

The FRIEDENSWORD

Camp Friedenswald

Volume 31, Issue 1: Spring 2023

Camp Friedenswald provides people of all ages the opportunity to grow in relationship with God, self, others and nature.

Reflection from the director

By Jenna Liechty Martin

“I’m falling in love with Camp Friedenswald all over again!”

This seemingly unprompted and spirited declaration from my co-worker, Amy Huser, on a quiet Friday in the office, drew me away from my computer, head slightly cocked in confusion, a smile forming across my face. We met in the middle of the office where I curiously asked her to tell me more...

Turns out her love was rekindled that afternoon after viewing a draft of a new book of photography by volunteers Allan and Marie Blunt. The photos brilliantly display and capture the beauty of this place in all seasons and ignited in Amy a reminder of her love of Camp. From her declaration, a space was opened for us to share, back and forth, about our shared love of Friedenswald – the people, the trees, the water, the more-than-human creatures, the mission, and the Holy that dances within and among it all.

In this issue of The Friedensword, as we look back at the work that’s taken place as part of our Resilience & Sustainability Plan over the past five years (pages 4-5) and as we honor staff transitions (page 2); as we anticipate the upcoming summer camping season and the relationships that will be formed and deepened (page 3); as we celebrate the Builders and the ways their support and active involvement in the life of Camp has helped sustain and encourage our work over the past year (pages 6-7) – through it all, I see Love on display.

It is from a place of love that our staff and board have developed a new strategic plan to help guide and shape our work for the next three years. The pillars of place, formation, justice, and resilience – described on the right – will anchor and guide our work together. I hope that you will join us.

As we work towards our goals together, I’m reminded that our efforts are animated by God’s deep love for us and for all creation. It’s a love that’s so often revealed through the place, the community, that we call Camp Friedenswald. I hope and pray that we might continue to bear witness to, and reflect, this extravagant love!

View our goals at friedenswald.org/strategic-plan-2023-25/.



PLACE

We root our work and play in the St. Joseph River watershed and commit to learning about, caring for, and being shaped by the place and its inhabitants.



FORMATION

We nurture and empower people for hopeful living through worship, play, rest, and skill-building.



JUSTICE

We value diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and will examine the power structures that contribute to climate change, discrimination, oppression, marginalization, and other forms of injustice, responding with individual and collective action.



RESILIENCE

We creatively adapt and embrace sustainable stewardship of our built environment, financial and personnel resources, to sustain Camp Friedenswald’s purpose into the future.



Staff Transitions

We say goodbye to **Vicky Solano** (pictured left) who served Camp Friedenswald for 18 years as housekeeper and kitchen assistant. Her hard work and dedication to Camp’s guests and campers were a blessing to thousands of people over the years. We wish Vicky all the best as she leaves for Seattle, Washington for a new adventure. Muchas gracias, Vicky! We are going to miss you (and your guacamole)!

We welcome **Jeremy and Janessa Hostetler** to our staff team, where they’ll be assisting with facilities & land stewardship and kitchen work, respectively. Together they bring a combined 24 years experience in their respective fields, both having worked at Greencroft Communities, Goshen, for most of those years. They are excited to be part of the Friedenswald community and look forward to interacting with guests and campers in the years to come.

We welcome **Heather Emerson** as our new housekeeper. Heather is no stranger to Camp Friedenswald, having lived here the past four years with her family. (Heather is married to Eric, our food service director.) If she’s not cleaning, you’ll likely find her in the Arts and Crafts Room, tie-dyeing anything she can get her hands on!

We welcome **Liam Elias** who will be volunteering for one year as sustainability and program assistant. Liam is a recent Goshen College graduate having received a degree in Environmental and Marine Science. He enjoyed many summers at Camp Camrec (Washington) and looks forward to helping facilitate a similar experience for youth at Camp Friedenswald.

