

H'mmm, I want to linger, H'mmm a little longer,
H'mmm, a little longer here with you.

H'mmm, and come September,
H'mmm, I will remember,
H'mmm, my happy camping
days with you.

H'mmm, and as the years go by,
H'mmm, I'll think of you and sigh,
H'mmm, this is good night
but not goodbye.

This is the sorrowful campfire song that we used to sing as the last song of the last campfire of each camp, hands of staff and campers clasped together, swaying in a circle under the night sky.

For campers especially, returning home from Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre (GCCRC) after a fun-filled week of activity, water sports, worshipping, singing, and other camp pursuits is often filled with sadness (and lots of laundry). They even have a name for it—Post Camp Depression (PCD).

Although PCD is short lived, having had a week of living in a cabin, a camp "family", a schedule with lots of fun and late nights, coming home can sometimes be a bit dull with the same old routine, same annoying siblings and of course the chores and rules of the family home. Soon the reconnection with friends and perhaps other adventures come to replace the melancholy, but the memories and lessons of camp remain intact, continually reminding the camper of those "happy camping days" and of God's wonderful love and compassion he has for us and His creation. It's the same with staff—having spent weeks living, working, praying, and having fun together, coming home is bittersweet—you look forward to catching up with "regular" life, but miss the interaction and bonds built over a summer of memories.

That's the great thing about GCCRC—it doesn't have to end! We can maintain and/or rekindle our relationship with the camp anytime, through volunteering for work weekends (see sidebar, right), planning or participating in [fall and winter retreats](#), catching up with friends at the [Gala](#), or singing God's praises for His bounty over [Thanksgiving Dinner](#), all are perfect opportunities to support and keep alive the spirit of the camp throughout the year.

Throughout this issue you'll see how God's everlasting love works in us, and through us, at GCCRC. Join us, if you can, at one of the many events being organized, or plan a retreat yourself for your group. We know that you too will want to linger, a little longer...

Volunteer + Stay Opportunities

Fall Work Weekend

October 16-18

Need to work off Thanksgiving dinner? Looking for volunteer hours for school? Just love Gracefield?

All great reasons to come for the Fall Work Weekend! Equipment, cabins, and sites need some TLC before being tucked away for the winter. Lots of jobs—big and small—suitable for all ages and skill levels. Meals and accommodations provided. Please contact the office for info.

Enjoy the property and stay for free!

Volunteer four or more hours during the week or on weekends. We need **painters, roofers and carpenters**. There is access to a small kitchen for meals if no cook is on site. If there is a cook and you volunteer for the day, meals are included. Arrangements can be confirmed through the office.

We are also looking for **winter weekend hosts from Nov 15 2015 through Feb 15, 2016**. It would involve a couple or individual being on-site to greet guests, answer questions, address basic requests, keep things tidy, and make a phone call if an outside service is required. Kitchen and invoicing is looked after by others.

Current Staff Needs

We are always looking for help with kitchen services during the retreat season. Please inquire with the office.



Message from Our Co-Executive Directors

The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of God stands forever.
Isaiah 40:8



Summer has drawn to a close and left us with wonderful memories and stories to tell. The grass may wither but God continues to do great things at Gracefield.

A tradition at Gracefield is to begin our day with a time focused on God. For children's camps this time is spent at Chapel Rock in a quiet time of reflection and prayer. It is time when children are encouraged to wonder, to absorb and celebrate the beauty of all that God has created; for them to lift up their prayers in silence to God who hears and care for them.

Other support staff and Gracefield guests are encouraged to gather at 9am for Our Daily Bread reading and time of prayer. In the midst of all the summer activities, taking time to stop for spiritual food around God word can be a challenge. As we reflect on the summer, it is those moments of special fellowship that stands out in our minds; times when guests joined in and enriched our morning devotional with depth of sharing and Godly wisdom. There were times when we as staff saw God using us to bring hope into someone's life. From these times of sweet fellowship, we gain an understanding of the challenges each face, and the triumphs each has overcome. We were encouraged that while children's camp ministry was charging forward and touching lives, God was also working in all corners of the Gracefield Ministry. Truly, when all the summer activity is over, God's word and message of hope continue on and does not fade or die. Gracefield's community of faith widens and embraces each of these people; campers, visitors, staff and volunteers, as they go back out into their communities.

