

# Campingnews



My daughter couldn't explain it, but said it felt like a door opened inside, allowing her to grow in her personal relationship with God.

SUMMER 2024 CAMPER PARENT



## The *power* of camp Opening hearts to self, others and God

The power of camp is its ability to create space and time that is unlike home and daily routines. As good and necessary as ordinary life is, the out-of-the-ordinary is often the environment in which God works and campers grow.

"Camp opens the story each of us carries," said one friend of camp ministry. "Many times, we don't know another's person's story. For kids especially, camp gives a chance to learn about self and others in a unique way – a way that leads to Christ. We would all be better if we spent a week at a Christian camp."

Campers at Covenant Harbor and

Covenant Point lived that experience in summer 2024. As they shared life together in small groups and loving community, their hearts and minds were opened to new parts of themselves and to God's perspective.

They enjoyed quiet time with God, meeting new people and trying new activities. They appreciated the independence camp gave them. And one mom said this: "Our daughter's counselor talked with her cabin about following the prompting of the Holy Spirit. She was listening and now is looking for the ways God is moving in her life. We saw her behavior change. There's the power of camp!"



"...God is moving in her life. We saw her behavior change. There's the power of camp!"

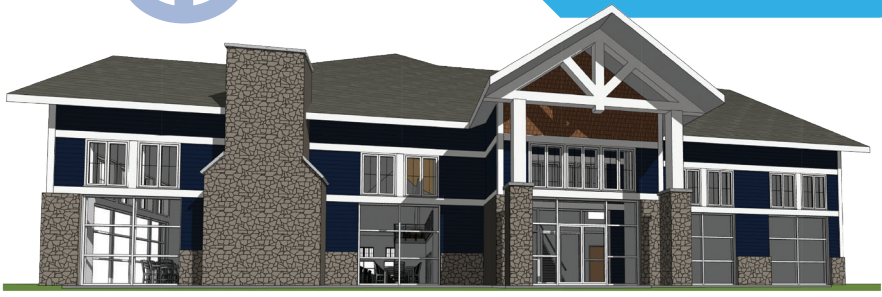
**IMPORTANT!**  
**Summer 2025**  
**Registration Opens**  
**Nov. 12!**

Registration for summer camp 2025 at both Covenant Harbor and Covenant Point begins at 7am on Tuesday, Nov. 12. This is a new date! See back for details.

[cpbc.com](http://cpbc.com) | [covenantharbor.org](http://covenantharbor.org)



**Staff are so energetic and love what they do!**  
SUMMER 2024 CAMPER PARENT



*Covenant Harbor's new Dining Commons features a Welcome Center with a circle drive. This preliminary rendering of the building shows that entrance.*

## Preparing for the new Dining Commons

### Covenant Harbor looks toward replacing the Lodge

Most campers and guests of Covenant Harbor find their way into the camp's classic Lodge for registration, a cup of coffee or a meal. The building is the centerpiece of the property and of many programs, is well-loved, well-used and ready for replacement.

Built in 1949, the Lodge offered ample space for cooking and serving 5,000 meals throughout the year. In 2024, more than 100,000 meals will be served in the Lodge, many in shifts. Staff still provide great meals from the small, out-of-date and worn-out kitchen, but the effort is increasingly cumbersome.

Significantly, the building's foundation continues to sink and shift. Decades of repairs have reached their limits. The time has come to create a new space to welcome guests, prepare meals and dine in a spacious, relaxed environment.

In its initial phase, the Creating Community Campaign for Covenant Harbor's Dining Commons is raising funds to build a new facility that will include a Welcome Center, main dining room that seats up to 428, lounges, an outdoor patio with lake views and many other features and amenities. The Dining Commons will be located where the current Lodge sits.

The campaign has raised \$4.77 million in gifts and pledges toward the \$8 million goal. Generous donors and the Foundation for Covenant Harbor are leading the way. The campaign will continue through additional phases in the next year. A construction start date has yet to be determined.

