



GLACIER CAMP NEWS

[Jesus] said to them, "Come away to a secluded place all by yourselves and rest a while." – Mark 6.31

UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 12-14

Summer TIM Talks --"My Cup Overflows"

Our Summer Camp theme will also be the focus of the July TIM Talks. Join us as we explore this great theme involving the promise of abundant life!

August 7-9

Renewal in the Rockies "Becoming a Trauma-Informed Congregation"

2026 brings changes that include a new name and a different date. Women -- mark your calendars for the first weekend in August. The name for the PW Retreat has changed but the fellowship and interaction will remain the same. Look for more information in upcoming editions of the Glacier Camp News!

October 18-19

Glacier Presbytery

The Camp is excited to be back in the scheduled rotation for presbytery meetings. Join us in October as we host the Fall meeting of Glacier Presbytery.

"What a Difference a Year Makes!"

Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days, you will find it. -- Ecclesiastes 11.1

editor's note: At a recent meeting of the Glacier Presbytery Camp Committee, Dave Herman -- a committee member from Great Falls -- shared the following thoughts. When I asked him, he was kind enough to let me include them here.

God has answered our prayers. Terri as our office administrator, getting the word out about our camp has increased the numbers using our camp and our income. We have two new board members to the camp committee that bring skills needed to make things happen that camp need that will pay off in the future. The camp has changed in the last two years. The rooms have been redone to the level that can be compared to other places in area. Forest Row has been replaced with new cabins, and the lower lodge is being updated and making it more desirable as an alternative for groups to use. Donations have made these happen

The Difference a Year Makes -- By the Numbers

	2025, Q1	2026, Q1	Change
Camp Revenue	\$9,885	\$18,501	\$8,616
Spruce Lodge Revenue	\$36,798	\$53,935	\$17,137
Total Expense	\$98,258	\$92,970	-\$5,286
Total Profit or Loss	-\$51,682	\$15,926	\$67,608

and will be needed still in the future if we want to grow to serve the youth and adults.

If you haven't visited the camp in the last three years, you have not seen the changes made at Spruce Lodge and camp which donations of time and money have made happen. Spruce Lodge is now more inviting to stay and combined with lower lodge and cabins also provides opportunities to hold family events, a church getaway or meetings, and facilities now available and even better place to have wedding or renewal vows.

The most significant change has been financial: the first three months of the year have resulted in the plus side instead of a large negative total which has the case in the past. God has blessed our camp with Terri as office administrator her skills especially getting the word out about camp that has increased our income starting in 2025.



INTERIOR OF ONE OF THE NEW KOA CABINS

We have two new committee members to replace members whose terms have ended, they bring skills to the committee to make things happen that the camp needs that will pay off in the future.

If you haven't visited the camp in the last two years or stayed at the Lodge to see the recent changes that have been made. The camp has changed and is changing because of your donations financially and time and will continue to catch up on the needed maintenance and continue to update our camp to better serve our youth and adults who use the camp. Go to our website www.glaciercamp.org to see the opportunities available for as a meeting or gathering place for you and your church.



Summer Camp 2026

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camp 2026 theme—*Overflowing Life!*—Psalm 23:5-6

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Summer Camp Updates

“You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” -- Psalm 23.5b

As I write this, only a few short weeks separate us from the launch of another busy Summer season. On this sunny May morning, everything is quiet here around the camp. Only a few ground squirrels frolic in the warm sun. But I don’t need much imagination to see ahead into the coming weeks a picture the kids playing on the lawn or singing (the ear worm stuck in my head at this moment is “Bazooka, Zooka, Bubblegum!”) as they wait outside Lake Lodge to be called in to breakfast.

Overview

This represents my eighth Summer as Glacier Presbytery Camp’s director and I find myself living into the rhythm of this season -- much as I would live into the rhythms of Lent or Advent, Christmas or Easter when I was a parish pastor. The phenomenon is hard to describe and any explanation will be wholly inadequate. It is



BUSY, BUT PURPOSEFUL? PREVIOUS STAFF TRAINING WEEKS EXHAUSTED PARTICIPANTS. IN 2026, WE ARE TRYING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

like you become part of the routine, part of the pulse, part of the beat of activities which range from the routine (like sitting in on morning worship) to the extraordinary (such as when a counselor asks you to help them pray with a camper facing a particularly difficult challenge).