Meanwhile we continue to pray that GCCRC be a beautiful place to come, where meaningful experiences are had and where Jesus Christ is central in all we do. May the word of God be lived out and proclaimed here at Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre for decades to come.

In His Service,

Brian & Janet Ham



Board Updates

In June the Presbytery of Ottawa, on the recommendation of the Board of Directors of Gracefield Camp, approved two new members of the Board.

Rev. Ian Johnston is recently retired from full-time ministry in the Presbyterian Church and has moved back to his roots in eastern Ontario. During his student days at Presbyterian College in the late 1970's he was a LIT leader at Gracefield, and his two children attended Gracefield when he ministered in Winchester during the 1980's. In more recent years he was the Synod Director for Camp Christopher in Saskatchewan. Says Reverend Johnston, "Christian camping has been an important part of my life since I was a boy, and I am looking forward to becoming part of the Board and re-connecting with Gracefield".

Rev. Karen Dimock accepted a call to St Andrew's Ottawa from Morningside-High Park in the Fall of last year and has a strong personal commitment to Christian camping ministry. While she is new to the Gracefield community, she introduced her young children to camping at Camp Kintail near Goderich, Ontario. Says Reverend Dimock, "Camping is a unique environment for the development of Christian community among young people".

At recent meetings of the Board both of the new members were welcomed by the Chair, Bon Cummings.



FUNDRAISING NEWS

This summer, Gracefield saw its first ever crowd funding initiative— **Making Camp Happen**. Its target was to raise \$6,000 in hopes that ten children or youth would be given the opportunity to attend a week at camp in 2016. The campaign ran from July 12th to August 15th and raised a total of \$1,310. Although we did not realize the set goal, more than three children will be able to go to camp for a week next year. The official campaign has ended; however, anyone who wishes to contribute to the Campership Fund can still do so by visiting Gracefield’s website. You can still be a hero and send someone to camp!

A FAN OF FACTS? A DEVOTEE OF DETAILS? A STUDENT OF STATS?

Put together a team and come to the **Gracefield Trivia Night**, a fundraiser for the camp that will take place early in 2016. More information and tickets, will be available at the Gala and the Gracefield website in November.

SUMMER WRAP-UP FROM A FIRST-TIME COUNSELLOR

Being a counsellor this summer was an AMAZING experience! On top of trying exciting new things, I had the opportunity to test and develop my abilities as a leader in Christ. I was able to build strong lasting relationships, and saw the same happening around me. Despite the anticipated challenges of being a camp counsellor, I felt peace and strength from God’s spirit when I needed it most. It was encouraging to witness individuals being blessed and empowered at camp. Many were thrilled to walk with God, feel his presence and most of all, be themselves amidst his creation. My summer at Gracefield was life changing—truly unforgettable!

David Campbell, a.k.a. Argo



Summer 2015 Memories from GCCRC Staff

ABOUT SPECIAL TIMES:

“At the start, one of our young male campers would barely talk. I started to get to know him while playing ping pong. The first time I sat with his cabin during a meal we agreed that if we ever got mail we would never be able to stand up in front of everyone and sing. (This is a tradition at camp when campers receive mail or packages). Yet by the end of camp, this same camper sang at the talent show and also sang for a parcel at mail call.”

“I liked to see all the Night Owl campers try to go over the climbing wall. Even if all of them did not make it over, it was obvious that everyone of them gave it their best shot. It was obvious that the Night Owlers were working together as a team and were having fun even though it was a fairly difficult task.”

“During my second week of counseling my campers were fairly quiet but they still bonded together as a cabin... in a clearly enjoyable manner. ”

“A young female camper who spoke mainly French, often became frustrated when she could not understand others or be understood. Other girls in the cabin helped with translating or even just spent time with her if they could not speak French. It brought the cabin closer and helped her feel more included. She also got super happy when we sang “boom chicka boom” since that was a song she already knew. ”

ABOUT CAMPERS WHO REACHED OUT TO OTHER CAMPERS WHEN THEY WERE HAVING DIFFICULTIES BY PATTING THEM ON THEIR BACK OR GIVING AN ENCOURAGING WORD:

“One girl in Cabin One was very sad and then the other girl that was not liking camp was helping the other girl and it was very awesome to see.”

