

Snowflakes

Snowflakes are mesmerizing on a mild snowy day they become the source of joy and wonder as they fall gently from the sky, onto our tongues and onto the world around us. They can also be something to be loathed, for example when trying to drive in a blinding snowstorm or navigate a slippery sidewalk. No matter what side of the debate you are on, we can all agree that their architecture is simply spectacular. From a young age we are taught that snowflakes are unique, no two alike, and as we fold paper and cut out shapes to make our own replica, we can see that a snip here and there can totally change our creation.

Like snowflakes, we are all one-of-a-kind creations of God. God knows us, even before we were born, and sees the path laid out before us as we live our lives. When we deviate, make mistakes, choose unwisely, God holds our hand, walks with us, and helps us on our journey. When we find joy and happiness, God is with us, still walking.

Often the Spirit works in others, or through places and events, which help shape our journey, making it unique. For some of us, Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre (GCCRC) has been one of God's instruments in defining who we are—whether it be reveling in the majesty of God's creation, experiencing God's presence under the night sky, or another irreplaceable moment that signals that God is with us.

Throughout this issue you'll read examples of how God is working with us and through us at GCCRC to change lives, through events such as the Gala, through people such as Brian, Janet and Barbra, and the Board of Directors, and through our youth by attending camp or working for the camp.

***For we are his workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared
beforehand, that we should walk in them.***

—Ephesians 2:10



Volunteer + Stay Opportunities

Have the urge to get out into the great outdoors without skis, snowshoes or skates and still work up a sweat?

Plan to come to one of our many work weekends scheduled this spring. Bring family and friends to help get the camp ready for a busy summer, by helping prepare the cabins, put the canoes and docks out, set the benches in place for chapel, and a myriad of other small jobs for young and old. There are also specific weekends for tree clearing.

Accommodation and meals available



Upcoming Work Weekends

Tree/wood related work weekends:

*Labour intensive,
not recommended for families*

April 8–10
April 15–17
April 22–24

Regular work weekends:

Family friendly
April 29–May 1
May 6–8

Message from Our Co-Executive Directors

NOVEMBER 15, 2015

We, Janet and Brian, want to update you on our personal journey. Our journey has been one of adventure and growing while seeking to model and serve Jesus Christ. This has resulted in a wonderful, meaningful, purposeful journey where we hope we have impacted the lives of some, while our lives have been impacted by many.

The most recent highlight of our journey has been GCCRC. It has captured our heart and we have seen great things happening through this ministry and believe there is much more to come. We are a small part in God's great big plan so it is comforting and inspiring to know there are many engaged in God's work through GCCRC working toward the big picture. How inspired and blessed we have been to be partnered with the many staff and volunteers.

As of May 15, 2016, our journey will take another turn and we will be engaging in the GCCRC ministry on a different level, not as Executive Directors, but as volunteers as God directs us. We are in a season of our journey where we believe it is necessary to slow our life down a little more.

It has been a privilege and honour to have the support and direction from such a dedicated, passionate and wise Board of Directors. It has also been a huge blessing working, praying, crying and laughing with Barb Draper. This team continue to advocate for the very best for GCCRC's present and future ministry.

In His Service,

Brian & Janet Ham



Response from Bon Cummings, Chair of the Board of Directors

As you can see from Janet and Brian Ham's letter, as of May 15th they will be moving out of the Executive Directors' role. Their dedication, hard work and unwavering enthusiasm for the camp have rebuilt attendance, stabilized finances and made significant progress with building restoration. An amazing feat in just two short years!

On behalf of all of us, I say a huge "Thank You!" Brian and Janet are leaving us with a solid operational base for moving forward.

And speaking of moving forward, the Board of Directors is undertaking and completing a strategic planning exercise that will identify operating, funding and management options for how best our ministries can/should move forward. Janet and Brian will be participating in this planning exercise and continuing to support the camp in a volunteer capacity.

While we await the outcome of the planning exercise, Barbra Draper, our Office Administrator will take on additional Camp management responsibilities; a year-round Facilities Manager and a summer Program Director will be hired (the notices to be posted shortly).

And, as you can imagine, Janet, Brian, Barb and our committee members are busy readying the camp and the 2016 March Break and Summer Programs, building for another successful Gracefield camping season full of adventure and blessings.

If you have any questions, please give one of us a call.



Another Successful “Gracefield in the City” Gala!

Gracefield supporters gathered on November 7, 2015 at Algonquin College at the annual **Gracefield in the City Gala**. The evening began with a performance of contemporary ballet from the Arise School of Dance. The young performers opened the evening with grace, elegance, and excellent dancing.

