

# Suwannee Ripples

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## Camp Suwannee Ministry Remains Relevant

By Craig Carter, ACV President/CEO

Like everywhere else Camp Suwannee has been greatly impacted by Covid-19 and the shutdown. For an entire year the grounds have been silent. There has not been the familiar sound of children laughing and playing, choruses lofting from worship services or the gong of the Suwannee Bell as it calls young people to mealtime or various activities.

We have heard many campers express how greatly they missed the opportunity to attend camp last summer to reconnect with friends and be renewed by a week at camp. The lost opportunities for ministry were disappointing as young people were unable to hear the gospel message and consider those life changing decision that are often made at the Suwannee Bowl.

Moreover, for almost a year, groups have not benefitted from the facilities of Camp Suwannee or the Conference and Retreat Center. We have not been able to host Church retreats, themed gatherings or family reunions. Many of these groups have reached out to us sharing how they miss their time on the grounds and expressing their desire to return once we are able to reopen.

Due to the pandemic, basically all revenue has been lost for this past year. During such a challenging time we have been able to benefit from limited relief funds and your support has been a great blessing.

We have tried very hard to maintain as much of our staff as possible. Some employees have helped out on occasion in various ACV departments and others have assisted as we have used the downtime to repair and spruce up the facilities. Even supplies come with costs however, so we have been limited there as well.

If not for the fact that we know none of this caught God by surprise, we could become panicked by our financial challenges and heartbroken considering what has been lost as we have been unable to minister to today's youth. Truly, this pandemic has been hard on everyone, including our young people.

No, we have not lost hope because we know God remains on the throne and in control. The camp has a rich history of serving through good times and bad and through it all, God has supplied our needs. That gives us confidence that He will see us through this difficult time as well.

This pandemic has shown that Camp Suwannee remains relevant and an important ministry for reaching young people for Christ. We are eager for the campers to return as we look forward to the day we can reopen and continue our efforts of reaching today's youth for Christ.



**Share Camp Suwannee with  
others so that we can reach  
more youth for Christ.**

# Director's Notes

By Doug Mabey

The last thing most of us want to talk about right now are the challenges of 2020, but what they say is true, "It's not what happens to you that matters, but how you respond to it."

God's Word says in so many places that He takes care of those who love Him and we can trust Him. Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'" Proverbs 3:5-6: "**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.**"

All the kids that missed summer camp and the annual youth retreat have been on my mind. With many churches unable to meet in person, they may not be getting all the spiritual support they need. We need to pray that they can stand strong. Let's also ask the Lord to work a miracle and make it possible for them to be able to enjoy the life-changing experience of Camp Suwannee again this summer.

In the meantime, we've been keeping busy at camp doing beautification projects and updates, so that the facilities will be in top shape when we are able to welcome groups again.

- Painted walls, floors, wardrobes and porches at Pine and Oak cabins
- Painted the Cafeteria Deck and serving line area
- Painted Youth Lodge porches, doors, walls and replaced and painted exterior trim
- Painted interior of Rumph Pavilion
- New bed slats were permanently mounted on each bed and added carpet to bottom of bed posts to protect painted floors
- Trimmed trees, bushes and cleaned flower beds camp-wide
- Repaired fencing

We hope that both returning and new campers can enjoy this special place again soon.

Five couples with Roving Volunteers in Christ's Service (RVICS) arrived Feb 8th. They will be working on projects mostly at the Village Lodge and we thank them for nearly 30 years of volunteer service here.

We are praying that God will see fit to make a way for us to have camp this summer, but we submit to His will for Camp Suwannee and its ministry.

Thank you for your prayers and your financial support. Have a happy and safe 2021!



## Youth Camp Dates 2021\*

Senior Camp (ages 13-18) July 11-17

Junior Camp (ages 7-12) July 18-24

The cost if registered by June 1 will be \$285.

Camp applications will be mailed out to previous campers and also posted online when available: [www.acvconference.net/facilities/camp-suwannee](http://www.acvconference.net/facilities/camp-suwannee).

