

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center

2018 Annual Report to the Central Southern Illinois Synod (CSIS)

Friends in Christ,

As we reflect on all the blessings, operations, and challenges at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) in 2018, we remain devoted to rebuilding our future generations and for His Kingdom in our 45 years of service in outdoor ministry with the Central Southern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. We are continuously grateful for God's provisions of 640 acres of His beautiful creation; for the opportunity to use our outdoor ministry to provide experiences connecting the Word of God with the World of God; and for the responsibility of stewardship of such gifts and sharing them with ALL God's people who come to LOMC for adventure, rest or spiritual formation.

The year 2018 brought great change in leadership and staffing to our ministry. In January, Executive Director Russ Senti announced his retirement effective September 1, 2018. After serving the camp through his 14th summer, he passed on his responsibilities to Interim Co-Executive Directors Jerry and Carolyn Fritsch. Jerry and Carolyn have offered new ideas and practices, in particular with updating staff and Board policies. For staff, it was our Program Director Michelle Heinrich's first full year, who implemented some new themed summer camps and youth retreats. The biggest bang in 2018 was the fall youth retreat with Pr. Maggie Falenschek, David Scherer of AGAPE and Joe Davis, which brought 12 congregations and 103 kids and adults and 14 Counselors/volunteers! Michelle's creativity, joy, and energy has been visible through closer connections with our constituency and steady, increased attendance in programming.

LOMC by the Numbers

Last summer, our 2018 camp theme was the same as the national ELCA Youth Gathering, "This Changes Everything." Through morning devotions, Bible study, and songs around a campfire, campers learned about how God's love changes them from the inside out, and how "by Grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8) We reach hundreds of youth, which can be seen in our camp attendance from 2018. **Day campers were up 32% over 2017 with 144 kids** spending most of their daylight hours at LOMC Monday through Friday. **Overnight campers were up almost 19% with 334 residential campers** over the 9 weeks of camp from Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Arizona and Georgia. **Overall, we had a total of 478 day and overnight campers, which was a 22% increase from last summer!**

Our guests and programs are many, offering something for everyone. Other groups that made the summer of 2018 full of ministry included:

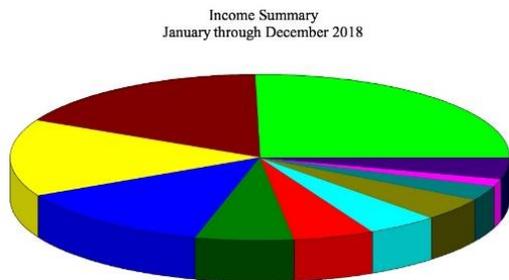
- 85 confirmation-aged youth from 11 ELCA congregations in the 3 synods of Illinois;
- 187 4-H campers from several counties in the NW part of the state;
- 25 girls from the Time, Talents and Treasures (T.T.T.) camp from Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa;

- 60 youth from the Muslim Youth of North America (M.Y.N.A.) from Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Florida and even Toronto, Canada;
- 25 youth from the Hephzibah Children's Organization from Oak Park, Illinois;
- 30 youth from Camp of Dreams (all inner-city Chicago based); and
- 2 Family Camps (one from Iowa and one from Wisconsin).

That's a grand total of 890+ campers learning about the free gift of God's Grace!

We continue to offer our guests great adventures, like our thrilling 1,200-foot-long zip line, pond canoeing, swimming, archery or team building, such as our low ropes course. Other retreats and events included (but not limited to) Women of the ELCA conference, scrap bookers, quilters, Bible studies, Cub Scout troops, Victories for Men support group, family reunions, special occasions, and more. **Over 1,100 guests joined us overnight in our adult lodging at Freedom Tree Village, and our total day/night guests came to 2,985. Coupled with our campers, that brings our total guests to almost 3,900 a year experiencing His creation!**

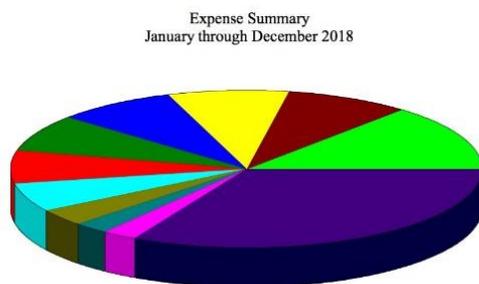
Fiscal Year at a Glance



01-0113 · Annual Fund	%25.44
04-1351 · Summer Program	17.51
04-1344 · FTV Retreats	15.10
04-1355 · Weekday Retreats	13.24
01-1500 · Rental - Land	6.47
01-1903 · Synod Grant	5.39
04-1348 · Faith Works	4.65
04-1353 · Weekend Retreats	4.52
04-1352 · LOMC Program	3.01
04-1345 · Outdoor Education	1.46
Other	3.22
Total	\$666,017.99

The top three income sources were:

1. Year-round and summer programs (33%),
2. Retreats (28%), and
3. Individual donations (17%).



01-2160 · Salaries - Admin	%13.66
02-2160 · Salaries - Food	8.73
02-2580 · Raw Food	8.37
01-4100 · Depreciation Expense	8.37
03-2160 · Salaries - Maint.	7.73
04-2120 · Salaries - Summer Prog	6.77
03-3930 · Electricity	6.02
04-2160 · Salaries - Program	3.61
01-2881 · Insurance - General Liability	2.51
03-3741 · Building/Grounds Repair	2.42
Other	31.82
Total	\$781,332.56