EXCITING CHANGES #1 -- LAKE LODGE KITCHEN REMODEL IN PROGRESS

As they have in the past, things kick off this Summer with the early arrival of our leadership team. Aaron is already onsite. Olly is expected to arrive on May 18. Brianne (our new waterfront coordinator) and Josiah will be arriving June 7 with the rest of the staff expected to show up on June 9. Staff training begins on a Wednesday this year (June 10); we are experimenting to see how well ten days of training will work as opposed to two weeks. The leadership

team has come up with some great new ideas to use this time for building the relationships and community that is vital for an effective ministry.

Exciting Changes

June 21 is when our season officially kicks off and we welcome our first week of residential campers. Many things excite me about the start of camp. For the first time since we were forced to abandon our Forest Row cabins, we begin the residential



#2 KITCHEN REMODEL NEARS COMPLETION, LOOKING WEST

season with a full compliment of functional accommodations. The four KOA cabins were available for our use the last two years but they hadn't yet been wired so we had to rely on alternative power sources. (I'll never forget last year as camp was opening, one of those alternative sources failed and for a couple of days, some cabins had to get by with flashlights and lanterns.) We don't have to worry about those issues this year.



#3 KITCHEN REMODEL NEARS COMPLETION, LOOKING EAST

Another exciting change is the Lake Lodge kitchen remodel. As a veteran of many trips between the Spruce Lodge kitchen and Lake Lodge, I am so thrilled we won't have to worry about jockeying meals and dishes back and forth. Fears about the spaghetti sauce spilling as the van bounced down the hill are now eliminated. Time and

energy -- always valuable commodities during the Summer season -- will be conserved for use in more meaningful ways.

By the Numbers

I learned a long time ago that numbers never tell the whole story. But they provide pieces of the mosaic -- pieces which help bring the picture of an organization to life. In reviewing the registration numbers for the 2026 season, a single word comes to my mind to describe the story they tell. That word is "Strong." 71 campers are registered for almost 100 camper-sessions. (The difference between the two figures comes from campers who are attending more than one week of camp.)

Using last Summer's numbers as a benchmark, we have almost as many campers registered as we did all last Summer. Of course, with Polson Day Camp last year, we had five weeks of residential camp in 2025 as opposed to six this year. We still need to get more campers. But so far, the numbers help tell the story that kids and their parents are excited to participate in our programs.



ADVENTURE CAMPERS, SUMMER 2025 -- FOR 2026, WE LOOK FORWARD TO A HEALTHY MIXTURE OF RETURNING AND NEW CAMPERS PARTICIPATING IN OUR MINISTRY

Another interesting statistic shows that 48% of our campers are returning while 52% of them are new. This represents a good balance. Returning campers understand the ethos of our ministry -- or, as Jack Huffine reflected in his remarks at our donor appreciation dinner last November, the Camp's "vibe." New campers, on the other hand, look at what we do without the preconceptions which come with previous

perspectives.

Concluding Thoughts

We are so excited for the opportunities of these coming weeks and the chances we will have to share with our campers the blessing and promise of God's abundant life in Jesus Christ. Our cup truly overflows with the blessings of your prayers and support which make this ministry possible. Glacier Presbytery Camp's cup overflows! Thank you so very much!





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Celebrating Ties That Bind -- Church, Camp, and Community

editor's note: I was privileged to participate in worship at First Presbyterian Church in Helena on May 10. As part of the service, we celebrated the ties binding the church's ministry to the ministry of Glacier Presbytery Camp. I asked Melissa Stiles, a church member and a member of the camp committee, to share her thoughts with the congregation on the legacy of Elroy and Lucille Letcher's commitment to the work of the camp. Here is a transcript of what she said:



LUCILLE LETCHER, MYSELF, AND MELISSA STILES CELEBRATE THE LETCHER'S HISTORIC COMMITMENT TO THE CAMP AND ITS MINISTRY

by Melissa Stiles, Camp Committee Member

Tim asked me to speak today as a representative of the Glacier Camp Board. When he asked, he said I could reflect on Elroy and Lucille's years of commitment to the camp and its ministry. I should have asked whether he intended to give me the whole service, because that is how long it would take to truly share all they have done through the

years -- and even then, I would never be able to capture it all.

Camp is my favorite place and the place where I feel God's presence most strongly. In high school, I wanted to spend as much time at camp as I could, so the story goes that one day my mom (who was a nurse) asked Elroy to help me get a job at camp -- while holding a very large needle to his arm! During my time working at camp, I saw first hand Elroy and Lucille's dedication to its mission. Elroy was there often -- making repairs, working on projects, or simply helping with whatever needed to be done. Lucille took old blankets and turned them into quilts for staff and campers. They were a driving force for fundraising and building the Spruce Lodge. More recently, they built and donated two homes on camp property so that staff members could have affordable housing and continue carrying out the camp's mission.

