



# BEAR CREEK CAMP

Explore, celebrate & grow in God's creation!



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for choosing Bear Creek Camp to be a part of your camper's and family's summer. Our Summer 2024 theme is *One in Love* which comes from the last line of the beloved BCC song "Go in Peace." This is the 50<sup>th</sup> summer of camp at Bear Creek Camp and together we're celebrating the beauty of our community and our connection with God through nature.

The following information is intended to help you and your camper prepare for camp and have the best possible experience at Bear Creek Camp. Even if you are a long-time Bear Creek Camp camper, please take a few minutes to read through the packet as details have changed.

The camp week will start with Check-In from 3:00 to 4:30 PM on Sunday. The week will end on Friday at 4:00 PM with the Family Program which will include an opportunity for the family to experience highlights from the week with their campers prior to departure. The Check-Out window following this program will be from 4:30 to 5:30 PM. Try Camp Check-Out is Wednesday at 11:00 AM. Please take a moment to see the "Preparing for Camp," "During Camp," and "Post Camp" sections for more information.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions concerning your camper's week at Bear Creek Camp. We can be reached by phone at (570) 472-3741 or email at [bccamp@bearcreekcamp.org](mailto:bccamp@bearcreekcamp.org). Also, like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to see updates from camp!

Whether you are new to Bear Creek Camp or have already been a part of our community, we are grateful for you. The work that we do together to make a difference in this world can only happen because of the collective of the campers, families, staff, donors, congregations, alumni, and prayerful supporters. We appreciate the entire BCC community that continues to value our space set apart for the transformative growth experiences unique to summer camp.

Please continue to pray for our campers, our staff, and the BCC community as a whole as we embark together on another summer of life-changing experiences.

In Christ,

Collin Grooms  
Executive Director

Kaitlyn Blend  
Associate Director

# PREPARING FOR CAMP

## PACKING

Please send sturdy and comfortable clothing with your camper. Campers will be very active during the week and clothing will get dirty, wet, and muddy as they tromp through woods, splash in mud puddles, and play in the creek. Please send only items that you and your camper won't be upset about if they are ruined. No laundry opportunities are available for campers; please pack enough clothes for the entire duration of the camp session. All clothes should also have appropriate language and imagery.

Aside from comfortable clothes, shoes should also be comfortable as well as effective. Activity shoes that will be worn during games, walks, and daily camp should be close-toed. Flip flops will only be allowed in cabins and at the lake. Hiking boots are strongly encouraged for hiking, however, sturdy sneakers are allowed in the absence of boots.

**PACKING LIST** – Campers should bring the following items for their use at camp.

- Personal water bottle
- Sleeping bag (optional – twin-sized fitted sheet set for bunks)
- Pillow
- Towels and washcloth
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Comb/Brush
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- swimsuit
- Clothes for all weather (shorts, jeans, t-shirts, sweatshirt, socks, etc.)
- Old clothes (things you don't mind getting dirty)
- Sturdy closed-toe shoes
- Extra pair of shoes (in case yours get wet)
- Backpack (if you don't have one, no need to buy one)
- Dress clothes for dance night
- Rain gear
- Bible
- Notebook
- Pens/Pencils
- Flashlight
- Camera (if desired)
- Medication (if needed)

**PACKING LIST FOR THE OVERNIGHT** – Campers should bring the following items for their one-night overnight. Please note that many of these items are included in the regular packing list and can simply be transported for the overnight.

- Clothes for all weather (sweatpants/sweater to sleep in, thicker socks)
- Old clothes (things you don't mind getting dirty)
- Sleeping bag
- Sturdy closed-toe Shoes
- Rain gear
- Extra small bag/grocery bag to keep clothes dry
- Flashlight

**PACKING LIST FOR THE RAFTING TRIP** – Campers should bring the following items for their one-day whitewater rafting trip (for junior high and seniors who have registered).

- Clothes to get wet (swimsuit with shorts/shirt to go over)
- Dry change of clothes in small bag/grocery bag
- Water shoes (must have a heel grip; crocs, sneakers, chacos all work, flip flops will not)

Please mark all belongings with the camper's name. Lost and found items will be kept at the office for a maximum of three months after the last session of summer camp. Please contact the camp if you are missing something and we will do our best to locate it.

## **ITEMS NOT TO BRING TO CAMP**

These items will be taken from campers and held until the end of the week. Possession of weapons or drugs may result in the immediate removal of the camper from camp. Your help and assistance on keeping these items home would be greatly appreciated.

- Food in cabins (The camp provides good, nutritious meals. Food in the cabins only encourages rodents and other animals to invade which can cause unsafe and unclean conditions. If a camper brings snacks or it is given in mail, the counselors will have a designated spot for it. Any snacks cannot have nuts).
- Electronics (**CELL PHONES**, personal music devices, video game systems, etc.)
- **Cell phones** (aside from taking away from the camp experience, phones can be easily lost or damaged which Bear Creek assumes no responsibility for)
- Knives, weapons, or any fire-related substance
- Cash, jewelry, or other valuables
- Alcohol, vapes, tobacco products, other drugs, or any drug paraphernalia

## **MEDICATIONS**

Please have medication, both prescription and over-the-counter, with you during the Check-In process. All medications must be stored with the Healthcare Staff while at camp; this includes any over-the-counter medications your camper might take. If your camper regularly takes over-the-counter medications or must take a specific kind, please bring these with you.

