

Fence Post

Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp / Spring 2019 Newsletter

Coming Up at Sky Ranch



Ruth Retreat Center Dedication

Saturday, May 11

11:00 am—1:00 pm at Sky Ranch

Light lunch to follow dedication.

All are welcome! Please call 970-493-5258 by May 6 to RSVP.

Memorial Day Work Weekend

Friday, May 24—Monday, May 27

Meals and lodging are provided free of charge.

We have projects for all ages and abilities!

Register online at:

www.skyranchcolorado.org/mdww



BBQ & Bluegrass

Sunday, June 2

4:00 pm—7:00 pm

Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church

4501 S Lemay Ave, Fort Collins

\$15 (ages 5 & up) | \$50 (family) | Free (4 & under)

All proceeds benefit Sky Ranch!



From the Executive Director

By Brad Abbott

There is a fresh spirit at Sky Ranch, and we attribute that to the work of the Holy Spirit working in, among, and through **all** those who take part in this outdoor ministry. During this decade, much of the money the camp received has been invested in the camp's program to deepen the faith of young people and to reduce debt. It has been a wise and good investment. As a result, our camper numbers have increased over 300% and we have reduced our debt by over \$500,000.

Because of the vision of the board and staff, and financial support from donors like you, Sky Ranch continues to expand and improve our facilities:

- In **2015**, Sky Ranch celebrated a milestone in the life of its ministry with the completion of the new shower house.
- In **2018**, we started (and mostly completed) the construction of "**Ruth**", our new summer staff/seasonal retreat cabin which will be dedicated on May 11 of this year.
- In **2019**, working with Kent

Garvin, we will begin construction on a new 3000 sq. ft. maintenance building, the "Garvin Garage."

- In **2020**, with the new maintenance building completed, we will eliminate the current maintenance "shack" in the center of camp and begin a special appeal to build a covered "**Peace Pavilion**" in its place.

Your support makes all this possible! Over the past two years, Sky Ranch has received over \$750,000 in designated gifts for facility improvements alone. These improvements have allowed us to better serve those who come to this sacred place.

The addition of the winterized Ruth Cabin, with bedrooms, bathrooms, and a meeting area, allows us to house all summer staff in one area on the western edge of camp. This opens three cabins in the center of camp to better serve campers. The new maintenance building will contain a complete wood shop, lumber storage, an area for auto work, ample storage for tools, equipment, and supplies, as well as an apartment for a seasonal property person. These new buildings support our program needs and allow us to be more hospitable in *facilitating an encounter with Christ on the mountaintops.*

A Board Member shared: *"Here, we encounter Christ and are brought closer to God in altitude and amplitude and in renewal of heart, mind and soul. Sky Ranch is a place for growth, for learning the Gospel of God's love for us, for growing in grace, for expressing hospitality around the Word and being fed in that hospitality around community tables, campfire altars, on hiking trails or wherever the Holy Spirit leads."*

I am continually amazed by the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the ministry of Sky Ranch. Outdoor Ministries like Sky Ranch are the most effective way the Church has to develop our next generation of leaders. I am inspired by the hard work of the staff and board who provide leadership and I am humbled by all those who support this mountaintop ministry. As the summer staff arrives and prepares to share God's gospel of love with all who come, please keep us in your prayers.

Finally, after several years of dedicated service as both summer staff and full-time staff, we say goodbye to Hannah Anderson. I am thankful for her passionate leadership and creativity in helping to expand our Four Winds and Backpacking Programs. Blessings to her as she begins her nursing education.



From the High School Program Director

By Hannah Anderson

This summer will be the first I've spent away from camp since 2010. This May, I will be moving to Portland, OR to attend Oregon Health & Science University to become a nurse. I am very excited for this next part of my life. I have always loved school and I have been working hard over the past few years to finish prerequisite courses.

While I'm thrilled to be going back to school, I will miss being a part of this ministry. It is hard to leave the staff and the campers. It is definitely hard to give up my summers in the mountains. But, the only constant at Sky Ranch is change. Our programs are filled with energy and creativity because we welcome new staff each year. Buildings are upgraded, new songs are sung, we play different games. Yet, the Gospel is proclaimed all the same.

In my time at Sky Ranch, there have been moments of empowerment and leadership. There have also been times when I relied on others for support. One of the



beautiful things about Sky Ranch is that we are called to live in the in-between spaces. Each staff member is vital to our ministry; and yet, it is the whole community that comes together to live out our mission.

Camp has been the place that has shaped me as a person most. For me, it is a place where unconditional love is shared. Camp is the place where I have made my closest friends and gone on the best adventures. I have been challenged to grow as a leader. It is the place where I have witnessed God in action every day.

