



# Riverside Reader

...a Biblically-based, cost-compassionate, small-camp experience

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## Safe in the Arms of Jesus

by Darrie Nelson, Executive Director

Reflecting on the past 12-18 months, I am grateful for a small but wonderfully important part of the role I have as Executive Director at Riverside. This bittersweet responsibility is not expressly in my job description and was not something I realized would be a part of my position, but it is something that impacts me in important ways. Every time I encounter this calling, I find myself re-focused, re-energized, and reminded of how important the experiences can be that individuals have when they participate in ministry at Riverside.

Throughout my twenty years as Director, I have had the honor and privilege of interacting with the families of those whose loved ones are now safe in the arms of Jesus. To quote precisely from my most recent interaction just a few weeks ago, a family took great comfort in knowing their loved one "is now safe in the arms of her Lord and Savior." Annina Wilson came to Riverside decades ago as a child and teenager because Roma Twist (former Camp Director) believed it was important that she and her eight siblings hear the Gospel of Christ. He picked them up and ensured that they would have an experience here that would last a lifetime.

Often, the interactions I have are with families whose loved ones spoke fondly of their time at Riverside decades ago. Sometimes, as was the case this past year, my interactions are with families whose loved one experienced Riverside as a child only a few short years ago. Those who are called home early make for especially emotional experiences, and I am reminded of the importance of Riverside and the urgency required as we go about the work He has set before us.

Josh's experience at Riverside was primarily as a participant in RSI, our teen summer staff program. Although he had only 24 short years, he spent a portion of five or six of those

summers serving at Riverside.

For years, Todd served alongside us, helping provide family camp experiences. In addition to preaching at many of our events, Todd's passion was Christian bookstore materials, which he supplied to our camp store for many years.

Like Todd, there are Jean, Carol, and Lorraine, to name just a few. They are all wonderful examples of how God orchestrated amazing and impactful experiences at Riverside.

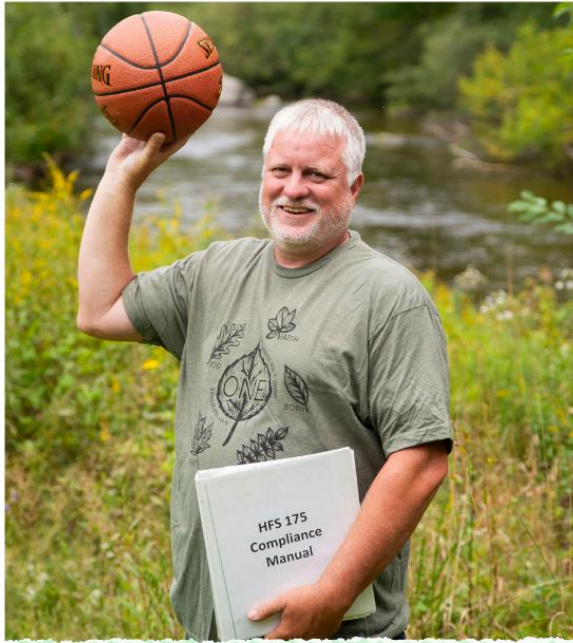
One might believe that a week of summer camp at Riverside is only for the fun and games and maybe a few new friendships. However, those who have experienced or witnessed God's work at Riverside know that a camp experience is far more than that. Yes, you make some great friends and often have lots of fun, but through the Christ-centered teaching, activities, and intentional relationship building, countless lives are being impacted. These transforming experiences have been made at Riverside throughout its ninety years, and I have been blessed to hear some of the accounts firsthand over the past few months.

For those receiving this newsletter, I hope you will be encouraged and reminded, as I have been, of the important part we all play in the transformations that happen at Riverside. These experiences don't occur by accident and don't occur without our Riverside family responding to the Spirit's prompting. Whether you are giving regularly, praying faithfully, or volunteering occasionally, we are thankful for your role in what God does at Riverside.

I pray that this entire newsletter - and this account of the amazing privilege I have as camp Director - will encourage, focus and re-energize you for the critical role we all play in God's Kingdom work at Riverside. ■



# Riverside Staff



**Darrie Nelson** Executive Director

At Riverside, we take our jobs very seriously. No time for goofing around when running this historic Bible Camp...