To learn more about the project and how you can support it, please contact Jon Heintzelman, director of advancement, at [jheintzelman@covenantharbor.org](mailto:jheintzelman@covenantharbor.org) or call him at (224) 804-7184. [+](#)

## Staff Update

### Welcome new staff

- Paula Arango, Riley Callahan, Sofia Frongillo and Jayda Josias have joined as ministry staff. Paula comes from Colombia, Riley from Illinois, Sofia from Montana and Jayda from South Africa. Sofia and Riley served on summer staff this year.
- Jeff Bakken started as a guest services coordinator in February.
- Abigail Nicolls and Derrick Mosley are new food service coordinators. Derrick began last December and Abby began this fall.
- Abigail Johnson is serving as registration and administration specialist.
- Colton Murphy started as activities coordinator in September, coming from Camp Eagle in Texas.



Paula Arango



Riley Callahan



Sofia Frongillo



Jayda Josias



Jeff Bakken



Abigail Nicolls



Derrick Mosley



Abigail Johnson



Colton Murphy

### Fond Farewells

- Glenn Graf, food service coordinator, retired after 20 years of serving in various camp ministries.
- Sheri Litwiller, guest services coordinator, departed for rest and renewal.
- Jared McDaniel, Snake Road Adventure Center director, left to join World Orphans. He continues to help out with SRAC and the maintenance team.
- Britta Mitchell, marketing director, left to join the recruiting team for Northland College, WI.

## Hispanic Ministries Sunday Celebration

About 600 members and friends from seven Hispanic Covenant churches in the region gathered at Covenant Harbor in August to worship and celebrate the baptisms of approximately 60 people. Pastors baptized their own parishioners in small groups. Many participants stayed through the afternoon to picnic and swim.



Photo by Edgar Torres

## Now hiring staff for summer 2025

Covenant Harbor is seeking young adults 16+ who love kids and want to share Jesus. Applications completed by Jan. 1, 2025, may qualify for a \$500 bonus. Other incentives are also offered. Find details at [covenantharbor.org/summer-staff](http://covenantharbor.org/summer-staff).





I loved the space our son was given to spend time alone with God's word.

SUMMER 2024 CAMPER PARENT

## South African staff contribute to kingdom mosaic

Each summer, Covenant Harbor's mission is to love kids and share Jesus. This summer, the staff that delivered that mission looked more like the mosaic of the kingdom of God.

Over the last two years, the camp has developed relationships with a few communities in Cape Town, South Africa. Through a trusted connection with a local pastor and his wife, Covenant Harbor's year-round staff were linked to prospective summer staff. This year, ten young adults from Cape Town served on staff.

"They flew to the other side of the world to spend their summer loving kids and sharing Jesus," said Emma Mueller, program director. "This relationship was special in ways we never imagined."

### Impact on campers, staff

For many campers, this was a first experience of witnessing a global picture of the body of Christ. Campers learned that South Africa is one of many countries on the continent of Africa. Some even learned a few words in Afrikaans.

Summer staff gained a new understanding of what God is doing in the world and how Christ is being made known. They gained new perspectives on their own cultures and each other's. And they shared spiritual life, diving deep into God's love through one another.

"There's something beautiful about gathering almost 100 young adults from around the world in one place," Emma said. "In addition to our crew from South Africa, staff came from near and far. It created a unique community. There were many differences and yet every person was here because Jesus called them. Sharing the stories of how they ended up at camp was powerful. Staff developed deep bonds serving together. In diversity, those bonds were even stronger."

Staff from South Africa also grew from their experience. "This was my second summer at Covenant Harbor," said Jayda Josias. "Last summer I was a counselor and this summer I was assistant director of the Kishwauketoe program. Back home it's harder to find people who share Christian beliefs and who are willing to talk about them. I wanted to be in a community

of like-minded people. I wanted conversations at a deeper level. Camp has given me that."

For most of the students, the experience of international travel, working overseas and being away from family was a first. But at the end of the season, they expressed a desire to see more of the world and meet new people. Several hope to return to Covenant Harbor next summer, some are exploring college in the US and others are considering work in yet another country.



