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let's look ahead 2027 Programs

Winter Fun Day — Jan 31

Confirmation Retreat — Feb 19–21

Men's Retreat — Feb 26–28

Spring Youth Retreat — Mar 12–14

Spring Spruce Up Day — Apr 14

Spring Women's Retreat — Apr 23–25

Spring Fun Day — May 2

First Day of Summer Camp — Jun 27

have you tagged in? Johnsonburg's Recurring Giving Program

At camp, every swimmer is paired with a buddy — someone to stay close, encourage them, and make sure they're never alone in the lake or pool. Each pair tags in with small round discs, marked with a number.

The Donor Buddy Board :

When you become a recurring donor, your name goes on our **Donor Buddy Board** — not just as a supporter, but as someone who is helping remind campers of a deeper truth: God's love is constant, present, and personal — and through you, campers can feel it.

Give today and you will receive an engraved tag with your name and the date you started your recurring gift to Johnsonburg.



Scan the QR code to
tag in today!



Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center — www.johnsonburg.org — FALL 2026

taking a chance Stories of My Own

By Lindsay Maybury

I didn't grow up going to summer camp. Most of my ideas about American summer camps came from *The Parent Trap* and *Addams Family Values*. So when my sister returned from her first summer as a counselor at Johnsonburg in 2018, I was fascinated by her stories. She told me about the lake and the trails, also describing the characters she worked alongside. It sounded like a great experience, but I never anticipated seeing Johnsonburg for myself.

That changed when she brought me to the 65 Summers celebration. Even during that short visit, I could see why my sister had loved her time here so much. Camp was such a different environment from anything I had experienced before. Little did I know that less than a year later, I would be living and working here.

My first visit came at a time when I was trying to figure out what would come after graduation. I knew I wanted to do something meaningful and connected to my faith, but finding a job that ticks these boxes isn't straightforward. When Elise told me about the internship, it felt like an opportunity well worth pursuing. Moving from Scotland to New Jersey was a big

decision, but after a lot of thought and prayer, I decided to take the chance.

The internship is run through Camp America and allows international graduates to gain work experience related to their field of study. I can experience so many facets of how a business is run whilst having many opportunities for fellowship in God's creation.

Since arriving at Johnsonburg, my experience has been much broader than I initially expected. I've had the opportunity to work alongside people from different backgrounds, learning how a camp and retreat centre operates behind the scenes, and taking on responsibilities that have pushed me outside of my comfort zone. I've also had the chance to attend the ACA Tristate conference, work on projects to promote camp, and learn more about Johnsonburg's history and the community that has grown around it since 1959.

The past months have convinced me that summer camp is vital for young people's development and the Johnsonburg mission is an essential one. Over summer I had the privilege of



Our Mission : *Where all may gather, where all are welcome, where all are invited to share: gracious hospitality, joyful Christian community and the wonder of God's creation.*



Above is Lindsay (top) and Erica (bottom) getting ready for another session of lifeguarding at summer camp this summer.

watching several campers grow in confidence through challenge by choice. Summer camp provides what young people are missing in most school systems. It's not just fun, it encourages positive development.

Two-thirds into my year here, there is still plenty I'm looking forward to. In November, I'll be attending a camp conference at Mo-Ranch, Texas. I'm excited to continue learning and contributing to the mission in the time I have left at Johnsonburg. I've also already begun my application for next summer. When I first heard my sister's stories about Johnsonburg, I never imagined that I would one day have stories of my own. I'm glad I decided to take the chance.

dedication of The Lakeview Yurt



Clockwise from top left: First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen pastor Fred Garry with George and Jean Blomn; come visit the Lakeview Yurt; friends of camp gather on the new porch to dedicate the Lakeview Yurt during Fall Fun Day, October 4, 2026; the Rome family (campers and yurt builders!).