\*Youth camp dates are tentative due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



# My Experience at Camp Suwannee



“My love for the camp started back in 2005; over the years, I have had many memories that involved: laughing, praying, worshiping and so much more. Some of my favorite stories start with “one time at Camp Suwannee.”

I have made several genuine friendships that I will cherish for a lifetime. I always looked forward to going back to camp year after year and continuing to be in an atmosphere of like-minded people with the love of Christ. I remember all the fun and games at Junior Camp with my Uncle, Pastor Tim. The years I moved onto Intermediate Camp with Gary Robinson, and then finally the years at Senior Camp with Pastor Logan Mullis.

I learned so much throughout the years, growing friendships and getting more in-depth in my faith with Christ. Even after I aged out of camp, I continued to enjoy being at the facility by being a camp counselor. This has ended up being more of a blessing to me than I could have ever imagined. The most memorable week I still think about was from a couple of years ago; Shane Mumford was the speaker for the week, and he talked about self worth and how all are created in God’s image. I was a counselor that week and was struggling with some personal things. I am glad I was there to experience the messages that God had given Shane to preach on because it was exactly what I needed and helped me get through some struggles.



Camp Suwannee will always have a special place in my heart.”

– Christine Vervisch

“Camp Suwannee is not only a special place for me but also my family. It’s a place where our lives were transformed, friendships that last a lifetime were birthed, and an atmosphere where Christ’s love and sacrifice was demonstrated through his presence and his people. The community that is established through Camp Suwannee gives a second home to many. All the years I have been to Camp Suwannee I have witnessed broken hearts being mended, the lost being found, and the wanderer being brought back home, by the graciousness of our Father time and time again. This is a place we will forever be grateful for. We pray that every person this ministry reaches will be as blessed as we have throughout the years.”

– Jennifer Cannada (Camp Suwannee counselor 2010-2017)

“My experience at Camp Suwannee is one that I’ll cherish for the rest of my life. I started going to camp in 2005 when I was eight years old. I attended every year until I aged out, and then I became a counselor. While coming to camp, I would grow closer to God and watch others accept God into their lives for the first time or rededicate their lives to Christ.

During my years of camp, I made some of the greatest friends in my life. My friends from camp help me with my walk with the Lord, and I do the same for them. These friendships offer accountability, in addition to a listening ear. I have made so many friends from camp. Some friends from out of town came back year after year bringing friends from their hometown to camp the next year, leading to additional friendships and relationships.

As a counselor, I got to experience the younger generation bring their friends to camp, watch them be on fire for the Lord, and grow in their faith. Camp Suwannee is something you should experience for yourself because it’s always one to remember.”

– Amanda Mabey



“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”-Mark 9:37



## Most Wanted List

- Canoe Paddles (4) - \$25 each, or \$100
- Pool Safety Sign - \$100
- Mattress Covers (25) - \$15 each, or \$375
- New Camp Sign - \$3,500
- Wood to rebuild Kite & Wackerlin Deck = \$2,100 needed
- Replace Dowling Cafeteria Ceiling = \$10,000 needed
- Replace Rumph Pavilion Roof = \$60,000 needed

The list includes some higher dollar items that have appeared previously, and the total reflects what remains to be raised for those projects. We appreciate gifts of any size toward these much-needed repairs.

**THANK YOU** to those who have given!

## Past Camp Traditions

For those of you who attended Camp Suwannee, what fond traditions do you remember? Is it how we used to dress up for a banquet where a king and queen of camp were crowned on the last night? How about the namesake of this publication, “Suwannee Ripples”? What was it like when you attended camp? Did it report who was seen with whom and other juicy gossip? Did you have a talent show during your time at camp? What were some of your favorite activities or traditions? We’d love to hear from you and report examples of what camp was like for you in one of Suwannee Ripples’ future issues. Give us a shout or send a note with a very much needed gift to help the camp during this difficult time. Just spending time thinking about your years at camp can bring a smile to your face.

## WHERE CHRIST IS EXALTED THROUGH CAMPING

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