



Lutheridge†Lutherock Ministries, Inc.

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Hooray for summertime!

We are preparing for your campfirmation camper to arrive and have lots of exciting, fun adventures planned. What a great week we will have together!

Your child will grow in so many ways ~

- learning to make friends and get along with people who are different
- making decisions and becoming more independent
- discovering new talents and practicing new skills
- creating games, songs, skits and crafts
- exploring God's creation and God's Word and growing closer to Jesus!
- PLUS all the confirmation teaching your leaders have planned

All this happens in a safe environment, where college age counselors act as big brothers and sisters, caring for children and sharing their witness to the importance of God in their own lives. Our staff are carefully screened, selected and trained and we are VERY proud of them. If you'd like to know more about our staff training or risk management procedures, just ask! We'd be happy to tell you why our camps are accredited by the American Camp Association.

Campfirmation is a partnership. Leaders from your church will be coming to camp with your child and participating in the camp week. The teaching sessions of each day will be designed by your leaders. Leaders are also a wonderful resource for any situations that may arise during the camp week. You can be sure that there are lots of folks looking out for your camper!

If you are in touch with adult leaders during your child's camp week, we ask that you keep us in the loop. Sometimes leaders mention some difficulty to a parent without telling it to us – and sometimes parents give leaders information about a camper that never gets to us. Your leaders have lots of skills but **we are the camp experts**, and we know how to work with all kinds of situations to create a GREAT experience for kids. Overcoming an obstacle with help from others is a witness to the power of Christian community, and a huge boost to a child's self esteem. We want the chance to do everything possible to make your camper's week a success. Please let us do that by calling a program director about anything that concerns you – including something you might hear from one of your leaders.

Parents can have many concerns about sending a child to camp. We'd like to make this experience as happy and worry free as possible for both parent and camper. Please take a minute to look over the information in this packet ~ and if you still have questions or concerns, call and ask us about them. **(Don't share them with your camper!)**

Make sure your conversations with your camper are calm, encouraging and show every confidence that your camper is going to have a GREAT time. (It's true!) Talk over any fears or concerns your camper may have and make a plan. Please feel free to call us for ideas and suggestions. Below are a few of the things that parents or campers might worry about, and some information that may help:

Health Care: Our staff is trained to take care of tummy aches, bee stings and lots of other minor issues. They also give out lots of TLC. There is a nurse or EMT in residence at Lutheridge and a health care manager at Lutherock. In case of an emergency, there are health care facilities close by. Please read more about medications in the Camper/Parent Information pages and our FAQ section on our website.

Making Friends: Our staff works hard at this. Each camper may have only one or two cabin buddies so no one group can “take over” the cabin. That way, everyone makes new friends. Counselors will use games and other activities to help everyone get to know each other and make sure no one is left out. We have training sessions on bullying so staff know how to watch for that and take action before it happens. Encourage your camper to take the lead by including everyone and reaching out to anyone who may seem shy or quiet.

Homesickness: Most of us miss home when we are away. Help your child see that this is normal, but won't stop camp from being lots of fun. Missing home and learning how to manage those feelings is an important part of growing up. Camp is a GREAT place to do that. Our top three strategies for helping homesick kids are:

1. Keep them busy doing things they enjoy.
2. Help them make friends.
3. Love them ~ LOTS.

These strategies also work for parents missing their kids!

Please do not tell your child you will come and get him/her if homesickness strikes; that really sets the child up to fail from the beginning. Instead, let your child know you trust the camp staff and you believe in his/her ability to take this important step. If your child seems VERY worried, call and talk to a program director so we can make a plan together. If you get a missing home letter from your child, call a program director to ask how he/she is doing. By the time you get the letter, things are probably going well. If your child is not eating, sleeping or not engaged by Tuesday, a program director will call you to talk about it. Please see other ideas for preparing your child for camp in our FAQ on our website.

Unplugging – This can be hard for both parents and kids, but it is one of the biggest gifts of outdoor ministry. Being away from TV, computers, video games ~ and, yes, CELL PHONES ~ helps us concentrate on the people right in front of us and the natural world around us. The single biggest reason that camp experiences are so intense and transformational is that we are away from such distractions. God often speaks through nature and community when we truly pay attention! **Please do not allow or encourage your child to bring a cell phone to camp.** If it is important to talk to your child during the camp week, please call us and we'll make arrangements for that to happen.

Thanks for reading all of this information, and we'd like information from you as well! Please use the health form to **tell us as much as you can about your child.** This is especially helpful if your child has special needs of any kind. We want to provide great support for your child to have the best camp week possible. Thanks for your help in that!

Please make sure the Health Form gets to us by May 1 or as soon after as possible. We have teams of nurses come in to screen them in early May. If they come in later we have to send them off site to be screened, which increases the chances of some being lost or misfiled. Some churches ask parents to mail the Health Form in, and other churches collect them and send them in all together. Either way, **PLEASE MAKE A COPY OF THE HEALTH FORM BEFORE YOU MAIL/GIVE IT AWAY!** Give the copy to the person bringing your child to camp – just in case. We are not able to accept a child without a signed Health Form.

Thanks so much for sharing your child with us. We can't wait to show your camper that having fun and loving God go hand in hand. Camp is all about experiencing the abundant life that Jesus offers. We weave worship, praise, prayer, scripture ~ and being kind and loving to each other ~ into all we do. Our goal is that campers leave singing Jesus songs and seeing God in everything and everyone. Your child will be such a gift to us!

Please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns. We cannot wait to welcome your camper to Lutheridge or Lutherock!

Lutheridge Program Directors
Pastor Mary Canniff-Kuhn
Pastor Tim Canniff-Kuhn
Kara Ridenhour

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