I know others have experienced camp the same way, and I trust that staff and campers will continue to be impacted by Sky Ranch. Though staff will change and facilities will be updated, Sky Ranch will always be a place where Christ is encountered on the mountaintops.

I am thankful I have had the privilege of helping Sky Ranch to grow in mission and vision. Though I'm leaving now, I know Sky Ranch will always be a part of my life—and I can't wait to return as a volunteer nurse in a few years!

Thank You to Our Staff Training Speakers!

We are grateful for the individuals who offer their time and expertise during staff training. They prepare well-rounded, caring camp staff so that we can provide the best possible experience for each guest and camper!

- Caitlin Almer & Hailey Johnson—Behavior Management and Learning Styles
- Hannah Anderson—Wilderness First Aid/CPR
- Sarah Bailey & Andrew Steger—Hospitality
- Pastor Matt Barnhouse—Vocation
- Elaine Beckman & Ann Burkett—Medication Administration Training
- Pastor Leta Behrens—Child Development
- Pastors Katie Emery and Garrett Streussel — Lutheran Theology 101
- Sam Giere, Associate Professor of Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation Wartburg Seminary— Preaching
- Pastor Paul Judson—Christian Apostleship and Guide Training
- Kinna Kemp & Young Adults—Diversity
- Angie McDonald—Mental Health, Boundaries, and Reporting
- Deacon Erin Power—Prayer Practices
- Pastor Rick Reiten—Bible Study



From the Youth & Outreach Program Director

By Jeff Fairfax

Sky Ranch offers a variety of programs designed for different age groups. One of the most unique is our Confirmation Intensive program. Imagine a group of pastors and church staff dressed as tribe leaders in Israel gathered around to watch Moses bring the Ten Commandments down the Lodge steps from Mount Sinai. Add to the mix dozens of middle schoolers-turned Israelites and off we go on an Exodus adventure across Sky Ranch grounds, complete with plagues, Egyptian soldiers, and wandering in the Wilderness.

Deaconess Kristen Baltrum, a veteran leader of the program describes the week as follows:

Confirmation Intensive is a week designed for confirmation students

and their teachers. Congregations come together to engage a different part of the Biblical narrative each year. In a three-year rotating series of portrayals, students will "live" through the Exodus, Jesus Passion, and the Early Church. Using scripture as our script, and creativity as our license, we travel back in time and meet the ancient ancestors of our faith that have so much to teach us. There are both moments of challenge and great joy as we struggle with what it means to be "saved to serve" and "free to grow."

Each year, the week starts with the setting of the scene, complete with a Time Traveling Machine. Campers learn about the time period we are entering into and become characters in the stories themselves. The Confirmation

Intensive program is the focus for the morning and evening sessions of camp, with the afternoon being reserved for all the great "Sky Ranch Camp Time" activities. The end of each week includes service projects at camp and a party! Sky Ranch staff works alongside the confirmation leaders to enhance the program. Two high school helpers from each participating congregation are invited to help with playing minor characters. The High School group moves within the camp experience as its own "cabin group" during the afternoon Sky Ranch time.

This program builds relationships between congregations, as well as partners congregations with camp in faith formation. It is an invaluable experience in being church together.