Elroy and Lucille have given so much to the camp through their financial support, their time, their talents, and the way they have encouraged others to do the same. There truly are no words sufficient to express the thanks they deserve for sharing God's love with so many children and adults over the years.

Capital Campaign Update

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. -- 2 Corinthians 9.11,12

Two words come to my mind as I reflect upon our capital campaign and the significant response we have received -- even though we are still in the "quiet" phase of this effort. The first word is enthusiastic. From the responses and the comments I have heard, the friends and supporters of our ministry understand this campaign as an idea whose time has come. A note which accompanied a gift to the campaign summed up the enthusiasm with which it was made. "I have been waiting a long time to make this commitment!"

Generous is the other word I think about as I consider the progress we have made since the campaign was launched six months ago. Seventeen gifts have been made to the campaign, bringing in a total of over \$111,000 raised so far. With pledged commitments added to the cash received, we are nearing a total of \$136,000. This represents 15% of the campaign's \$900,000 goal. And all this has happened during the "quiet" phase of the campaign!

The benefits of the money we have raised have had an immediate and positive impact on the Camp and its financial bottom line. Roughly half of the contractor's invoiced charges have been paid, so we are well on our way to covering that infrastructure expense. In addition to bringing water and electricity to Terri's cottage, this work also involved completing the set up of the four new KOA cabins -- including connecting them to the camp's power grid, a blessing you can read about in the "Exciting Changes" section of the "Summer Camp Update" article.

The mortgage reduction efforts are also bearing tangible fruit. At the end of 2025, we made a \$50,000 payment toward the principle. And, as the year began, we have been making regular principle payments. I don't have the exact figures, but the numbers here give you a ballpark idea of the direct impact these gifts have had. In November of 2025, monthly interest payments on the mortgage were around \$4,200. The current monthly interest is now about \$300 less. Even someone like me -- whose specialty is words not numbers -- understands this reduces our annual interest expense.

Of course the campaign still has a long way to go in order to reach our goal. There remains a lot of work to be done to promote and interpret this effort. But we are off to a good start. And my heart overflows with thanksgiving to God for the generosity and enthusiasm that has brought us this far.

Good Reward for Their Toil

Projects Underway, Spring 2026

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.” -- Ecclesiastes 4.9

Many outdoor projects are in process here at Glacier Presbytery Camp, as we are busy getting things cleaned up, fixed up, and ready for the upcoming Summer season.

One of those projects involves the replacement of worn and cracked benches around our campfire worship circle and at Vesper Point. The new benches have been cut, sanded, and secured and are ready to



welcome campers and other worshipers who gather to celebrate the beauty and wonder of God’s creation as they look out over Flathead Lake.

In 2019, a September storm wiped out the existing dock on our waterfront. Efforts to replace it began in 2024, when we constructed a floating dock which could be put into the water in

the Spring and taken out on shore in the Fall. This fix was not without its challenges. The dock's angle thrust it out into deep water, thus making it prone to the lake's wind and waves. Walking on the dock when the water was choppy could be compared to riding a saddle bronc at the county rodeo.

Thanks to the hard work of camp committee member Wally Congdon, a new, permanent dock is being constructed. High lake levels which persisted through the Winter have held back work and the full project won't be complete until the Summer of 2027. But we will have a stable dock for this Summer's season -- a place from which the kids can go swimming, paddle-boarding, and canoeing during waterfront time. And during H2O camp, we will be able to securely tie up the boat while kids get off and on. This dock, Wally assures me, isn't going anywhere!



Director's Reflections

On Drought and Rain and Resurrection

*O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD your God;
for he has given the early rain for your vindication,
he has poured down for you abundant rain,
the early and the later rain, as before.. -- Joel 2.23*

The miracle of the rainfall is mentioned in the benediction of the resurrection. What is the reason? Rabbi Joseph said: *Because it is put on a level with the resurrection of the dead, therefore it was inserted in the benediction of the resurrection.* – *The Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 33a*

I remember the drought, and how it came like most droughts come: quietly, subtly, with no obvious attention or warning. There was a big snow, early in November. Then came maybe ten straight days of bitter cold. Everyone talked about how this was a sign -- a prelude of the hard and harsh Winter that was to come. If the first two weeks of November were this bad, one could only imagine what December and January might be like.