Please bring medication in its original container with all prescription information on it placed in a zip-lock bag. Please mark the bag with the camper's name and place a 3x5 index card or piece of paper in the bag with the following information legibly written on it:

Camper's Name

Name of the medication and the dosage

Directions for taking the medication

When the medication is to be taken (camp standard times include breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bedtime; other times can be scheduled as needed).

## **ALLERGIES**

Please ensure that all registration information lists all allergies and food restrictions for your camper. Our kitchen will accommodate any food allergies and restrictions, so we need to know your child's restrictions in advance to best prepare for their week at camp.

## **CAMPER MAIL AND EMAIL**

Receiving mail at camp is something campers look forward to. Here are a few options to do so.

- 1.) You may bring pre-written mail addressed to your camper on Sunday afternoon to drop off for distribution throughout the week. We will have boxes out to collect these at Check-In. If including food, please do not bring items with peanuts or tree nuts.
- 2.) One-way email can also be sent to campers during the week. Simply:
  - Send an email to [campermail@bearcreekcamp.org](mailto:campermail@bearcreekcamp.org)
  - In the subject line: [Camper's Name] [Age Group] [Cabin Number (if known)]
  - Write and submit email; letters are delivered to your camper at the next lunch
- 3.) If you would like to send mail via the postal service please send it early in the week to ensure delivery to your camper. Please address mail in the following way:

Camper's Name

Bear Creek Camp

PO Box 278

Bear Creek, PA 18602

**REFUND POLICY**

All registrations for residential programs are subject to a \$150 non-refundable deposit. Refunds for cancellations will be made according to the following schedule:

No-show or less than 1 week in advance: 50% refund of cost of camp. More than 1 week: refunded minus deposit. Cancellations due to medical reasons: Refunded 100% when we receive a doctor's certification.

Transferring to another 2024 summer session may be done at no charge in lieu of cancellation, subject to program openings and availability.

# DURING CAMP

## CHECK-IN

The camping week begins Sunday with Check-In from 3:00 to 4:30 PM for Full Week and Try Camp Campers. To help stagger the arrival times for families, we ask that you plan for arrival times by camper's last name: A through I: 3:00 - 3:30 PM, J through R: 3:30 - 4:00 PM, S through Z: 4:00 - 4:30 PM. Should you be traveling with multiple campers with different last names, we suggest choosing the earlier of the options. If the suggested arrival window does not work for your family, we will welcome any campers after 3:00pm.

Bear Creek Camp's address is **3601 Bear Creek Blvd, Bear Creek Township, PA 18702.**

Upon arrival at camp, you will turn off State Route 115 and travel down our three-mile red road. At the fork, you will follow the signs for the one-way loop towards the office. Near the soccer field, you will be greeted by a staff member who will identify the program site where your camper will be staying for the week and direct you to the check-in stations for each age group: Try Camp and Juniors at the Retreat Center (Dining Hall); Middlers at East Site; Junior High at South Site; and Seniors at North Site.

## MEDICATIONS

Healthcare staff will be located at the office during the check-in process. **ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL LABELED CONTAINERS** (even large volume) and then grouped into a clear ziplock bag with the camper's full name on the outside to be turned in to the Healthcare Coordinator during Check-In. Any changes to medications from the submitted health form must be made at Check-in with the healthcare staff.

## CAMP STORE

Our Camp Store system that will show the pre-loaded amount in each camper's personal store account; this will allow campers to purchase snacks and other store items during the week without carrying cash. The Camp Store will be open each day in the afternoon and visited by quest groups. You can deposit any amount you would like into your camper's camp store account through the CampBrain registration portal. We suggest **\$10-30**. We will limit the amount of soda and candy campers can buy each day and offer alternatives such as granola bars and juices. Camp store funds not spent during the week can be refunded or, if you choose, donated to our Campership Fund. You will be contacted with any balance remaining via email following the conclusion of the camp week. Please do not leave cash with your camper; it cannot be used by campers in the Camp Store during the week.

## CAMP PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

Quest Group Photo (the group your camper will be with all week), and Weekly Highlight Video are additional items you have the option of purchasing. Please note campership money does not cover these items. A Weekly Highlight Video is available for \$12, a color 8x10 photo of your camper's Quest Group is available for \$8, and a Photo/Video combo package is also available for \$15. All can be ordered prior to the week through the registration portal.

Photos from throughout the week will be available following camper departure at [bearcreekcamp.org/photos](http://bearcreekcamp.org/photos) and on Bear Creek Camp's Facebook and Instagram pages. For the safety of all our campers, photos will be posted after the week has concluded.