Throughout the evening, supporters purchased raffle tickets for a variety of donated gifts—gift certificates to restaurants and entertainment vouchers, coffee makers, doll houses, and even mosquito jackets, which are very useful at camp during the springtime. The raffle raised \$1,320 towards the operational budget.

We were very fortunate to have William MacLelland as our auctioneer for the live auction. Alan Campbell won a pair of Ottawa Senators tickets and a Cody Ceci jersey. There were Ruth Davidson’s famous butter tarts, once again providing supporters with a little taste of home while supporting Gracefield. The live auction earned \$1,368 towards the operational budget. Overall the Gracefield in the City Gala raised a total of \$3,509.37! What a blessing to have this support.

The 2015 summer staff were asked to select a camper who exemplified Christian camping and helped to foster a loving Christian community at Gracefield. Leaders are encouraged to consider campers who demonstrated kindness, faith, graciousness, generosity, co-operation and courage. Christine Ball, member of Gracefield’s program committee, presented the **Golden Paddle Award to Paige Commando** who attend MADD (Music, Art, Drama & Dance) Camp. Paige’s enthusiasm and passion for camp were evident every single moment she was at camp. Congratulations, Paige!

The Gracefield Board of Directors recognized a volunteer and an employee who provided exceptional service to Gracefield during 2015. **Cameron Rogers** volunteered throughout the summer by providing camp program and maintenance support. Cameron became a certified ORCKA (Ontario Recreational Canoe and Kayak Association) instructor and upgraded his skills in archery during the spring in order to become a valuable skilled volunteer at Gracefield. Peter Lamont, Chair of the Personnel Committee, provided Cameron with a certificate and monetary gift on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Peter also awarded **James Dance** with a certificate and monetary gift from the Board for his exceptional support last summer at Gracefield. James stepped up and helped where gaps appeared and supported the summer staff leading the way to a successful season. Both Cameron and James went beyond their call of duty in their service to Gracefield. Thank you, Cameron and James!

The execution of the Gala would not be possible without the strength of the many volunteers that helped pull the evening together. Special thanks go to Manon Campbell, Stuart Gentle, Christine and William Ball, and Joanne Lauzon for their tireless efforts to make the Gala a success. Gracefield is very blessed to have such an amazing pool of talented and giving supporters. Thank you to everyone who participated and who supported the ministry in 2015.

Plans are underway for the 2016 Gala. A different format is being considered to attract more guests in a cost-effective manner. The Fund Development and Communications Committee would love to hear your ideas! Email your suggestions to info@gracefieldcamp.ca.



Gracefield had a Haircut!

THIS PAST FALL, CAMP GOT A MUCH NEEDED TRIM... OF TREES, THAT IS!

In the last few years, more and more trees have fallen or died and it was determined that some forest management was needed to not only tidy up some of the blowdowns, but to think strategically about our forests to ensure the long-term health of our acreage.

A professional company was hired to undertake the necessary assessment and work, and trees were removed this past fall, with further work being planned for fall of 2016. [A copy of the management plan can be found on our website.](#) All necessary precautions were made to protect streams flowing into the lake so there would be no spring flooding, which was a concern expressed by some neighbours from Lac Paquin. You'll also note that some space was cleared across from the entrance parking lot for a future revamp of our septic system. In doing this work, it was discovered that we have quite a lot of sugar maples that were hiding – now that they have the space to grow, perhaps Gracefield syrup will be on the menu someday!

Because of this work, we'll have some specific weekends this spring to help clear away some of the wood, so if you like to wield an axe or chainsaw, split and stack, there are work weekends just for you! See work weekend section for more details.

Summer Camps

Thinking about camp this summer for your child, preteen, or teen? We have a program that will suit your camper!

If your teen is thinking about a future summer job, perhaps the [Leadership In Training](#) camp will provide them the necessary skills to be a future leader in the workplace. A bonus for this year is that the youth will not only spending several weeks at camp learning the ropes (literally!), but they will participate with young Presbyterians from across our country in Canada Youth 2016 in St. Catharine's Ontario, for five days of soul-satisfying worship, recreation, small group discussions, workshops, faith exploration and joyful celebration!

If you have a young'un between the ages of 5 and 8, you can attend camp with them in a special [Discovery Camp](#) designed for those that want to go to sleepaway camp, but are not sure they want to do it yet. This gives them the best of two worlds by allowing them to participate kid-only and group activities during the day, while bunking down with mommy or daddy at night.

[Family Camp](#) is always a great time to reconnect as a family and this year the weekend Camp will be held in conjunction with our annual Canada Day celebrations. This is a great opportunity to get away for a long weekend and participate in activities as a family. Come and get out on the lake in a canoe and enjoy the peace that is beyond understanding, God's peace.