But the cold didn't last. And the big snow quickly melted. And then, there was nothing. No snow. No rain. Not even a few flurries. Day after day after day, the big sky was mostly clear. The occasional passing clouds bore no precipitation. The weather forecast became a feedback loop that repeated itself over and over and over again. "We are looking at warm and dry conditions to prevail well into next week."

For a while, there was a novelty to it all. I remember visiting with a friend who traveled to Florida for Christmas. "How was your trip?" I wondered. Garnet explained how she enjoyed being with her family. "But the weather!" she exclaimed. "Florida was so damp and cold! The weather was warmer here in Montana. Who could have imagined such a thing?"

The novelty, though, soon grew stale. A dry December was followed by a dry January. Winter passed into Spring and the only moisture was an occasional skiff or two of snow. During calving season, nobody had to worry about dealing with wet or cold calves. The farmers, forever optimists, planted their Spring crops. A few storms carried some hope for more moisture.

Nothing, though, materialized. The hay crop was meager. The harvest was even worse. I remember helping a friend cut his Winter wheat. The crop was so short that the combine's header scraped the ground. And the yield would figure to be worth less than the expense required to run the equipment to harvest it. My friend looked up toward the unforgiving sky. "Best thing that could happen," he remarked, "would be to get hailed out."

These conditions prevailed through the Fall and into a second Winter. I remember the toll this drought took on people -- on their physical, mental, and spiritual health. Like the land itself, everyone was thirsty. Nerves were on edge. Anxiety got expressed through anger. As the drought endured, everyone's patience eroded. When? That was the question we all silently asked. When would the rain come and break the drought and bring life back? When?

The first big storm came a week or so after St. Patrick's Day. It came with a fury, too -- with wind and cold and heavy wet snow. I remember just managing to make it home before the storm closed the highways. When it was over, some drifts were three or even four feet high. They needed a whole day to plow the roads and make them passable. But no one complained. It was moisture. Good moisture.

The snow and rain kept coming. It was as if nature decided to make up for eighteen months of drought with a half dozen storms. In one of these storms, the rain fell all night. The thirsty ground soaked up all the moisture, such that there was hardly any mud. As the temperatures warmed, the landscape turned green. The miracle of life had come back to the Judith Basin.

I particularly remember that year's Day of Resurrection. We had a sunrise service in the community park. The weather was raw and damp. The wind blew cold. But no one seemed to mind. A recent storm left scattered puddles. And a couple of little girls splashed around in them -- getting mud on their Easter dresses and patent leather shoes. Ordinarily such behavior warranted a parental rebuke. But their mother just smiled. And everyone else laughed.

"Christ is risen!" I exclaimed. With boisterous enthusiasm, people in this little gathering responded: "He is risen indeed!" It was then, if only in a nascent way, I began to understand Joel's prophetic promise of abundant rain. And I was able to begin to grasp the Talmud's teaching, which explained that the miracle of rainfall is on a level with the resurrection of the dead.

These memories come to me now, from a distant past. Outside in this present moment, the sky is a gunmetal grey. The wind blows (cold, of course) from the north and from the heavens there falls scattered snow and rain. People voice their complaints about it -- complaints which to me are an anathema. Once you have lived through drought, you never complain about moisture.

So far, the landscape continues to bear the dull brown patina of Winter. Spring brought an average amount of moisture. But the temperature has been consistently cool and the green-up is maybe ten days away. It will come, though. I know that life and resurrection will come through the divine promise. The imperatives from Joel 2 command my attention. "Rejoice! Be glad!"

I think too, how that promise comes in this dull brown season of my life. As time has passed, death has taken so many who are dear to me -- most especially my wife. I'd be a liar if I said it wasn't hard. Like a drought, death digs into a person and bites hard. And you wonder when. When will its power be broken? When will the time of rain and resurrection at last come? When will the prophetic promise of Joel 2 be realized? On this cold, wet day, I ponder those questions.

And then, as the sunlight spills through a cleft in the clouds, I realize my calling is not so much to wonder as it is to hope -- to hope in the promises of rain and resurrection. Death's drought will be broken. The dead in Christ shall live. And so we will be with the Lord forever¹. The miracle of life, resurrected life, will come. I hold that promise close to my heart. And in response to the prophetic mandate, I rejoice and am glad.

Tim Lanham, Director

¹ See 1 Thessalonians 4.16ff.



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