**Tessa Olson** RSI & Digital Marketing Coordinator  
**Lucero Olson** Program Director



**Molly McGinn**  
Assistant Program Director



**Annie Hulka**  
Housekeeper

**Brian Hulka**  
Caretaker



**Mickey Kaufman**  
Director of  
Stewardship Ministries



**Elyse Erdahl**  
Administrative Assistant



**Janeé Kazda**  
Bookkeeper



**Leah Koehler**  
Intern/Farmhand



**Scott Latzig**  
Volunteer Staff



**Riverside Staff 2024**

## TREK

by Lucero Olson, Program Director



Summer camp for young adults - how exciting! There are so many young adults out there looking to connect with people, God, and nature, so we decided to give them an opportunity to come to summer camp. We modeled this trip after our Teen TREK program but made it a bit shorter so that people could get away from work to enjoy camp. We had 9 young adults join us for a 4-night tent-camping trip in the U.P. of Michigan. We spent time hiking, sightseeing, swimming, chatting, and studying God's Word. We deeply studied 1 Peter together, trying to better understand all of the incredible things God has

done, all that He asks us to do, and all that He promises He will do for us. We came away from our study with some answers and many questions to continue thinking over and studying on our own. We explored much of God's awesome creation, including a restored late 1800's factory town, numerous waterfalls, two Great Lakes, and close to 20 miles of trails. We had a number of awesome wildlife encounters, ate all of our meals out in nature and/or over a campfire, and even climbed a 300-foot sand dune! We can't wait to do it all again next year! ■



## A 90th Celebration

by Mickey Kaufman, Director of Stewardship Ministries

Meeting old friends, singing, kayaking, concerts, eating in the same dining room, campfires, Bible studies, wagon rides, "tea" on the Farm, walks, a boat ride on the Chain-of-Lakes – these are some of the memories of Homecoming Camp 2024. Over 45 people (former campers and volunteers) enjoyed the activities of this annual event. It was so much fun to reconnect with friends from the past, especially in this very special place called Riverside. We laughed, we cried, but most of all, we just enjoyed being together.

People came from as far away as Arizona – and as close as a mile down the road. Some stayed at the camp for the week or a few days; others went home at night and came back day after day; some only dropped by for a day. We relived some of the memories that made us who we are today. We talked about decisions made – in the chapel, in the dorms, at the Rock of Ages, or around the campfire – decisions that affected our lives for years and years to come. We shared what God has been doing in our lives. We prayed for and with each other.

The week started with a 2-day focus, called "Renew," led by Brian and Diane Harris. We spent time thinking about what God has been doing in our lives. It was a time to listen as well as a time to process and reflect. Reflection focused on 1) The

past: Where have you been? What has happened? 2) The present: How are things with you today? How is it with your soul? And 3) The future: Where are you going? What is ahead of you? What concerns do you have?

The rest of the week, we expanded on those themes by focusing on honoring the past (2024 is Riverside's 90th anniversary year), serving in the present, and preparing for the future.

Lonnie Stine and Bob Olla led us through Scriptures that spoke to our hearts and facilitated great discussions on these themes.

If you were a camper, staff member, or volunteer worker any time in the past, consider joining us for the 2025 Homecoming Camp – August 4-10. More details to come. If you have any questions, contact the Riverside office. ■

"The combination of all that is Riverside—the beautiful setting, the music, the teaching, and the testimonies/camaraderie of faithful believers – healed and restored my soul. It was, as they say, a 'taste of heaven.'" - Mary Beth



# Craft Camp | Lumberjack Day

## Crafting by the River

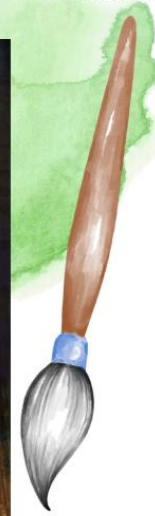
by Molly McGinn, Assistant Program Manager

This year's Craft Camp was, as always, a wonderful time of fellowship and crafting alongside old and new friends! This weekend is unique in that there is very little scheduled programming, allowing for plenty of time for the ladies to craft to their hearts' content. It is always a joy to see the various talents the Lord has gifted these women, and it's especially fun to see them share their knowledge with one another! Some of the many skills represented during the weekend included detailed painting, plant arrangements, whittling, and scrapbooking.

