

# Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries

*"Providing unique environments where God encounters people and renews them to live lives of love"*



First and foremost, Pathways would like to say THANK YOU your many thoughts and prayers for our campers and staff as well as for your generous financial support. That support comes in a variety of ways and we are grateful. The ministry of Pathways would not be possible without each and every one of you. We especially need your continued assistance in promoting camp and encouraging people to attend our youth and family programs, so be on the lookout for brochures to share with your congregation about this summer's schedule.

In January of 2022 we welcomed our program director, Kale Johnson, to the year-round staff. Kale's leadership and passion for faith forming camp experiences are a major reason why we had a fantastic summer camping season at Camp Emmaus. We saw an increase of 52 campers compared to the previous year but we are still trailing behind pre-pandemic levels. Although short-staffed, our summer ministry team did an amazing job of connecting young people to their faith and creating an intentional, Christian community where everyone was welcome and felt God's love. In addition to our summer programs, we saw a sizeable boost in our retreat revenue with new and existing groups utilizing our spaces.

We are excited to be purchasing Camp Emmaus from Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead. This is a significant step forward for our organization and one we did not take lightly. We are fortunate to be in a financial position where we have completed our first \$200,000 payment giving Pathways full ownership of the camp and decision making authority over the property. We now have 5 years to complete the terms of the purchase agreement and the remaining \$500,000 payment to Trinity's capital campaign.

Throughout the year, we continue to see a variety of support throughout our donor base. We are seeing a slight decline in giving from church budgets, but we have made up for that with increases in giving from foundations/endowment funds, individual donors and businesses. Pathways is extremely grateful for the financial support that we receive. If you or your congregation have not considered supporting Pathways this past year, now is a great time to invest in the faith formation of our youth and families.

The Pathways Board of Directors voted to work with consultant and former camper, Brenda Moore & Associates. Brenda is guiding us through strategic decisions in order to align our physical assets with our mission of offering unique environments where God encounters people and renews them to live lives of love. Brenda's experience and insight are a guiding light for our organization to follow as we move into the future.

In April of 2022, we were able to participate in a Total Inclusion symposium put on by the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Network. The Executive Director, Program Director and Board Chair were able to explore ways to make camp more inclusive and welcoming to marginalized groups. We currently have two elements that we are pursuing: guidelines for working with youth with behavioral challenges and installing handicap access to our chapel and lakefront at Camp Emmaus. We continue to look deeper into what total inclusion looks like for Pathways and our sites.

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This year we completed some major facility improvement projects. The electrical work was finished on the new maintenance garage at Camp Emmaus. The boys' bath house was spruced up in a similar fashion to what we did to the girls' bath house in 2020. Thanks to a facility improvement grant we replaced water heaters, freshened up paint and completed landscaping work. At Camp Minne-Wa-Kan, Concordia Language Villages was greeted with new siding on the chapel and a freshly seal coated ball court.

While 2022 brought with it some challenges, it allowed for opportunities to grow and adapt while bringing with it some exciting successes and strengths. As we look ahead to 2023, we need your continued help and support. Your financial support allows us to continue our ministry and support the facilitation of our camping season. Besides financial support, we ask that your congregation's Pathways representative attend our Annual Meeting in March. We also strongly encourage your congregation to promote camp within your church walls and beyond. Camp happens because we have campers who want to attend, so please spread the word! Once again, thank you for your continued support. We look forward to what 2023 brings for Pathways and our partnership with your congregation!