We have a whole bunch of other camps as well, so please visit our website at for more information.

Be sure to [register](#) before March 31 to take advantage of our early bird discount!

CAMP EMPLOYMENT

Got a son or daughter looking for a summer job? From camp counsellor, to cook, to lifeguard, to maintenance and dishwasher, there is a job here for you! [Refer to our website for a list of current positions and how to apply.](#)

There are also two senior positions the camp is seeking: a full-time Facilities Manager and a Program Director (spring-summer). Check out the website for information about these positions.

TENT AND TRAILER

May 15th is the official opening of the loop. Until then, the T&T Community will be having their annual winter breakfast at Kristy's Restaurant (Richmond Road) on March 5th at 9:30 am, to collectively dream about those lazy days by Jim's Jetty, that big catch by Turtle Rock, and those fun campfires with friends, family and fellow campers!

If you would like to join in, please contact Barbra at the office: info@gracefieldcamp.ca

March Break Camp

Looking for something to do over the March Break? How about snowshoeing, skating, arts & crafts, drama, worship and a whole bunch of other fun activities! Come up for [March Break Camp](#) the week of March 14-18th. Transportation is provided from Ottawa.



Group Events at Gracefield

If your church, youth group, school or any other group wants to hear more about Gracefield and the amazing opportunities that are available for camper sponsorship, camping, retreats or summer camps, connect with us and we would love to come and visit! We can provide your group with additional information and give you the opportunity to ask us questions.

Send your email to info@gracefieldcamp.ca or call us at 819-463-2465. It would be our pleasure to meet with you.

What's so great about a Gracefield Winter Retreat?

KNOX OTTAWA SHARES THEIR VIEWS.

GOD | God is all around and his creation is magnificent!

R & R & R | Where else can you rest, relax & recreate!

ANIMALS | Exploring Gracefield in the winter, you can find traces of all our furry and feathered neighbours, from deer, to wolves, to mice and owls, the snow is the perfect medium to capture their movements.

CATCHING UP | Spend some time in Pineview, catching up with that book you've been meaning to finish, that friend you haven't seen in awhile, your sleep that's been alluding you, that jigsaw puzzle you didn't have time to finish last time!

EATING | What is it about fresh air that gets an appetite going? From hot soup to hot cakes, the cooks at Gracefield always have something simmering!

FRIENDSHIP | Meet new friends, deepen friendships, Gracefield is the perfect location to gather together.

ICE | Whether you are having a kids vs adults hockey game, or enjoying a snowshoe or ski on the surface, Lac Castor's ice is great for a variety of activities.

EVERYONE | Winter retreats are perfect for young and old, active and non-active, day trippers or overnighters—there's something for everyone!

LOVE | Expressions of love abound, from caring to sharing with others, and loving the camp and being good stewards of God's creation.

DO IT NOW! | Book your late winter retreat with your group/church or start planning for next year!



July 1st Canada Celebration and Family Camp

Plan to join us for the Friday July 1st **Canada Day Celebrations** with games, sports, music and barbecue. The day concludes with an amazing fireworks display orchestrated by Bruce Hastings.

Continue with us Saturday and Sunday to enjoy the full weekend with **Family Camp** activities, canoe regatta, and inspirational times for all ages. A variety of accommodations are available: tent in the loop or more remotely at Bruno's, second wilderness or second beach; rent a cabin; or book a room at Jolly Roger or White Pine. Glen and Joyce Davis, who have served in mission work and various leadership roles across Canada, will lead us in outdoor Sunday Worship and bible reflections. Meet this year's summer camp staff and let your children get to know their summer counselors.

Ottawa Parent & Child Expo

Gracefield will be present for this year's Ottawa Parent & Child Expo, taking place at the Nepean Sportsplex April 16th and 17th. For information, visit the Ottawa Parent & Child Expo [website](#).

Past staff, committee members, this year's and former LITs are encourage to be part of our booth. Let's represent Gracefield Camp and Retreat Centre and encourage others to join us this summer!



Keep in Touch!

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

Gracefield Christian Camp & Retreat Centre

37 Chemin des Loisirs; CP 420
Gracefield, Quebec J0X 1W0

Email

info@gracefieldcamp.ca

Website

www.gracefieldcamp.ca

Facebook

[/GracefieldCampConf](https://www.facebook.com/GracefieldCampConf)

Twitter

[@GracefieldCCRC](https://twitter.com/GracefieldCCRC)

Instagram

[@GracefieldCCRC](https://www.instagram.com/GracefieldCCRC)

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](#). Monthly donations are possible though the PAR program—please call the office for more information.

A tax receipt will be issued for all monetary donations.