Of course, it wouldn't be Craft Camp without the amazing food from our volunteer cooks; Rachel, Erich, and Carol. They provided the ladies with a variety of delicious meals and a plethora of desserts throughout the weekend! Although the crafting is the highlight, the ladies also had the opportunity to experience the beautiful fall colors at Riverside through foraging, walks in the woods, and a hayride. It truly was the perfect weekend of crafting and creating amidst the Lord's creation!

The Saturday of Craft Camp weekend is always Lumberjack Day at Riverside. This year, we had volunteers come from all over the state to donate their time and labor splitting and stacking firewood. Due to the size and skill of the team, several potentially dangerous dead trees were able to be safely cut down and removed from Riverside's properties. These trees were then split and stacked and will provide heat to the Retreat Center and other buildings all winter long. Without our volunteers, Riverside's heating costs for the colder months would be exorbitant. But thanks to all those that came and served, we will keep warm through the winter for a fraction of the cost.

If you're a lady looking for a peaceful getaway with friends, or a men's group looking for a place to serve together, Riverside is the place to be in the fall. Join us next year for the weekend of October 18th, 2025! ■



## RSI TRAINING WEEKEND MAY 2-4, 2025

Riverside Servanthood Institute is our teen volunteer program. If your high school student would like to serve at Riverside this summer, then they must attend RSI Training Weekend. While here, students will complete their application to serve and receive training for the various roles they might hold throughout the year. Don't wait, visit our website and get signed up today! \*

\* Completed application does not guarantee acceptance to RSI program. Applicants not accepted to the program are encouraged to reapply in future years.



## A Time for Everything ...

In early September, David and Mickey Kaufman relocated to Indiana to settle into retirement living. Well, David retired. Mickey continues to work for Riverside as our Director of Stewardship Ministries. Even though we don't have her popping into the office these days, we still see Mickey every week via a video call in to our staff meetings. And with phone calls and emails, we continue to work "closely" with her from afar.

During his four years here, David completed countless projects around camp. The pig shelter, the horse barn, the camp office remodel, the farm office remodel, and a myriad of other improvement projects were completed thanks to his expertise and labor. We are so grateful for your dedication to the mission at Riverside, David, and wish you the very best in your retirement! ■

## Sustaining Riverside Financial Report Fiscal Year: May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Budget</u>
General Fund Income:	\$ 100,055	\$ 175,000
General Fund Expense:	\$ 128,312	\$ 175,000
Current Surplus/(Deficit): <small>as of Nov. 19, 2024</small>	(\$28,257)	



“...give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

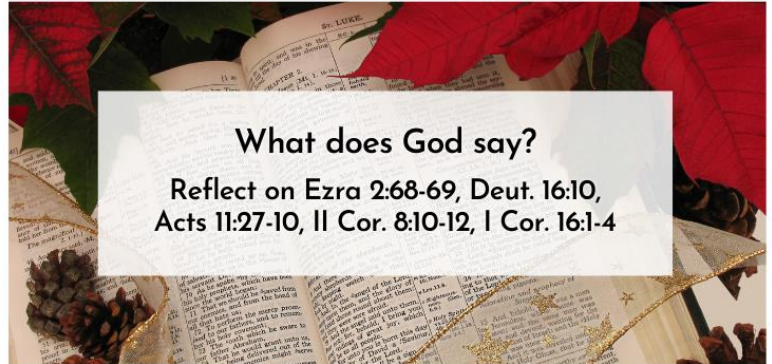
-Luke 6:38

## Giving What's Been Given

by Mickey Kaufman, Director of Stewardship Ministries

When Paul was writing to the Corinthians regarding the money they were collecting for the starving saints in Jerusalem, he said “each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper...” And in Acts, we are told that the disciples in Antioch “determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea.”