Year-round staff

- Vicki Archer, *Dishwasher*
- Liam Elias, *Program & Sustainability Assistant*
- Eric Emerson, *Food Service Director*
- Heather Emerson, *Housekeeper*
- Jonathan Fridley, *Facilities Director*
- Andrea Golden, *Bookkeeper*
- Jeremy Hostetler, *Facilities & Land Stewardship Assistant*
- Janessa Hostetler, *Kitchen Assistant*
- Amy Huser, *Sustainability & OE Director*
- Jane Litwiller, *Program Director*
- Jenna Liechty Martin, *Executive Director*
- Lora Nafziger, *Program Advisor*
- Phil Nyce, *Facilities Assistant*
- Anita & Paul Pawelski, *Guest Hosts*
- Jess Whicker, *Guest Services Director*

Board of Directors

- Steve Hartman-Keiser
- Todd Kirkton, *Secretary*
- Evan Miller
- Deanna Risser, *Vice-Chair*
- Mark Roeschley
- Pete Suter, *Chair*
- Sarah Werner
- Alita Yoder
- Kendra Yoder

Contact us:

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 Cassopolis, MI 49031
 269-476-9744
 camp@friedenswald.org
 www.friedenswald.org

Moving? Need to update your address? Please let us know!



10 things to love about Family Camp

(straight from the family campers)

- 10) Setting aside responsibilities for more family time
- 9) Reconnecting with family and friends
- 8) Technology break encouraged by poor cell reception
- 7) Eating dessert first (Grasshopper pie!)
- 6) The welcoming and friendly atmosphere created by the staff
- 5) Opportunity to live in nature for a week
- 4) A safe place for kids to go “free range” and a chance for adults to slow down
- 3) Everything that yields happy children who do not whine at their parents
- 2) Feeling connected with God and nature while sitting outside listening to the trees and seeing the moon
- 1) Camp working its magic every year

Come experience the love and magic for yourself!
 Space is still available for the weeks of July 10-14 and July 24-28. Family Camp is open to families of all shapes and sizes - come with whoever you define as family!





Summer 2023: Water Ways

By Jane Litwiller, program director

I have always appreciated how the realities of watersheds illustrate one of the clearest examples of the interconnectedness of life on the planet and the future we share. Sometimes ecological problems feel distant but when we start thinking at the watershed level, they can simultaneously feel intimate while also being connected to a larger whole farther away. No matter where you are on the planet, you are in a watershed. Water is always moving. It will cross state boundaries and property lines and fill open spaces. I hope the analogy of thinking about God's love and the love of Jesus in this way will be impactful for campers as we explore the theme of "Water Ways" this summer.

There is an innate spiritual connection to water for humans (and possibly other species as well). Maybe it's because our bodies are made of water. Maybe it's because our survival depends on it. Maybe it's just because it's the way we were created. There are obviously many stories within Christianity and other traditions emphasizing the significance of water. Water is medicine. Water is life. All of these ring true on a spiritual and physical level.

When I think of my own life, I think of the waterways that defined specific time periods or parts of my identity. I think of the Au Gres River and Saginaw bay where my parents grew up and where my maternal grandparents lived until their deaths. I think of the time living in Pentwater as a kid and experiencing the Hart Dam break (Great Flood of 1986) flooding us out of our home. I think of living on the shores of the North Branch of the Pentwater River wading into it as kids and floating downstream in inner tubes. I think of moving to the banks of Swan Creek and all of the adventures I had as a kid exploring "the gully" behind our house. Swan Creek flowed into the Pere Marquette River and out into Lake Michigan where I frequently was able to experience the comforts and connections fostered by the waves, the sounds, and the smells of the lake like an all enveloping hug from the Creator.

Pictured above (left to right) Becky Overholt and Jane Litwiller, Women's Retreat; August Franklin, summer camp; Willow Huser Company, exploring the fen.

Living for the last 20 years in the St. Joseph River Watershed (in Goshen and now at Camp) has also been impactful in different ways. Where the first 18 years of my life in Michigan gave me many "anchors" to hang onto, the last 20 have comprised all of my formal education about aquatic ecology and the science of water. It has given me tools to advocate for change from both a place of informed knowledge and also a deeply passionate sense of place immersed in the Great Lakes watershed.

I hope for Camp to be a similar place of connection for all who come. I hope that a beginning understanding of what a watershed is, our responsibilities as Christians to care for it, and a greater understanding of the love of the Creator through water will be fostered. I also hope that Camp can be a springboard for campers to learn more about the watersheds and issues impacting them in their home places and that we can all find ways to grow into a sense of watershed discipleship wherever we live.

The 2023 summer theme is "Water Ways" and was adapted from "Creation Speaks," a curriculum published by Chalice Press. Through stories, songs, and activities, we hope campers will leave at the end of the week with a richer understanding of:

- How water is life-giving, life-changing, and shapes the world
- Stories of how Jesus used water to cross boundaries and welcome all people
- Watershed discipleship and what it means to root our faith and work for peace and justice in a particular place



By the Numbers: Highlights from 2018-2022

For the past five years we have committed ourselves to making Camp Friedenswald more resilient and sustainable. As we look back, we celebrate the steps that have been taken with the support of the Camp community and hope that it might serve as an inspiration to others. We also humbly recognize the messiness of this work and that we are not finished! Most metrics are calculated against our baseline year of 2015 or cover the past five years of the plan.

