



Green Lake Lutheran Ministries

Organizational Profile

Fall 2021

Who we are

GLLM is a ministry of camps and congregations stretching across the state of Minnesota and beyond. Three locations house our on-site camping and retreating programs: Green Lake Bible Camp (Spicer, MN), Shores of St. Andrew Bible Camp (New London MN, adjacent to Sibley State Park), and Camp House (Brimson, MN). All three are situated on beautiful lakes and include significant wooded areas as part of the property. Each site embodies unique features and programs, with GLBC hosting numerous year-round camps and retreats, "Shores," offering robust youth and family camping options, and Camp House providing a more rustic "north woods" experience for church groups and others.

Green Lake Bible Camp, GLLM's original 58 acre property, was founded in 1938 by a group of congregations from the Twin Cities and Southern Minnesota eager to dip their toes in the summer Bible Camp movement. In 1941, the iconic Stave Chapel (modeled after the Fortune church in Bergen, Norway) was built. This gorgeous chapel was remodeled in 1995 and is used often for weddings and by local congregations for summer worship. It continues to be a centerpiece of the summer camp experience.

As the ministry grew, a retreat center (Chrysalis House) was added to the Spicer site in 1981. The decision to build a year-round facility was innovative and forward-thinking, as most camps were still hosting primarily youth in the summertime. The vision was for ministry to be "for all ages and in all seasons." Green Lake quickly became a leader in this new era of camping and retreating ministry. Still today, GLLM has grown its ministry by adding spaces such as Medayto Lodge, a six bedroom, three-bathroom guest house that can accommodate family reunions and other groups looking for a lakeside getaway.

Through a merger with the Lutheran Camp Board in 1991, Shores of St. Andrew and Camp House were added as additional ministry sites. While Camp House remained closed for several years, the Shores property enhanced youth camping ministry by providing programming for younger campers and families. Facility renovations occurred in 1998, 2000, 2016, and 2021. In 2004, a chapel was added when Marble Lutheran Church in Canby, MN closed its doors and donated its building to Shores. Like the GLBC Chapel, it is used for summer worship and is also available to local congregations for weddings and weekly services.

Camp House, a former railroad camp in northern Minnesota, opened its doors as part of GLLM in 2001. Situated on the peaceful shoreline of Lake George, Camp House affords guests a unique opportunity for reflection and renewal. Families take advantage of weekend "bed and breakfast" stays, and pastors bring Confirmation campers to canoe the Boundaries Waters or enjoy the north shore of Lake Superior. An outdoor brick oven is a recent addition to the site, used for cooking and community building.

Much of GLLM's ministry happens outside of summer on-site camping. Increasingly, GLLM looks to expand its footprint by taking programming back to congregations and communities through day camps, Ministry Associates (year-round, young adult staff), and other partnerships. 177 member congregations makeup Green Lake Lutheran Ministries. Many more (non-member) congregations and organizations participate in the ministry of GLLM. Positioned near both the prairie of southwest Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro area, GLLM proudly serves rural, urban, and suburban demographics.

Theology

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Most GLLM member congregations are ELCA congregations. GLLM participates in the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries network and is closely connected to several synods of the ELCA including the Southwest Minnesota Synod. GLLM's theology and programmatic philosophy is rooted in the Lutheran Christian tradition that emphasizes the saving grace of Jesus Christ as being at the heart of the life of faith. Through means of grace such as worship, sacraments, and the study of God's word we are strengthened for service in Christ's name. Community and hospitality, modeled after Jesus' teachings, are central to our core values. Our ministry strives to offer extravagant welcome, embracing each person as a beloved child of God. As an outdoor ministry, a robust theology of creation also guides our mission. We celebrate God's hand at work in waves lapping the lake shore, birds chirping wake up calls on cabin window sills, and on wooded trails winding into grassy meadows. We seek to be good stewards of these precious and beautiful gifts.

Programs

Traditional summer youth camping has been a priority at GLLM since its inception. All three sites host elementary through high school aged campers. Specialty programs include adventure camps, service learning, art, and sports camps. Year-round retreating opportunities range from first communion retreats for elementary students to women's crafting weekends and men's "good news, good brews" gatherings.

Year-round retreating happens at the Green Lake Bible Camp and Shores of St. Andrew Bible Camp site, accommodating a variety of groups. Quilting and other craft groups, youth groups, confirmation groups, synod groups, corporate conferences and family groups make up the largest part of the total. Radical hospitality is a core value of our ministry and is a pillar of our retreat ministry.

As GLLM looks to the future, we seek to sustain the quality of youth summer camp, while intentionally growing our retreating ministries and family camping opportunities. We are eager to invite new groups of guests to experience radical hospitality at all three sites, and want to imagine new and creative ways of engaging campers and retreaters with the life-changing love of Jesus.

Attendance

In 2019, camper and guest days totaled 23,500.50 at GLBC, Shores and Camp House. This is an increase of 723 from 2018. Day camp was provided to 31 congregations and served 774 youth in 2019. GLLM provided 150 camp scholarships to campers and retreat guests totaling over \$75,000. Total number of retreat guests served in 2019 was 5,621. As of 2019, our summer camp programs were at their highest level in over a decade and retreat numbers were at all time highs.

Financials

As we look ahead to 2022, we expect our total budget to be just over \$2,000,000 with income breaking down evenly between summer camp, retreats, and fundraising. Our most major organizational expense is staffing with seasonal and full time staffing equalling approximately half of our yearly budget.

Staff

Led by the Executive Director, 16 permanent staff members serve GLLM. Key positions include: associate director, marketing and development director, director of retreat and hospitality ministries, director of property and facilities, director of finance and administration, and food service director. Summer staff at all three sites totaled 75 in 2021.