Jayda Josias and Caitlyn Fortune were two of ten staff from South Africa serving at Covenant Harbor this summer.

Jayda, who remained at camp to serve as ministry staff this year, extols her experience. "Now, I see a lot of parts of the ministry," she said. "I'm learning so much – leadership, hosting, facilitating ropes course experiences, learning communication skills. This is what I hoped for. One day, I want to open a summer camp in South Africa. It would be so great if I could take this home." 📍

*Interest in working at camp among South African students continues to grow. This fall, Emma is traveling to South Africa to further establish and nurture relationships with the network of pastors and churches supporting this connection, as well as learning how Covenant Harbor might help equip their ministries through the leadership development of summer staff.*



## Summer 2024 Snapshot

**Theme:** Side by Side, from John 1:14. "So the Word became human and made his home among us."

**Youth campers:** 2,471

**Alpha service leadership campers:** 79

**Camper scholarship funds distributed:** \$81,165, serving 165 campers

**Summer staff scholarship funds distributed:** \$84,100, serving 73 staff

**Summer staff:** 81 + 15 high school camp associates + 23 RNs and community care workers + 9 volunteers

**Mission offering for Camp2Camp Peacemaking project (Colombia, Israel/Palestine, South Sudan/Ethiopia):** \$4,408

**Memorable camper quote:** "The community here is amazing. The people are so welcoming."



Work at camp! It's a great experience, even if you've worked there before. No two experiences are the same. If you are called by God, there's a reason."

MARLENE ESPINOZA

## 'We went on a journey together' Program directors led a formative, life-giving summer

When Antwon Walls and Marlene Espinoza stepped into their roles as co-program directors at Covenant Point this summer, their previous experiences as campers and staff members equipped them – but so did their reliance on each other, the staff community and the Lord.

The pair were the first summer staff of color to serve in the significant program director role. Both credit their sense of welcome when they were young campers, their growth over years of participation and God's leading for a fulfilling experience that focused on the camp's mission.

"When I first went to camp about ten years ago, my pastor warned me that there would not be many people of color there," Antwon recalled. "I was nervous. But it was great. My counselors welcomed me and I made good friends – including Marlene. I kept going back."

### Stepping forward

After being campers for about five summers, both Antwon and Marlene moved into summer staff positions, including as counselors and kitchen staff. Antwon also served a year as an intern. Their experiences drew them deeper into camp life and into summer ministry, positioning them for a next level of leadership.

"At first, I was scared to be a program director," said Marlene. "It can be more behind the scenes and I love being with campers. But Antwon and I believed we could do it and we supported each other. To my surprise, I got a lot of interaction with campers!"

"I didn't know what to expect," Antwon said. "I did know that I wanted to showcase what it means to put yourself aside and put camp first. I wanted to love unconditionally and help people grow. We both wanted to love the kids."

The two learned their gifts and skills complimented each other and their partnership allowed ministry to thrive. At the same time, their own journeys flourished.

### Leading transparently

"It can be intimidating to be a Spanish-speaking woman," Marlene said. "But I am patient with kids and good at talking with them in both English and Spanish. Counselors called on me for help.

"For example, this summer, we had some campers who spoke only Spanish. They brought me such joy. I am thankful I could be available to them. I know they felt loved and welcomed, plus they showed me how to be fearless in a new environment."

As African American, Antwon also found purpose in ministry to campers of color. "More than ever, I saw that what I look like can be meaningful to campers. Campers of color gravitated to me – I was an instant connection. I felt honored they could see someone like me in a leadership role."

*Continued on next page*



*Antwon Walls and Marlene Espinoza served as co-program directors at Covenant Point this summer.*

## Staff Update

### Meet Cortney Tomczak

As Covenant Point's hospitality manager, Cortney Tomczak returned to a place she knows well when she began her role late last year. From Iron Mountain, Michigan, she spent many summers at Covenant Point as a camper and staff member.



*Cortney Tomczak*

"Returning to Covenant Point was like a dream," Cortney said. "It was clear that God had been at work, preparing my heart to take on this next adventure."