Environmental

REDUCED energy use*:

13% less electricity

41% less gasoline

70% less diesel fuel

*Reflects difference 2015 to 2022

ADDED:

36% solar

On-site and community solar panels

14,217 square feet of insulation

2 electric vehicle chargers

11 local food partners

Ranging from produce to maple syrup and bacon.

1 new eco-friendly playground

Created from black locust harvested on-site

Sustainable purchasing guidelines for all areas

Examples:

- 100% Utz certified coffee (ensures good labor and environmental practices)

- 100% recycled office paper

Embedded recycling and compost systems in operations

TENDED the land:

540 hours land stewardship work per year on average

6 ecosystems stewarded



Social

EDUCATED for sustainability

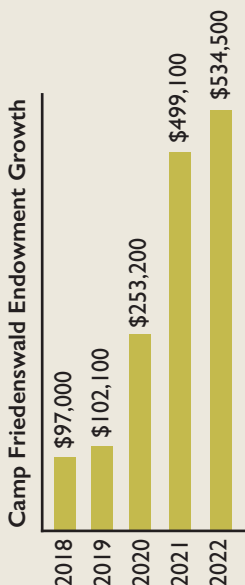
- Program themes intentionally fostered a love of God and a love of God's creation with the recognition that the two are inseparable.
- 7 environmental sustainability themed camps/retreats since 2017
- 9 destination points on trails
- 2 books published about nature at Camp

WORKED towards justice

- Created and integrated land acknowledgment statement
- Joined Repair Network of the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition
- Published inclusion statement for employment at Camp
- Instituted Camp Board-led Diversity, Equity and Inclusion task force

STRENGTHENED Mennonite connections

Mennonite churches hosting a retreat at Camp grew from 8 in 2017 to 14 in 2022.



Financial

YOU GAVE generously

- 648 volunteer days per year on average
- 155% increase in unrestricted giving
- 100 more donors in 2022 than in 2018

Endowment fund quadrupled and divested from fossil fuels

The total in the Camp Friedenswald endowment fund passed \$500,000 and was divested from fossil fuels through investment with Mennonite Education Agency.

PAID staff fair wages

- 41% average increase in year-round staff wages



For more details, visit <https://friedenswald.org/sustainability/>

CAMP FRIEDENSWALD BUILDERS

The people, congregations, and organizations listed contributed as Builders to Camp Friedenswald from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. If you gave during this time and your name is not listed or is listed incorrectly, please accept our apologies and notify Jenna Liechty Martin. Thank you for your faithful support!

Anonymous
 Jan Althaus
 Philip & Andrea Arner
 Sylvia and Calvin Aschliman
 Rachel Augspurger
 J.O. & Elizabeth Augspurger
 Don Augspurger
 Walter & Lynette Bachman
 Wendell Badertscher & Esther Nafziger
 Jim & Lois Bare
 Richard Baum
 Howard & Phyllis Baumgartner
 David & Tanya Baumgartner
 Stefan Baumgartner
 Curt & Shari Bechler
 Marie G Beechy*
 Ted & Gretta Beitler
 Ed & Beverly Benner
 Hilary Bertsche
 Dave & Evie* Bertsche
 Don & Carolyn Blosser
 Allan & Marie Blunt
 Alvin & Mary Bontrager
 Michael & Connie Brandt
 Tim Braun & Alysha Liljeqvist
 Jeff & Patricia Buhr
 Arlin & Maretta Buller
 Ron & Jane Caldwell
 Jon Carver
 David & Sara Chupp
 Virgil & Louise Claassen
 Stanley & Joenita Clemens
 Richard & Kathleen Collins
 Mike & Stephanie Company
 John Courtney
 Jack & Katherine Delee
 Lu Derstine
 Michael & Norma Devine
 Carole F Dobbie

