

# FELLOWSHIP NEWS



## Miracle Camp Continues Hosting Campers Amid Challenges

Miracle Camp and Retreat Center in Lawton, Michigan, has faced significant challenges since it began in 1965, like the 2008 U.S. financial crisis and unpredictable weather. But, when Ross Adams stepped into the executive director role in January, Miracle Camp and Retreat Center was about to experience the most challenging year of its 55-year history.

Ross Adams and his wife, Pam, are new to Miracle Camp, but they aren't new to the camping industry. Having worked at camps in Colorado, Texas, California, Nebraska, and most recently at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, he brought 30 years of experience in the camping industry to his new role in January. But, by March, he and the staff at Miracle Camp were faced with a new challenge, a viral pandemic and the subsequent quarantine. By following health and safety protocols, Miracle Camp prepared to host campers this summer.

During a typical summer, Miracle Camp hosts 1400 school-aged students. This

year, the staff made adjustments in activities to meet American Camp Association and the State of Michigan's safety guidelines and opened to about 1000 campers. After a 14-day screening process before arrival and screening upon arrival, the campers stayed in small cohorts. These cohorts shared a cabin and participated in daily activities together. Because of these changes, many campers reported a more positive experience than previous years, developing deeper friendships and participating in more activities.

While many Michigan camps did not open this summer, Miracle Camp has continued to operate, hosting groups into the fall at 50% capacity and planning for winter camps. Adams admits that support from churches and donors has kept Miracle Camp operating. Their budget shortfall is being supplemented through the Build a Bridge campaign this summer and another campaign this fall to keep the facility going until next spring and summer. Donations can be made at [MiracleCamp.com](http://MiracleCamp.com).



## LifeChange Camp Continues Vision to Share the Gospel

LifeChange Camp was carved out of 80 acres of uncut timber in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri. Through the vision of Bill and Carol Anderson and the work of volunteers, Life Change Camp began hosting campers two years later. Since 2002, the facility has grown to its present-day capacity, hosting nearly 2000 people each year for camps and retreats and presenting the gospel. This summer, despite the challenges posed by cancellations and COVID-19 safety protocols, LifeChange remained true to its purpose.

Among the changes made, the number of campers per cabin were limited and cabins were sanitized between camps. But, the weather allowed for continued outdoor activities, and each week yielded spiritual decisions in campers' lives. During one junior high camp, a popular speaker whose son had recently died from a brain tumor talked to the campers about death. He challenged them by saying, "You're not guaranteed your next breath or the next year." After his challenge, every student responded with a decision to either follow Jesus for the first time or to renew a commitment to live for Him.

Since LifeChange Camp has suffered the loss of groups for retreats this fall and winter, they depend upon donations during this unprecedented time in history and upon volunteers who can help with work projects. Donations to LifeChange Camp can be made at [LifeChangeCamp.org](http://LifeChangeCamp.org).

## Salem4Youth Experiences Spiritual Growth Amid Lockdown

For the 12 young men and 26 staff at Salem4Youth, the viral pandemic and lockdown didn't change their day-to-day life. Located on a 50-acre campus near Flanagan, Illinois, two hours southwest of Chicago, the residential program provides vocational training and counseling support along with academics. In contrast, the challenges that arose during the pandemic have sparked spiritual interest among the young men.

Since the students and some of the staff live and work on the property, they continued their activities unhindered. Terry Bengé, the executive director, had been teaching from 1 Peter 2:13, "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority," when the lockdown occurred, and the young men saw the practical application of Scripture. During this time, the spiritual interest among the residents has been stirred and two young men have decided to follow Jesus Christ. One of them will be baptized this month.

Although the initial lockdown posed challenges to staff and residents, limiting family visits and cancelling their annual auction, their freezers and pantries stayed full because of the local food bank and donations. Since the residential facility provides room and board for the young men who live there, they use 90 eggs to prepare one breakfast.

To support Salem4Youth, visit their website at [Salem4Youth.com](http://Salem4Youth.com) or their Facebook page to purchase honey harvested by the residents this summer.