For over 2000 years, nomadic peoples in central Asia have utilized the ancient yurt structure for gatherings, lodging, meals and worship. Typically it would take 30 minutes to 3 hours to construct; Johnsonburg's yurt took almost 3 days to build! With the help of volunteers of all ages, the Lakeview Yurt was built in May 2026 to provide additional meeting and gathering space near the Dining Hall. A new porch was intentionally designed to allow rain-free access to the Yurt, along with an accessible welcome to the Dining Hall— at the heart of Johnsonburg's campus.

A key piece to any yurt is the central compression ring or crown of the structure. Historically, this piece was passed down through generations and a family's heritage was documented by the amount of smoke on the ring (from cooking and warming fires in the center of the yurt). While we won't be lighting fires

in the Lakeview Yurt, we do recognize the symbolism of the circle as people of faith. The never ending love and unending presence of God may be represented by this new circular space.

We give gratitude for the many people who helped make this dream a reality as part of the Marked for the Future capital campaign: board and committee members who supported the planning; four churches who donated generously during the campaign for the yurt: First Presbyterian Church of Ridgewood, First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, The Presbyterian Church at Woodbury, and Long Valley Presbyterian Church; and the volunteers and staff who built the yurt! Thank you!

a renewal of Vows

A beautiful gathering and ceremony celebrating the renewal of wedding vows for 50 years of marriage for Lorelei and Kurt Oelschlager was held in the Johnsonburg Dining Hall this August. Family and friends, classmates and neighbors gathered to honor this special couple who lived on site and ministered to generations of camps and guests at Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center for 40 years. May God's richest blessings continue to pour out on you both!



The Cedars gift honors the act of giving to God. Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center recognizes and thanks members and friends who have made a commitment in their estate plans to provide enduring support for Johnsonburg.

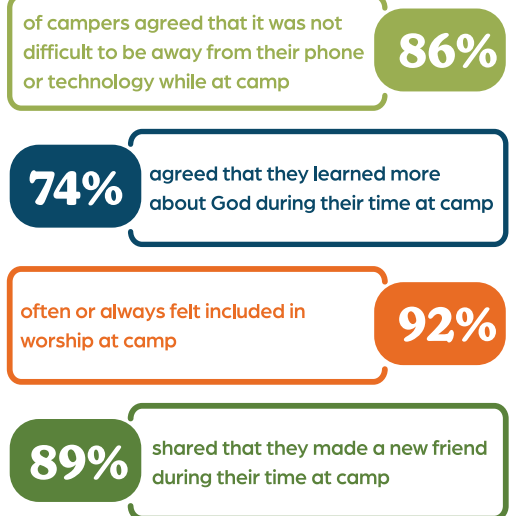
Options for planned gifts...
Endowment
Campership Fund
Operating Budget

Have any questions?
Reach out to Linda at
linda@johnsonburg.org.



stats from the Summer

This past summer, Johnsonburg engaged in the Effective Camp Research Project with a cohort of northeast faith-based camps through Sacred Playgrounds <https://sacredplaygrounds.com>. Here are some of the results from our **campers ages 11–17 years**:



Feedback from our **elementary campers ages 6–11** when asked their favorite things about camp included : **making new friends, their counselor, pool, zipline, lake and the giant swing.**

When asked what they learned, here are a few answers that were seen on the evaluations:



2027 Men's Retreat February 26–28, 2027

If you are looking to slow down and breathe, this is a perfect chance to rest, reset, and make space for the Spirit. You'll have the opportunity to:

Set your phone and laptop aside : Enjoy peaceful surroundings, fresh air, a break from all the hurry.
Engage in Honest Dialogue : Discuss real-life challenges—work-life balance, fatherhood, aging, mentorship, and living out our faith with integrity.
Build Authentic Community : Connect across generations over shared meals, gather around the fire place for conversations and fellowship.
Reflect & Recharge : Experience thoughtful worship, explore scripture through relevant teaching for today, and intentional personal quiet time.

For more about the guest speakers and retreat details visit, johnsonburg.org.