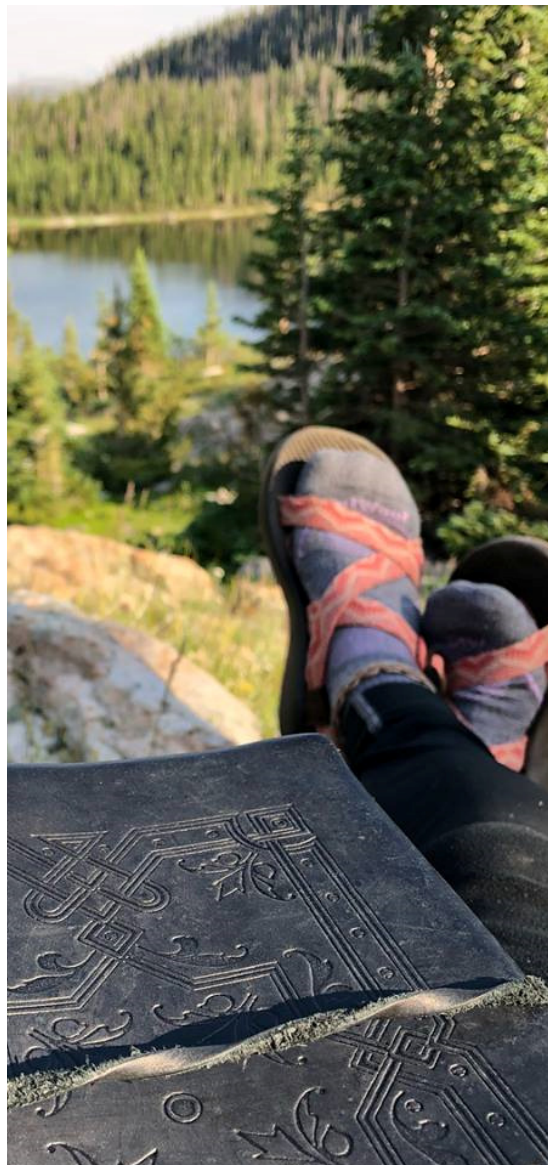
From the Board of Directors

Lindsay Reiten joined the Sky Ranch Board of Directors in 2018. She is an Assistant Professor in the Math Education Department at UNC. Lindsay attends Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, where her husband is the pastor. Their daughter, Anya, attended Sky Ranch for the first time last summer.

Camp has always been an important part of my faith and my life. Through confirmation camp, leadership school, and numerous middle/high school retreats at camp, I grew as a youth leader in my church. Realizing the influence camp had on me as a camper, I applied to be a counselor. After three summers, my faith grew, I made some great friends, and I met my future spouse. Camp to me was a place to reconnect with God, relationships, and priorities. It was a place where I was renewed and rejuvenated.

Attending and working at a camp in Wisconsin, I heard about Sky Ranch. In fact, I had friends that were *called to the mountains* (rather than to the corn fields and cow pastures of Wisconsin) to be counselors at Sky Ranch. In college, I did not understand the pull of Sky Ranch. Now, 15 years later, I am starting to understand.

My first trip to Sky Ranch, I remember thinking *why would anyone choose to drive 15 miles on loose gravel with big rocks up the side of a mountain*. However, upon arrival and experiencing camp, I realized why. Sky Ranch is a place of rejuvenation for me and my family. It is a place where we grow as we are renewed and rejuvenated through dialogue with others. Learning new songs, exploring new to us trails, playing games, worshiping, meeting new people and reconnecting with friends, campfires...the list continues for the ways we experience God *through holy play*.



Coyote Howl Confirmation Retreat

September 27-29, 2019

The Coyote Howl Confirmation Retreat creates a sacred space for confirmation students to build upon a foundation which will travel back with them to their home congregations. Coyote Howl offers community building, Bible Study, worship and fellowship with youth from throughout the Rocky Mountain Synod. Alongside our dynamic, energetic and passionate staff, youth will explore the way that God is at work in their individual communities along with how their connection to one another essentially shapes their journey of faith.

For more information and to register please visit: www.skyranchcolorado.org/coyote-howl

Meet the 2019 Summer Staff!

These dedicated young adults are joining us from around the country (and around the world!) for a summer of ministry and service at Sky Ranch. We are especially excited to welcome Asta, our international camp counselor from Cameroon. Our staff bring diverse gifts and share a call to minister to children in the mountains of Colorado. We can't wait to see our staff grow in service, faith, leadership, and fun this summer!

You can meet our staff by volunteering at Memorial Day Work Weekend, attending Barbeque and Bluegrass in Fort Collins. You may also see them at your local day



Nicole Belin
U of Northern CO
Centennial, CO



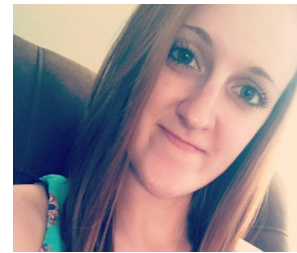
Abby Bendorf
University of Wisconsin—Grad
Owatonna, MN



Bekah Bendorf
University of Wisconsin
Owatonna, MN



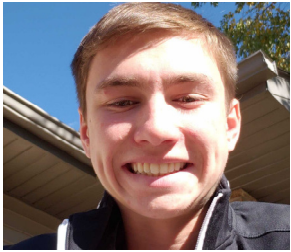
Mykala Coe
Colorado Mesa University
Littleton, CO



Ashley Freeman
Valparaiso University
Portage, IN



Sarah Gaiser
Greeley, CO



Tony Klagge
St. Olaf College
Loveland, CO



Laura Lenzcycki
Gustavus Adolphus—Grad
Fort Collins, CO



Alex Light
North Dakota State University
Fargo, ND



Lukas Lindgren
St. Olaf College
St. Paul, MN



Tiffany Miller
Augustana University
Sioux City, IA



Maddy Reed
Colorado School of Mines
Longmont, CO



Kristofer Reiser
U of Northern CO—Grad
Portland, OR



Joe Rein
Colorado State —Grad
Littleton, CO



Grace Ricard
Minnesota State University
Benson, MN



Greg Roskowic
Augustana College
Rockford, IL



Ethan Wick
Wayne State College—Grad
Blair, NE



Ashlee Will
Valparaiso University
North Street, MI



Josh Williams
Valparaiso University
Chicago, IL



Tyler Borkowski
U of Northern CO
Fort Collins, CO



Lia Bouzarelos Kopta
Valparaiso University
Addison, IL



Jacob Burnett
University of Wyoming
Littleton, CO



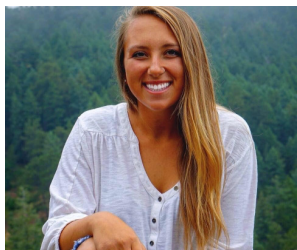
Corbin Casmey
Colorado Mesa University
Longmont, CO