## **CAMP ACTIVITIES**

Bear Creek Camp has many activities for your camper to enjoy. With their counselors, campers will have the opportunity to choose some of the activities that they will experience. Please either speak to your camper's counselor or encourage your camper to speak with them about any special interest they have. Other factors including weather, scheduling, group dynamics, and staffing, may affect what activities will be available.

## **OVERNIGHT**

All campers except Try Camp Campers will get to camp overnight on our property for at least one night. This experience gets the campers involved in developing their outdoor living skills and involves carrying personal and group gear, hiking, preparing meals over campfires, setting up a tent, and basic back-country hygiene. Older Quest Groups will have the option of deciding to camp out more than one night.

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR A BEAR CREEK CAMP CAMPER**

Bear Creek Camp strives to create an environment where all campers are respected and safe. The camp reserves the right to send home any camper who refuses to follow camp rules or, in the opinion of the director, is unable to function adequately in the camp setting. We want the program of BCC to meet the developmental readiness of all our campers. In addition to meeting the age requirement for camp, youth campers in our overnight programs must be able to meet the essential functions of campers as age-appropriate. Campers must be able to:

- Walk throughout the day on grass, gravel, sand, or asphalt
- Carry a small backpack with essentials for activities
- Communicate their needs to others
- Manage their own personal hygiene independently (including use of the bathroom, changing clothes, and showering) or with minimal counselor assistance (including brushing teeth and haircare)
- Sleep in bunk-style housing with toilets in a separate building and without air-conditioning
- Willingly follow simple and complex directions including spoken guidelines at orientation
- Appropriately participate in a community-based environment with a supervision ratio ranging from 1:6 to 1:10 depending on camper age
- Refrain from harming self, others, and camp property
- Ability to comply with all appropriate health guidelines
- Illegal substances (cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, etc.) are not permitted

Our programs are typically not designed to accommodate campers requiring reduced ratio care. We are happy to discuss reasonable accommodations or recommend other programs that may provide a more successful experience for your camper.

## **COMMUNICATION DURING THE CAMP WEEK**

In the case of an emergency involving a camper, parents/guardians will be informed as quickly as possible following our emergency processes and procedures. Contact methods may include phone calls or emails to the contact information listed at the time of camper registration. Our medical team will also connect with guardians on an as-needed basis when medical care exceeds basic first aid (minor scrapes, bumps, short-term ill feelings). We believe in the value of the unplugged experience and therefore cell phones are not allowed at camp. Should a situation arise where a camper needs to make or receive a call during the week, we can make arrangements for that communication.

## **ILLNESS OR INJURY**

Bear Creek Camp does not carry primary medical insurance for campers. Guardians are financially responsible for the cost of any medical care needed during a camper's stay at Bear Creek Camp. We will contact the guardian via phone of a camper injury or illness that requires the camper to be in our infirmary for an extended time or taken off-site for medical reasons.

## **HOMESICKNESS**

Homesickness is a natural and healthy part of appropriate child development. Summer staff are trained on appropriate methods of working with homesick campers to ensure that they feel safe and comfortable at camp while building the necessary skills of resilience and independence. Occasionally, one of the strategies in working with homesickness may include a phone call home. In this case, a staff member will reach out to the guardians to discuss strategies and if deemed appropriate, will facilitate a phone call.

## **OUR STAFF**

Bear Creek Camp staff consists of a team of year-round and seasonal camp professionals. Our summer staff are college-aged young adults who undergo extensive pre-camp training to prepare to serve as leaders and role models throughout the summer. Many of our staff are former campers who attended BCC and now look to pass along the positive impacts of their experiences.

All staff are required to complete clearances for working with youth under Pennsylvania State Law. All staff are required to attend training before camper arrival which includes training on child development, camp safety and emergency preparedness (including First Aid/CPR/AED certification), behavior management, homesickness, and all of the program elements of camp including archery, low ropes, high ropes, waterfront, outdoor skills, games, and more. Lifeguards and high ropes facilitators receive additional training to be certified in those program areas.

## **POST CAMP**

### **FRIDAY DEPARTURES**

The Family Program, beginning at 4:00 PM on Friday will take place in the Pavilion. This will include an opportunity to experience highlights from the camper's week.

The Check-Out window following this program will be from 4:30 to 5:30 PM. Campers will return to their cabins after the program. Guardians will proceed to their camper's program site and cabin where they will sign the camper out and receive medications, Quest Group photo, and luggage. All campers must be picked up by 5:30 PM on Friday. Try Camp Check-Out is Wednesday at 11:00 AM at the Retreat Center.

### **EARLY DEPARTURE**

If your camper needs to depart camp prior to the conclusion of the family program, please contact the office and we will ensure the camper is prepared to depart from the office at the scheduled time.

### **POST CAMP FOLLOW-UP**

Guardians will receive a post-camp evaluation/survey to review with their camper. These evaluations help us shape the Bear Creek Camp program for the future and your thoughtful participation is appreciated.

**We appreciate your thoughtful attention to the above.  
Please direct any questions to the camp office- [bccamp@bearcreekcamp.org](mailto:bccamp@bearcreekcamp.org) or  
570.472.3741**