul by Gloria Bublitz Trinity Lutheran Church New Era

by John Stoneback

by Rise Rasch

### SPECIAL **THANKS**

Our annual "Run the Race" fundraising event happens because of our dedicated runners and volunteers. Runners, cooks, social media managers, drivers and more contributed this year to the success of this event. We owe them an endless amount of gratitude.

#### **RUNNERS**

Lisa Jeffreys Amanda Kane Sara Cogsil **Bridget Reno** Nicole McCarthy Sarah Stasilowicz Alex Clark Megan Mathes Haley Vay Beaman Lvdia Feld Elspeth Muzzin Caitlin King **Brendan King** Keegan Sullivan **Austin Hawks** Jesse Barr

C.J. Clark Matt Hicks **Branden Hunt** Jeff Amlotte Chris Paliewicz **Anthony Ritter** Amanda Clark Mary Sauger

#### **VOLUNTEERS**

Kirsten Schoensee Kristin McCarthy **Beth Paulo Alison Boris** Merri McGregor **Craig Mathes Matt Cutting** 

Stay up-to-date on all things Living Water Ministries at elcalivingwater.com



# MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN THE STREAM

The Stream is a community of monthly givers who care deeply about Living Water Ministries' vision of creating communities centered in Christ to transform lives and the world. Your gift will strengthen and provide stability to our Annual Fund and provide life-giving, regular support to Living Water Ministries. Together, with support of The Stream, Living Water can continue to move forward to bring together all of God's children to experience Christian community, grow in faith, develop leadership skills, and serve others.

Donors who join the stream will help create a reliable source of income that funds our mission and makes our budgeting more accurate while also simplifying the giving process for you.

Learn more at elcalivingwater.com/stream/

#### \$10/month

Covers the cost of transportation for campers to attend service-learning sites during a week of camp.

#### \$50/month

Creates community and covers the cost of program supplies for a week of camp.

#### \$25/month

Develops leaders and covers the cost of a week's salary for a summer staffer.

#### \$100/month

Grows faith and covers the cost of attending a week of camp for approximately 3 campers.





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