God doesn't ask us to give what we don't have; He expects us to give in proportion to what we have been given. ■



## Zarephath

by Elyse Erdahl, Administrative Assistant

The buildings at Riverside get their names from important historical figures and significant places all found in the Bible. Hebron, Gaza, Ruth, Joseph... some names are more widely recognized than others. Do you know the story associated with Zarephath? It's not one of the more common locations talked about in Sunday school, not like Bethlehem or Nazareth - but God performed miracles in Zarephath too.

In 1 Kings 17, Elijah befriends a widow at the Lord's command during a draught. This widow and her son resided in the city of Zarephath and were very poor when Elijah met them. During his first conversation with her, Elijah learns that they are down to their very last bit of flour and oil and will soon starve. He asks her to make him a small loaf of bread and he delivers God's message that the flour and oil will not run out until God sends rain to end the draught.

No surprise, God is true to His word and the flour and oil last. Some time later, the son falls gravely ill. Eventually, he stops breathing and Elijah carries him to the upper room of the widow's home. Laying him on the bed, Elijah cries out to God to return the boy's life. Then, the widow watches Elijah carry her son back down the stairs and proclaim that he is again alive. She praises God and trusts the word spoken by Elijah as God's truth.

The account of the widow in Zarephath is a powerful example of God's provision. Whether it's manna, loaves & fishes, or oil & flour, our God provides. And it is still true today! No matter the bumps along the road, God continues to provide for the construction of Zarephath. There is still much work to be done, but we are grateful for and overjoyed by the progress so far! ■



**WONDERING HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT RIVERSIDE? THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!**



- “Donate” Tab on our Website
- Use the MyWell Giving App
- Text “riverside” to 40101
- List Riverside in Your Will or Estate Planning
- Mail a Check
- Volunteer
- Join our Prayer Team
- Give Equipment or Property (Gift-in-Kind)

# Upcoming Events



*Christmas Open House*

**December 5, 2024**  
**6pm-8pm**



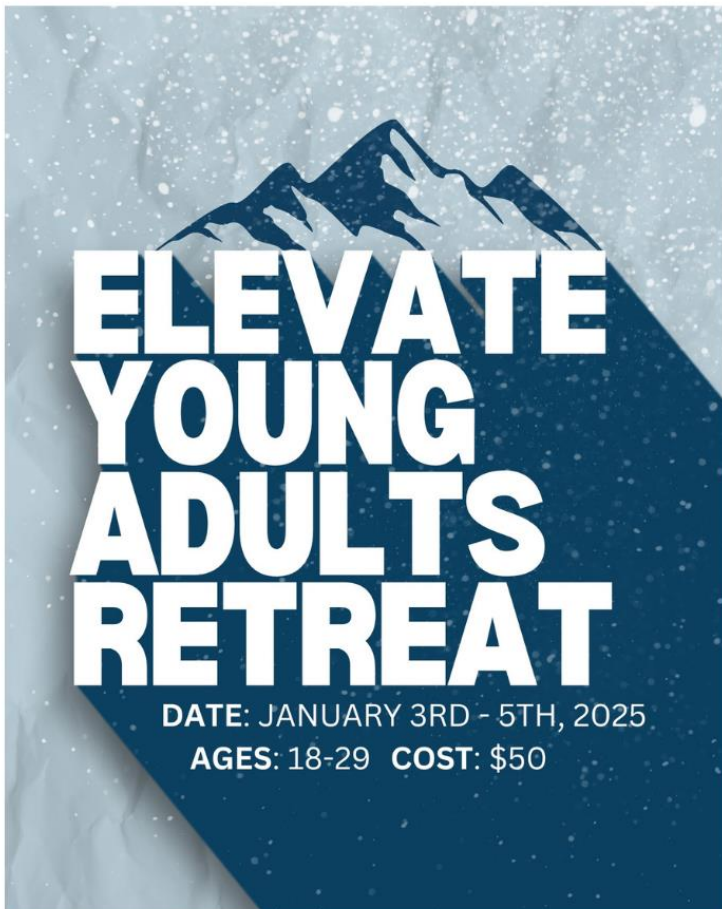
## HAPPY NEW YEAR!



