

Happy 2026 from Path of Life! January always brings a season of sweet reflection on the year behind us and eager anticipation for the season ahead.

The past year was exciting, unpredictable, exhausting at times, but without doubt, a year we saw the sovereignty and blessing of God on our ministry in many unique ways.

The longer I work at camp, the more I am convicted that it's all God's work, we're just here for the ride. No amount of planning could have prepared us for what 2025 brought, but He went before us all the way.

We started the year with installing electric mini-splits in the chapel and basement, something that needed to happen for many reasons, and I can't begin to explain the blessing that has been to the year-round ministry.

One of the many benefits of electric vs firewood heat was that it opened up a space perfect for our changing rooms, a dream for several years as our day camps grew. We knew that the cost would be substantial, but well worth it, if the Lord provided the means to get it done. We plodded through the spring, with lots of school's-out camps and retreats, food fundraisers, and small projects, waiting until after Easter to make the final decision whether to start dumping thousands into this project.

With camp registrations coming in steadily, and a successful fundraising season behind us, we cautiously prepared a proposal to go ahead with it for our May board meeting. That afternoon, we received notification from our insurance agency that they were dropping us as a client.

Much has been said about this experience, I won't repeat it here, but it sent me personally into a tailspin like nothing I had ever encountered, with every phone call and email resulting in more questions than answers, an incredible amount of wasted time, never-ending "wait and sees" and eye-watering cost estimates. But with two months before our first day of camp, we couldn't wait on the project I really believed God had led us to.

And so we prayed, we let people know what was going on. More than anything, I didn't want to just ask our friends and supporters to plug a hole ripped open by an untimely policy change, I prayed that God would use His people to help us GROW out of the problem.

And grow we did. It was truly amazing to see, how people stepped up and stood with us in a tough season, putting their faith and dollars to work. We never spent money faster than it came in, every trip to Lowes was fully funded by the generosity of His people, and the registrations for camp continued pouring in- By the time we wrapped the summer, we had **917 campers** come through our doors, and I can say with zero doubt, that it could **NEVER** have happened without those changing rooms in place.

As a camp ministry director, it's easy to get wrapped up in the buildings and grounds, the nuts and bolts of camp, and analyze the data and dollars behind it all, but let me assure you, 917 is more than a number.

What we have here may not be impressive in the eyes of the outside world, but I'll forever be grateful for the value of every single soul, and the countless opportunities God gave us to touch their lives and share the love of Christ.

As much as working with paint and sheetrock and concrete leaves tangible results, and as satisfying as it may be to stand back and look at the improved aesthetics and functionality, its no secret that EVERYTHING at camp falls apart and breaks down eventually.

**But the work God does in the hearts of young people will never rust, rot, unravel, crack, or fade.**

We're so grateful for the kids that come through our doors and meet with God- for many of them, we're just one stop on the Path of Life, God's work has never begun or ended here, but there's nothing more exciting than seeing a young person come to faith in Christ, or to watch a teenager re-dedicate their lives to following Him, or witnessing a counselor grow in their faith and gifting as God uses them.

As we look to the year ahead, our hearts long to see God do it all over again. While there were constant challenges and pain, and plenty of things that we'd love to improve upon, we just want to be faithful and ready for God to do what only He can- speak to the hearts of his people.

There's an incredibly long list of things that need to happen before camp opens, and while we plan on putting in a lot of hours to make them happen, there are certain things that only God can provide-

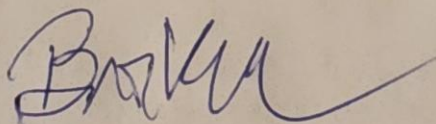
Will you pray with us for-

**Staff-** This is the prayer of every camp everywhere. No matter how great last year's staff was, there will always be turnover, it's the nature of what we do, and we're always going to be looking for gifted people who love Jesus and love kids. Primarily we are looking for counselors, a cook, and an activities/game director.

**Campers-** Registration opens on March 1- We're not praying for the most campers, just campers that we can help the most. But we do want to see this place full and busy and making a difference in as many lives as possible. Pray for the heart preparation that only God can do, working in the weeks and months prior to camp, that they would come ready to hear the word and meet with Him in a dynamic way.

**Projects-** We've got a long wish list of things we'd love to see God do with His property. Deciding what, when, and where to prioritize His time and funds is always a challenge. We plan on doing a few basic small-dollar jobs through the winter months, along with the typical assortment of day camps, retreats, dinners, and fundraisers, but my hope and prayer after Easter is to renovate the front right quarter of the lodge, replacing the firewood dump bay and chain link fence with a 52x16 wraparound deck, dramatically improving the appearance of the building and adding functional space to an ever-tightening lodge.

In closing, let me say a big THANK YOU for your support through the last year. We couldn't be more grateful to our community for their generosity and encouragement through all the ups and downs of the past few seasons. With your support, we're excited to see Path of Life go on to serve God and our families for generations to come.



Brad Kark, Camp Director