Although Cortney was familiar with the summer pace and intensity, she said it was a whirlwind. "The job is big, but I was incredibly supported by the year-round staff," she said. "I'm honored to be a part of this team. Plus, the intergenerational mix in the kitchen during the last few weeks of the summer meant we had high school students as young as 15, summer staff alumni in their late 20s and volunteers over 70 working together in the kitchen. This is our ministry – nourishing campers for their encounters with Christ."

### Openings for Interns

Covenant Point is looking for young adults who want to participate in camp ministry, discern vocation and experience living in a small Christian community. To learn more, visit [cpbc.com/staffopenings](http://cpbc.com/staffopenings) and contact Executive Director Erik Strom at [erik@cpbc.com](mailto:erik@cpbc.com).

## Now hiring staff for summer 2025

Covenant Point is seeking young adults 18+ who want to help campers take a new or next step in faith as summer staff, as well as students ages 16-18 for 4-week work crew sessions. Find details at [cpbc.com/staffopenings](http://cpbc.com/staffopenings).





Camp has taught me how to be a better leader by caring for people. It's given me a different lens in how I see the world. I feel more equipped to go into the world."

ANTWON WALLS

He added, "Camp has taught me that I'm likable. It's cool because I haven't always realized that. I'm just a regular guy, but people seem to like me. I don't think of this in a self-centered way, but as how God made me. This awareness helped me lead, especially in hard situations."

**Setting the tone**

Executive Director Erik Strom said that the program director role is complex and includes extensive planning, day-to-day management, up front leadership for campers and equipping of staff.

"It can be challenging," he said. "The caliber and maturity of our leaders makes all the difference in our mission. Antwon and Marlene set the tone that helped our campers grow in a Christ-centered, holistic way. They were mature, kind, welcoming and warm

toward both campers and staff. I was so proud of them. They were stellar."

**Leadership growth**

"Camp helped me use my gifts of patience, situational awareness, listening and conversation," Marlene said. "I didn't know the role fully before the summer, but I was willing to learn it. God helped me, and Antwon and I figured it out. There were a lot of new staff members that didn't know the Covenant Point culture, but I was new to my role, too. As a staff, we focused on our responsibilities and learned together."

"I wondered about our theme before the summer started - Holy Trinity, Wholly Loved," Antwon recalled. "I didn't know how I could embody those words. But seeing how the summer turned out, how staff went on the journey together,

I saw the theme in action. I felt God's presence in how we cared for one another, how new staff members fit in, how the community formed and how we loved the campers. Marlene and I led by example and the Holy Spirit 'did' Holy Trinity, Wholly Loved." 🌿

*Antwon Walls grew up in Oakdale Covenant Church, Chicago, and plans to cultivate athletics and education among youth through sports business. Marlene Espinoza grew up in Iglesia del Pacto Evangelico Peniel, Chicago, and is a senior at North Park University pursuing a double major in history and secondary education.*

**Hemlock Lodge makes room for more campers**

With the successful completion of Covenant Point's \$600,000 Making Room campaign to fund the building of a new lodge, campers of many ages found welcome within the walls of Hemlock Lodge this summer.

Generous support from donors not only allowed the camp to meet its campaign goal, but to exceed it by \$115,000. "I am exceedingly grateful for the many people who gave generously, making the campaign a swift success," said Executive Director Erik Strom. "Hemlock served us well this summer and it will continue to be an asset year-round as we welcome retreat participants and rental groups."