ABOUT HAVING SPECIAL NEEDS CAMPERS INTEGRATED AT CAMP, ALLOWING THEM TO NOT BE DEFINED BY THEIR LIMITATIONS:

“I like how we integrate special needs campers in with the other campers. We have had children with Autism and Cerebral Palsy. We have had children with ADD, ADHD and ODD.”

“As a counselor at Gracefield, I have worked with many campers over the summer. Having never been to camp myself as a kid, I find counseling to be a deeply rewarding job. Watching and helping the campers enjoy being kids for a week is such a special moment”

“...so many different campers, unique in their own way”



Look Out—The Quilters Are Coming! Part 2

In the last issue of Beavertales, Chris Burbridge of the Glebe-St. James United Church Ottawa (GSJ UC) quilters group, provided readers with a wonderful story on how the quilting group formed and then built a lasting relationship with Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre through their Patchwork Pilgrimages. In September, this group will be celebrating their 9th anniversary at Gracefield—Congratulations!

In Part 2 of her story, Chris provides tips for those thinking about organizing a retreat at the camp...

TIPS FOR RETREAT ORGANIZERS

DOLLARS AND CENTS

In the early years, we sometimes worried that we would not break even for our costs. While this event is not a fundraiser for our church, we try to ensure that it pays for itself. Since most of our materials are donated by the quilters themselves, the retreat fees cover the camp fees for accommodations and meals (what a luxury having someone else do the all cooking!).

If you are organizing a retreat, don't forget to include the taxes as part of your costs when figuring out the fees to charge—guess how we learned that! We are also able to offer subsidies for those in need, and we are lucky enough to have donors (quilters and others) who offer cash donations to the retreat.

BE ORGANIZED

Judy usually arranges carpooling and the room assignments for the quilters. We ask them whom they want to share with and try to make everyone happy. On our registration form we also ask about food allergies, as per the Gracefield Camp forms. It really helps the camp staff with planning and they have worked very hard to accommodate all the different needs. I usually concentrate on the logistics, and the project planning and preparation.

KNOW YOUR CROWD AND THEIR SKILL LEVELS

Many people bring a friend or relative, so it's a mini vacation for them to spend some time together. While all the GSJ participants know each other, we make sure everyone has a nametag so there are no strangers.

The nametags have become famous and often appear at GSJ events during the year.

Only some of our participants are experienced quilters. They range from some who have never sewn or never quilted, to others who could teach quilting classes. Although I demonstrate the projects, and we give lots of guidance and help throughout the weekend, the quilters usually break into project teams and help each other along. There is really something wonderful about the energy this sharing, supportive experience brings to the room.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Most of our demographic does not do well on upper bunks, so when we cost out the weekend, we count only floor-level beds. Barbra, Janet and Brian have always been most helpful when we figure out these logistics. In the beginning we reserved White Pine Lodge which we felt would accommodate 25 mostly middle-aged women who like to sleep at a lower altitude. Our numbers have grown such that in 2013 we began reserving Beaver Lodge as well. Last year, we had 42 participants, including two young girls and their moms. Teaching-wise, we have found that this is as high a number of students as we want.

PLAN YOUR WORK AND WORK THE PLAN

Post the weekend's schedule so everyone is aware of it and knows when to be where—it's especially important to make sure meals are served on time. Herding quilters might be compared to herding cats.

OUR SCHEDULE

Many of the quilters leave Ottawa right after work on Friday afternoon, so we arrange to have supper at the camp on Friday evening. We begin right after supper by gathering in the lounge with a few hymns and introductions. On Friday night we teach a quilting skill or interesting technique. The quilters will use this to make a small project for themselves (e.g. totebag, placemats, lap quilt).

The lesson continues on Saturday morning. After lunch on Saturday we start on the baby quilts. Many



people will use the newly acquired technique. We work on them until lunch on Sunday when all of the materials must be packed away. On Saturday night, we have a time of sharing. People bring quilts they have made during the year and other show and tell items. It is amazing to see the creativity among us.

Sunday morning, weather permitting, we have worship service in the outdoor chapel. We have had our ministers come with us on this retreat and also have several licensed lay worship leaders among our group. This is a time when God's grace fills our senses: gentle words and music fill that cool autumn air, while the trees and light reflecting off the lake paint a kaleidoscope. Before lunch we make sure we take a group picture with all the participants and as many quilts as we can fit in. After lunch we say our goodbyes and head home by 2pm.