Duane Donaldson & Debbie Horstman
 Alex & Emma Dugger
 Mike & Mary Edmiston
 Jim & Linda Eicher
 Bracton & Briana Eicher
 Kirk & Heather Eicher-Miller
 Amelia Eicher-Miller
 Mia Engle
 Kate Epp Weaver
 David & Suzanne Estvanko
 John Fox & Mary Habegger Fox
 George & Barb Fridley
 Jonathan & Julie Fridley
 Jon & Janelle Friesen
 Erica, Max & August Friesen
 Billy Funk & Alita Yoder
 Barbira Gant
 Brian & Christine Gehman
 Ned Geiser & Marie Harnish
 Marlin Gerber
 John Gerber
 Rose Gerber Emery
 Daniel & Jan Gingerich
 William Goldberg & Lisa Schirch
 Peter & Mary Graber
 Jonathan & Phoebe Graber
 Cal & Sharon Graber
 Julia Graber & Raphael LaFrance
 Erik Grayvold & Angela Moore
 Alan Greaser & Jeannie Brunk
 Nate Gundy & Jessica Witmer
 John & Jan Gundy
 Bob & Christine Guth
 Ronald & Ladonna Habegger
 Marge Habegger
 Gary & Carla Habegger
 Mike & Gwen Habegger
 Arman & Sue Habegger
 Steve & Lori Hartman-Keiser
 Tim & Marybeth Hartzler

Matt & Jen Hartzler
 Greg & Laura Hartzler
 Kelly Hartzler
 Wilbur & Elizabeth Hershberger
 Galen & Karen Hershberger
 Stefan & Karen Hershberger
 Hal Hess & Christine Schumacher
 Steve & Vicky Hill
 Rex & Angie Hochstedler
 Mary Hofstetter
 Mark & Beth Hooley
 Jim & Sandi Hostetler
 Jacob Hostetler
 Hans and Linda* Houshower
 Steve & Mary Beth Huser
 Amy Huser
 Matthew and Julie Huser
 Kevin & Tonya Jaberg
 Steve & Jan Johnson
 Barry & Janeen Bertsche Johnson
 Terry & Lois Kaufmann-Hunsberger
 Vernon & Shirley King
 Titus King & Joy Kauffman King
 Randy & Mary Kinsman
 Todd & Alison Kirkton
 Jim & Vicky Kirkton
 Tim & Sarah Koontz
 Ted Koontz & Gayle Gerber Koontz
 Elsie Koop Liechty
 Benjamin Kreider
 Mark & Trixy Larimer
 George & Anita Lehman
 Scott & Greta Lehman
 Jim & Bertie Lehman
 Mary Lehman Yoder
 John & Joy Liechty
 Nancy Liechty Loewen
 Douglas & Mary Liechty-Caskey
 Dorothy Loepp

James Loewen
 Doug & Paula Luginbill
 James & Audra Mark
 Arlene Mark*
 Wesley Mark & Mary Harder
 David Mark
 Jacob Mark
 Peter Martin & Jenna Liechty Martin
 Daryl & Karen Martin
 John Mattson & Lucretia Wilson Mattson
 Rodney Maust
 Ray and Mary Maynard
 Connie McBroome
 Pete & Cheryl Roscher Mikinka
 Sandy Miller
 Lynn & Linda Miller
 Brent Miller & Megan Stauffer-Miller
 Tina Miller
 Darren Miller & Anna Ruth Hershberger
 Imogene Miller
 Tom and Susan Miller
 Evan Miller
 Phil & Karen Miller Rush
 Mary Ann Moman
 Mary Anne Moser
 Dave & Jenny Moser
 Ruth Naylor
 Randall & Marcia Nelson
 Darryl & Lori Nester
 David Nester
 Kevin & Kendra Nickel
 Art & Cheryl Neuenschwander
 Jerry & Virginia Nussbaum
 Jonathan & Becky Nussbaum
 Phil & Maribeth Nyce
 Noe Oberholtzer Hess



Luke Penner & Rachel Yoder Penner
 John & Jo Ann Preheim
 Ron & Pat Pusko
 Eric & Jennifer Reichenbach
 Douglas & Paulette Reichenbach
 Brian & Heather Bachman Reichenbach
 Lamar Reichert
 John & Kay Reimer
 Alice & Dennis* Risser
 Deanna Risser
 Ramiro Columna & Teresa Rodriguez
 Mark & Jane Roeschley
 Randy & Mary Roth
 Carol & Verne Schirch
 Kyle Schmidt
 Joe & Mary Schrock
 Roger & Nathalie Schrock
 Tim & JP Schumacher
 Jane Sears
 Amy & Jeff Shadbolt
 Karl & Michelle Shelly
 Elisabeth & Alton* Shelly
 Anne & Philip Shenk
 Jim & Kay Sommer
 Jo Sommer*