Hemlock added 24 beds to Covenant Point's lodging options, increasing the camp's capacity to 234 beds. The next step in the project is to add covered porches and complete interior upgrades to Aspen and Birch lodges, which are adjacent to Hemlock. That work will be completed this fall and early winter. 🌿



*The Janssen family of Cherry Valley, IL, enjoyed their stay in Covenant Point's new Hemlock Lodge during family camp this summer.*



*Summer 2024 Snapshot*

**Theme:** Holy Trinity, Wholly Loved, from Rev. 22:13. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

**Youth campers:** 558

**Family campers:** 168; 42 families

**Camper scholarship funds:** \$31,655, serving 97 campers

**Summer staff scholarship funds:** \$16,250, serving 10 staff

**Summer staff:** 36 + 25 high school Work Crew students

**Fundraising Triathlon:** \$19,400 raised

**Mission offering for Camp2Camp Peacemaking project (Colombia, Israel/Palestine, South Sudan/Ethiopia):** \$2,383

**Memorable camper quote:** "Thanks for creating a culture of fun, relationships and hunger for Jesus for our grandchild."

**Pastors of the week:** Libby Piotrowski, North Park, Chicago; Andrew Sturdy, United, Gladstone, MI; Tim Hawkinson, Renew, Carroll, IA; Alicia Vela Anderson, LaSalle Street, Chicago; Kyle Mecher, Resurrection, Chicago; Phil Staurseth, pastor; Tiana Coleman, Missio Dei, Chicago

## Honor and Memorial Gifts

Harbor Point Ministries honors and celebrates the lives of our friends and supporters and thanks the following donors for their contributions. Gifts recognized here have been received by Harbor Point Ministries, Covenant Harbor Bible Camp and Covenant Point Bible Camp between Aug. 16, 2023, and Sept. 15, 2024.



*Covenant pastors enjoy ice cream during a celebration of camp ministry this spring.*

### IN HONOR OF

**Chuck and Nancy Adair**  
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Our family is incredibly grateful for the impact camp has had on our daughters, now 17 and 20. We hope this gift helps continue the important work you are doing for young people. Use as needed to do God's work.

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**John A. and Marilyn Dinkel**  
**Timothy Erickson**  
**F. Wilbur and E. Kathryn Gustafson**  
**Verna M. Larson**

**Thank you for your support!**

We are grateful for the prayers, volunteer help and financial contributions of so many. Your support of Harbor Point Ministries, Covenant Point and Covenant Harbor is deeply appreciated.



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## Going on at Camp



### Covenant Harbor

#### Village Retreat

Nov. 1-3

Church youth leaders speak into this retreat, where high school groups from Covenant churches are prioritized. Collaborative planning allows for bonding and spiritual growth.

#### Winter Camps

Jan. 10-12 – Jr. and Sr. High

Jan. 24-26 – Jr. and Sr. High

Jan. 31-Feb. 2 – Jr. High Only

Feb. 14-16 – 3-6 Grades

Feb. 21-23 – Jr. and Sr. High

These weekends for church youth groups (may be parent-led) offer large-group teaching and worship as well as small group time and activities.



### Covenant Point

#### Christmas Camp

Dec. 27-Jan. 1

Extend the holiday season with family and enjoy winter activities, good food, intergenerational worship and a relaxed atmosphere during this week.

#### One Life Retreats

Jan. 2-5 | Feb. 14-17

These long weekends are for high school youth groups, and include a broomball tournament, polar bear dip, great food, a downhill skiing option, spiritual disciplines and Christ-centered worship.

#### Men's Retreat

Feb. 21-23

Excellent food, recreational activities and life-giving worship make this a memorable time for friends and small groups to get away.

# NEW DATE!

## Summer Camp 2025 Registration

opens **Nov. 12** for both Covenant Harbor and Covenant Point!

### Also new! Specific times for some programs!

- All Covenant Harbor programs open at 7am
- Covenant Point's Mainland, Island and Trip Camps open at 7am
- Covenant Point's Family Camps open at 9am

Visit **covenantharbor.org** and **cpbc.com** to see program schedules, prices and details.

**Questions?** Call Covenant Harbor at (262) 248-3600 and Covenant Point at (906) 265-2117.



*The Harbor Point Camping News is published annually by Harbor Point Ministries, the organization that connects Covenant Harbor and Covenant Point to each other and their sponsor churches. To learn more or to change your mailing information, email Beth Fredrickson at [bfredrickson@harborpointministries.org](mailto:bfredrickson@harborpointministries.org).*

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