LESSONS LEARNED

Be sure to get feedback from the participants. Judy and I begin our evaluation of the weekend right away while the details are fresh. What worked? What didn't? We ask the quilters to send us their feedback and evaluations by email as soon as possible. We share the comments related to accommodations, meals and facilities with Janet and Brian. We look at the quilting-related suggestions and make sure they're taken into account for next year's retreat.

Facilities Plan Workshop

On August 8th, the Sustainability Committee of the Gracefield Board presented their draft Facilities Plan to interested members of the Gracefield community, a copy of which can be found in the Publications section of [our website](#). The Sustainability Committee has proposed a long-term vision for buildings and sites such as White Pine, Jolly Roger, Beaver, Parliament Hill and the T&T loop in addition to many of the secondary facilities on site. The Plan also proposes new buildings, such as a new combination bathroom/showers/laundry room to replace East Block.

During the meeting, discussion was held on: the year round use of facilities; multiple uses of facilities; making facilities more open to self-catering; and, enhancing the experience for family/individual visitors. If you have any additional questions and/or comments on the Plan, you can contact the office for further information.

This Committee should be congratulated for the time, effort and thought that has gone into this comprehensive Plan that will help to guide Gracefield and its facilities into the future.

2015 Gracefield in the City Gala

Come and be entertained on Saturday, November 7, 2015, by the Arise School of Dance as the group elegantly welcomes supporters to the Gala with their contemporary ballet style. Doors will open to Salons A&B of Algonquin College's Market Place Court at 5:30pm with the entertainment beginning shortly after. A three course dinner will be served as the evening of celebration for the 2015 season continues.

Tickets for the Gala can be purchased online through Snap Up tickets or by contacting the camp office at 1-888-493-CAMP (2267). Adult tickets are \$55 and include a \$10 charitable donation and children 12 and under can join in the celebration for \$40. Come and support Gracefield where God's grace abounds.



Looking for quiet time away from the city to enjoy the beautiful fall colours and be spiritually encouraged?

Join us at Gracefield for a day, weekend or week!

EMBRACE LIFE!

Fall Colours Mid-Week Retreat
Wednesday, September 30 to Friday October 2, 2015

A variety of activities are offered to provide spiritual encouragement while in the midst of Gracefield's colour filled outdoors or the warmth of fellowship around the fireplace. Rev. Floyd McPhee will lead Bible study on the topic *Developing Our Spiritual Character*.

Cost \$150 and includes meals, shared accommodations and tax.
Wednesday check-in at 11am, Friday check-out at 2pm.

CARE for the CAREGIVERS RETREAT

Friday October 2 to Sunday October 4, 2015

Are you a care giver who would benefit from a time of rest and spiritual nourishment? We welcome you to come and enjoy the beauty of Gracefield and times of mutual sharing with others. Optional activities are designed to enhance personal care and enjoyment of God's sustaining presence.

Cost \$150 and includes meals, shared accommodations and tax.
Friday check-in at 5pm, Sunday check-out at 6pm.



THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

Saturday October 10 to Monday October 12, 2015

In keeping with the tradition, we welcome families and individuals to join us at Gracefield for a weekend of giving thanks and time of reflection. Thanksgiving dinner will be on Sunday October 11 at 6pm.

Everyone is welcome to come and give thanks around the table.

Dinner only is \$15/adult and \$11/child (ages 4-12) plus tax.
Weekend prices depend on meal package and accommodations.



For more INFORMATION or to REGISTER
info@gracefieldcamp.ca
or 888-493-CAMP (2267)



Keep in Touch!

If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns please contact us!

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Toll Free

888-493-CAMP (2267)

Local Call

819-463-2465

Please Donate

The ministries at Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre depend on a variety of fundraising efforts and generous donors. You may choose to contribute to Gracefield for a specific project, or on a more general basis. You may also consider donating to the Campership Fund which helps children and young adults enjoy our camp experience, who would not otherwise be able to do so.

You can donate by mailing a cheque, calling the office with your credit card, or online through our [website](http://www.gracefieldcamp.ca). Monthly donations are possible through the PAR program—please call the office for more information.

A tax receipt will be issued for all monetary donations.