Jedd & Nanette Sprunger
 Margaret & Phillip Sprunger
 Bruce & Suzanne Stauffer
 Amy Stauffer McNutt
 Todd Steele & Lisa Liechty-Steele
 Joel & Teri Steinmetz
 James Stevenson
 Peter Streid
 Kent & Linda Stucky
 Jacob & Becca Stucky
 Pete & Kim Suter
 Fred & Marlene Suter
 Dave & Marlene Suter
 Tim & Margaret Thut
 Donald & Beth Troyer
 Gertrude Warkentin
 Jim & Jane Weaver
 Joshua Weaver & Julia Gingrich
 Mary Weis
 Rylee Weishaupt
 Sarah Werner
 Martha West
 Brian & Brenda Wiebe
 Catherine Wilcox
 Dan & Kathleen Wilson
 Diane Wiman
 Penny Yarman
 Kent & Gaye Yoder

Matthew Yoder
 Virgil & Amy Yoder
 Kendra Yoder & David Lind
 Joryn Yoder
 Jim & Sandra Yoder
 Lucille Zimmerman

CONGREGATIONS

Assembly Mennonite Church
 Belmont Mennonite Church
 Central District Conference
 Community Mennonite Church
 Eighth Street Mennonite Church
 Emmaus Road Mennonite Fellowship
 First Mennonite Church of Bluffton
 First Mennonite Church of Sugarcreek
 First Mennonite Church of Urbana-Champaign
 Grace Mennonite Church
 Hively Avenue Mennonite Church
 Koinonia Class (First Mennonite, Berne)
 Maplewood Mennonite Church
 Mennonite Church of Normal
 North Danvers Mennonite Church

Oak Grove Mennonite Church
 Paoli Mennonite Fellowship
 Prairieview Mennonite Church
 Salem Mennonite Church
 Silverwood Mennonite Church

ORGANIZATIONS

Community Foundation of Elkhart County
 Everence Foundation, Inc.
 Moser Motor Sales
 Shavehead Lake Association

BEQUESTS

Lloyd & Aldine Combs
 John & Evelyn Bertsche Bequest
 D. Paul & Anne Miller
 Maurice Stahly Family Endowment Fund

** indicates people who died in the past year*

ESTATE GIFTS

In 2022 Camp Friedenswald was the recipient of two estate gifts. We remember the lives of these individuals and are grateful for their foresight and generous spirits that are reflected in their final gifts to Camp Friedenswald. Both gifts will support the Camp Friedenswald Endowment – a growing source of annual funding for furthering and deepening camp’s mission.

Lloyd & Aldine Combs (Normal, Illinois) were active in their home congregation of Mennonite Church of Normal. One of Aldine’s favorite church-related activities was attending the annual Women’s Retreat at Camp Friedenswald. Their support and encouragement of the church and its ministries was, and continues to be, a blessing.

D. Paul & Anne Miller (Normal, Illinois) were long-time supporters of Camp Friedenswald, where love of the woods and a love of people were encouraged and fostered. For many years, even into his 90’s, D. Paul was known for water skiing on Shavehead Lake during the annual Builders Weekend.

Who is a Builder?

A Builder is someone who believes in the work of Camp Friedenswald and is committed to supporting its mission by providing essential financial support (\$500 or more annually) and/ or volunteering five or more days each year. See Friedenswald.org/get-involved/ to find out more!

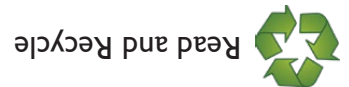


Volunteers helped keep Camp running throughout the year, often appearing as angels in aprons. Pictured from left: Sandi & Jim Hostetler; Max Franklin; Erin, Ellie, and Madison Yoh; Iona and Anna Ruth Hershberger; Justin Berg (staff), Eric Emerson (staff), and Mary Roth; Vernon King.



June 11-16	High School Camp (9-12)	July 15-16	Builders Weekend
June 18-23	Pre Junior Camp (3-4)	July 17-21	Family Camp II
June 18-20	Primary Camp (2)	July 24-28	Family Camp III
June 25-30	Junior High Camp (7-8)	Sept. 15-17	Women's Retreat
July 2-7	Junior Camp (5-6)	Oct. 14-16	Restoration Retreat
July 10-14	Family Camp I		

For scholarship information, registration, and program details visit Friedenswald.org.



Return Service Requested

