



Lake Wapogasset

LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP, INC.

Toward a Theology of Christian Community at LWLBC

We know who we are.

We inspire faith through the wonder of creation and community.

We are places of grace forming people of faith.

What Does This Mean?

The life of Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible camps is rooted in our belief that we have been created by a loving God, shown to us in Jesus, who promises abundant life as we are drawn into a relationship with God. This basic belief is core to our faith and shapes all that we do at camp. It is our hope that all who come to camp encounter the grace of God seen in Jesus Christ.

We believe each person is created in the image of God and that therefore each person is uniquely and wonderfully made with purpose and great intention.

We believe Christian community is centered around the cross of Jesus and shaped by the power of the Holy Spirit as the gathering of those who seek to discover what it means to believe in Jesus and live the ways of Jesus in our everyday lives. This community invites us into a living relationship with God and orients life to a journey of becoming whom God has claimed us to be. This is not something we can do on our own; it always takes place within real relationships and real places.

As we create community together at camp we gather in the name of this creating God whose activity in the world is most clearly seen in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and experienced through the work of the Holy Spirit moving in and through individual lives and community as a whole.

Our Understanding of God

As Lutherans we teach that God is the creator of all that exists, comes to us in the person of Jesus, and continues to be present with us through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

The beauty and complexity of the universe and all creation comes from God. God created in the past and continues to create, providing life and nurturing all living things. As we see God working in creation, we sense God's presence and are drawn closer to God. It is no wonder that campers discover God in nature and at camp.

God came near to us in the person of Jesus. Jesus is the fullest picture of God's love and in him we know God's redemptive nature through forgiveness, reconciliation, grace and mercy. Jesus experienced the sin and brokenness of humanity and through his death and resurrection overcame

death and restored our relationship with God. God desires for everyone to know they are loved just as they are. Therefore, God's unconditional, redemptive love saturates all aspects of our life together.

God continues to be present with us today through the power of the Holy Spirit. Calling, gathering and enlightening us, we are nurtured and sustained as followers of Jesus. We are shaped into the church, God's hands and feet at work in the world, as the Spirit leads and guides us.

The faith we seek to nurture at camp grows out of the core tenants of God named above. We believe this faith, rooted in a grace-full God who is present in community, creating and redeeming life, cultivates "places of grace."

As places of grace, we encourage others in seeking and knowing God. We welcome questions, struggles, and insights as we cultivate opportunities for people to explore and share their own thoughts and experiences in mutually respectful and accountable spaces that have the power to form "people of faith."

Wapo, Ox, and Wilderness each seek to be Christ-centered Christian communities rooted in God's Word that calls us to love others through valuing all people, cultivating mutual respect, and radically welcoming all people.

In light of our understanding of God, we live our core values in practice in the following ways.

Core Values

We are a Lutheran Community.

We align ourselves with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and its guiding values. Our programs and curriculum are rooted in grace, forgiveness, love & reconciliation. We treat all people with dignity, compassion, and justice.

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."
Ephesians 4:32*

In practice: In response to God's boundless love for us, our Lutheran community warmly welcomes other denominations and those who are seeking a faith-based opportunity. Our ultimate goal through play, conversation, worship, fellowship and community is for campers to meet Jesus and to experience and know that they are a beloved child of God. Our prayer is that the seeds of mercy, grace, forgiveness, hope and love are planted in hearts to be nourished and fed through church or other faith-based opportunities as relationships continue to grow in Christ. Our values speak to the way we live and practice our faith, and they will guide how we live together at Wapo, Ox Lake and Wilderness Canoe Base.

We believe in the power of outdoor ministry.

Attuned to our beautiful, natural settings we create experiences that offer respite and rejuvenation with little distraction. We celebrate opportunities to untangle from technology and encourage play. We nurture faith and build community centered in the faith practices of the church: worship, prayer, devotions, bible study, service, caring conversations, and hospitality.

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them will bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

In practice: In response to God's boundless love for us, we model a new rhythm of daily life together that is unique to outdoor ministries. Our communities, and cabin & tent/adventure groups are steeped in daily faith practices, producing a rich environment for campers to see faith in action, presenting opportunities to grow deeper roots as a named and claimed child of God. Immersive faith communities nurture faith, build character, develop leaders, strengthen families, and support congregations for the sake of each camper and for the sake of the world. We strive to uplift the 5 fundamentals of effective camps (Sacred Playgrounds Effective Camp Research Project); Faith-centered, Safe Spaces, Participatory, Unplugged from home, and relational.

We value relationships.

Reflecting God's enormous love and grace for us individually, we welcome, value, respect, and strive to engage with youth, families, congregations, and organizations. We revel in the rich tapestry of God's creation and value every person, including people of color, the LGBTQIA+ community, women, minorities and those of differing abilities and socio-economic status.

Jesus instructs us: *"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know you are my disciples". John 13:34*

In practice: In response to God's boundless love for us, we seek to model building strong relationships between all at camp; respecting differences, affirming each individual, learning what "love of neighbor" means person-to-person. Camp is a space for us to honor each person where they are.

We invite all campers into healthy community and relationship patterns, and will swiftly seek to address bad behaviors that fall short, inviting campers into strong and positive relationships with one another.

We are good stewards of our resources: humans, facilities & finances.

Our primary responsibility is to maintain and promote the well-being of all who gather at our sites. Our practices and protocols create safe spaces that nurture spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional health. Committed to organizational health, we thoughtfully care for all that has been entrusted to us.

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

In practice: In response to God’s boundless love for us, we attend to the people and assets entrusted to our care. Our primary responsibility is for the health, safety and well-being of our campers. We seek to make every individual feel safe and included. We train all of our staff members to the highest standards. We are accredited through the American Camp Association, we utilize county and state resources and comply with all pertinent laws. We value the resources and best practices and protocols that arise out of our relationship with Lutheran Outdoor Ministries (LOM).