*Join us at our annual  
New Year's Eve Party!  
Bring your favorite game  
and a dish to pass*

**DEC 31ST**  
**6pm - 12am**

In the festively decorated  
Hebron Retreat Center at  
Riverside Bible Camp



**ELEVATE  
YOUNG  
ADULTS  
RETREAT**

DATE: JANUARY 3RD - 5TH, 2025  
AGES: 18-29 COST: \$50



**Ignite**  
**THE FIRE** FEBRUARY 21ST-23RD  
JUNIOR HIGH: 6TH-8TH GRADE

**Infuse**  
FEBRUARY 7TH-9TH  
SENIOR HIGH: 9TH-12TH GRADE  
**THE FLAME**

## TOP 10 most-wanted

In-kind donations are a wonderful blessing to Riverside's ministry. Please let us know if you would like to donate an item listed below or if you would like to provide the funds needed to purchase it.



- Wooden Bench Swings (4)\*
- Gently Used Tennis Balls
- iPad (Camp Store & Registration)
- Funds for Rocking Chairs \*\*
- 9-12ft Artificial Christmas Tree
- Funds for River Tubes
- 6ft Plastic Tables (Folding Legs)
- 2-4 Seat UTV
- Funds for Van Roof Rack
- Cross Country Ski Poles

\*One bench donated, more still needed

\*\*\$200 donated, \$200 still needed

## 2024-2025 Schedule

### December

- 5 Christmas Open House
- 31 New Year's Eve Party

### January

- 3-5 Elevate

### February

- 7-9 Infuse
- 21-23 Ignite
- 25 Marriage Café

### March

- 25 Marriage Café

### April

- 11-12 Association Mtg
- 15 Marriage Café
- 26 Pioneer Women's Day



Looking for more information about one of our events?  
Visit [riversidebiblecamp.org/programs](http://riversidebiblecamp.org/programs)

**2025**  
*Marriage*  
*Café*

February 25 | March 25 | April 15

(a) "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" (b) "Joy To The World" (c) "Silent Night" (d) "Oh Come All Ye Faithful" (e) "Go Tell It On The Mountain"

# Harvest Family Camp

## Pumpkins, Portraits, and Playtime

by Lucero Olson, Program Director

Our October Family Camp was packed! It was not only full of families, but full of fun, fellowship, and growth. Our goal with every family camp is to give parents a chance to get away from the stressors of daily life, give kids a chance to have some great fun, and give everyone an opportunity to grow in their faith. It's awesome to see families engaged in conversations on parenting, education, discipleship, and so many other topics that are important to get others' perspectives on and learn more about.

We hope that this weekend was an edifying temporary community that encouraged and revitalized families physically and spiritually. Families participated in four teaching sessions led by Jason Roe from FORGE. One of Jason's main focuses was on the power of testimony and how important it is to not only know how God has worked in our lives, but be able to share it with others. Jason made it clear that the power of telling our God stories does not lie in what we've endured or what we've done, but in how God showed Himself and His power - how He brought us through our pain and struggles and drew us near to Him. Sharing what God has done for us in our specific circumstances and what He did on the cross for all are extremely powerful tools to minister to and disciple others.

There were also some fun and creative activities for families to participate in. These included a beautiful craft to take home with their family portrait in it, fun games each night (like 'counselor hunt'), and a pumpkin boat building and racing competition! The pumpkin boats were especially engaging because families got to carve a pumpkin or two into whatever type of boat or boat-like creation they could imagine. Some boats resembled Viking ships and others were beyond comparison to any sailing vessels made before. Many boats sailed and many boats were sunk in the Tomorrow River that Saturday, but there was no lack of excitement as kids and parents proudly watched their creations float down the river. Some families even took their ships home to display, whether they won their race or not!

It's always heartwarming to see that families don't want to leave when check out time comes on Sunday, parents chatting away while kids run off to play. We are so grateful to have been able to serve them through this fun fall weekend! ■



### NAME THAT TUNE!

How well do you know your Christmas Carols? Do you think you can guess each title just by using the first letter of each word in its name?

Try to guess all five songs!

A) I C U A M C

B) J T T W

C) S N

D) O C A Y F

E) G T I O T M

Find the answers on the bottom of page 7!



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