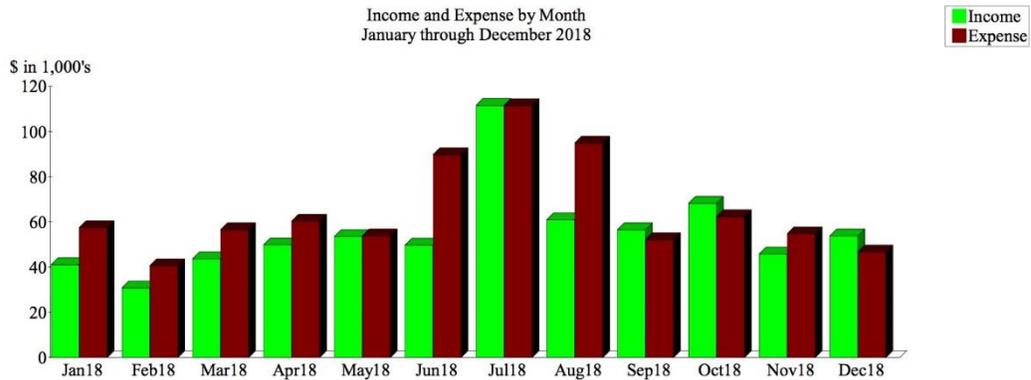
The top four expenses were:

1. General and Administration (25%),
2. Food (21%),
3. Program (18%), and
4. Property (16 %).

66 congregations and 7 Women of the ELCA groups generously supported the camp in 2018.

We are thankful for the faithful giving from the three synods in Illinois that makes up 5.39% of our revenue: Metropolitan Chicago (\$13,465), Northern Illinois (\$15,115), and Central Southern Illinois (\$15,280).

2018 was a fiscally challenging year for LOMC, largely due to changes in society which are beyond the control of the ministry. One



such change was in outdoor education. State funds have dried up leaving schools without the means of providing outdoor experiences for children. The competition with other programs such as soccer camp, basketball camp, etc. also play a role in how children spend their summer days.

Development

Development saw some firsts in special event fundraisers, as well as new partnerships in ministry working together for the Gospel.

May Giving Day

We hosted our second annual LOMC Giving Day, held May 29, 2018, the Tuesday following Memorial Day. The appeal was to raise \$10,000 for summer camp scholarships. The day was met with great enthusiasm as people gave through our new platform GiveGab (and Facebook) to watch our goal not only be achieved but surpassed. **Our grand total for 2018 Giving Day was \$11,655 raised by 139 donors, which was 117% to our goal. We had 134 total donors: 55 returning and 79 new, which means OVER half, 59%, were new!**

Pedal for a Purpose: Spring Fundraiser and Fall 9.29.18 Bike Ride

LOMC was chosen as the recipient of the 2018 Central Southern Illinois Synod (CSIS) fundraiser Pedal for a Purpose, a standing fundraiser within the synod led by Pastor Adam Dichsen at Faith Lutheran Church in Jacksonville. Initially held during the spring months through the synod assembly in June, it was extended over the summer to continue to raise funds for our \$25,000 goal. The event culminated with a Pedal for a Purpose bike ride and celebration event on Saturday, 9/29/2018. Sponsored cyclists conquered just under 25 miles on the Byron nuclear loop, and joined us back at camp for a celebratory lunch. **Our grand total received was \$15,838 (63% of our \$25,000 goal)!** We'd like to give thanks and praise again to organizer, Pr. Adam Dichsen, and we were beyond grateful for this tremendous honor and partnership in ministry within the CSIS. We also give thanks to everyone who donated, collected offerings, and ran their own fundraiser to support the refurbishment of bunkhouses. Finally, our biggest achievement was gaining over 135 individual new donors to the camp, and this does not even include congregations who may have been a first time supporter.

#Giving Tuesday

LOMC continued to join the global #GivingTuesday movement, held on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving on 11/27/18 last year. New last year, we partnered with #ILGive to help in our efforts not only to raise \$10,000 for our Annual Fund, but also to support all the non-profits in our state. Donations continued to come in 10 days following the event. Final numbers were as follows:

Payout Donation (less fees passed on by donor)
\$7,479.30
\$1,350 Board matching gifts
\$8,829.30 total payout

Even greater news, the above donations came from 81 donors, of which 41 were new. That means 50% of the donors for this fundraising appeal were new!

Some Final 2018 Numbers of Giving

- Silent Auction/Pie Sale: 77 pies donated from Trinity Lutheran, Durand plus silent auction, Autumn Fest offerings and donations: \$4,370 (highest amount in 3 years).
- WELCA fall mailing (a first last year): \$1,050 from 7 congregations: \$750 towards camperships, \$300 towards Annual Fund
- Russ Swing Choir Tour Scholarship Fund: \$8,883
- Campership funds received for summer (including Russ' SCT fund): \$23,542
- Final 2018 Annual Fund Total: \$169,445, exceeding our goal of \$169,000!
- Capital Campaign: \$23,586 (running silently, plus proceeds from Pedal for a Purpose)

The LOMC staff and Board of Directors expresses gratitude to the congregations of the CSIS for your continued support of God's work at LOMC! Board members serving from the CSIS in 2018 were Bishop John Roth, Jason Fisher, Rob Gieraltowski, Deacon Jill Goldhammer, John Gregg, and Rev. Dennis O'Brien. Thank you to all who make this outdoor ministry possible. The impact of LOMC on the lives of countless people cannot be underestimated. We look forward to a year of growth and change in 2019 as we continue to serve out our mission.

In His Service,



Jerry and Carolyn Fritsch, Interim Co-Executive Directors



Adriana Plocinski, Development Director