Mckenna Cordsen
Colorado Mesa University
Fort Collins, CO



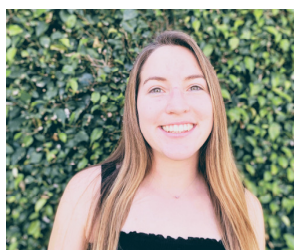
Karsen Gromm
Columbia College
Ottawa, IL



Nicole Hanneman
Colorado Christian University
Littleton, CO



Alex Kalan
University of Wyoming
Windsor, CO



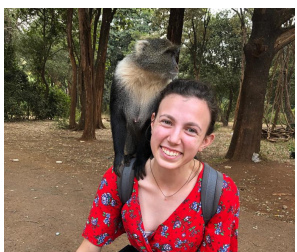
Macy Kennedy
Florida Gulf Coast U—Grad
Cape Coral, FL



Joe Kiel
Clemson University—Grad
Ogden, UT



Megan Milroy
University of Wisconsin
St. Cloud, MN



Maya Nieberger
Cardiff University
Erie, CO



Michael Novotny
University of Wisconsin
West Bend, WI



Haley Pluchek
Augustana University—Grad
Centennial, CO



Katie Pubentz
Judson University—Grad
Ottawa, IL



Carli Schwanebeck
Augustana College
Glen Ellyn, IL



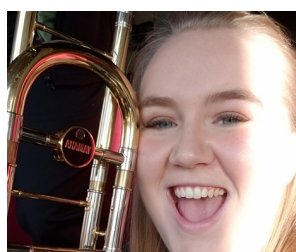
Christine Vincent
Augustana College—Grad
Bettendorf, IA



Kaari von Bernuth
Colorado State—Grad
Longmont, CO



Nicci Watson
Texas A&M—Grad
Columbia, SC



Katie Weiland
Gustavus Adolphus—Grad
Minneapolis, MN

Please in your prayers, remember these young leaders of the church. Pray that the Holy Spirit will infuse them with the high amounts of stamina, energy, and focus needed to share the gospel with our campers all summer long.

Spring Property Update

At Sky Ranch we continue to upgrade facilities to meet a growing demand. **Volunteers combined to contribute over 2,000 hours of service** to improve facilities and grounds last year. A lot was accomplished including:

- Completion of the new RUTH Cabin
- Built a new footbridge over Beaver Creek
- Replaced log benches at Sondance worship area
- Constructed a covered grill area in the Chuckwagon area
- Finished replacing heaters in camper cabins and upstairs of Lodge
- Built a new archery shed
- Replaced exterior siding on Bonhoeffer Cabin
- Built new picnic tables and a new bench/storage area outside the Lodge

Of course, a new season of camp brings a whole new list of projects! Through leave-a-trace groups and volunteers at our work weekends, we hope to:

- Build a new maintenance building: the GARVIN GARAGE!
- Put a metal roof on Tubman Cabin
- Install bunk beds, shelves, blinds and shower rods in Ruth Cabin
- Landscape and construct new fire ring and seating near Ruth Cabin
- Build internal metal frames for Beaver Meadows Platform Tents
- Construct new low ropes elements
- Install new water shutoff valve, fix leaks at Nurse's Cabin
- Lodge – replace/repair exterior doors, paint and install new blinds and mattresses in some bedrooms, install shutoffs valves for water heaters
- Install laminate floor/subfloor and mattresses in Schramm Cabin
- Plant seedlings and prepare greenhouse for summer
- Install new irrigation pipe in greenhouse



Wish List

General

- 10 Lutheran Study Bibles
- Dependable Car or Minivan
- Laminate Flooring for Camper Cabins
- Embroidery Floss/Thread
- Construction Paper (assorted colors)
- Crayola Markers (non-toxic)
- Wenger Music Stands
- Go Pro Camera (Call for info)
- Guitars
- Clavinova with MIDI
- **Kitchen**
- Industrial Food Processor
- Heavy Duty Kitchen Hand Mixer
- Commercial Chef Knives Set

Property

- 5-gallon Shop Vacuums
- Cadet Wall Heaters (call for info)
- Snow Mobile
- 2 seat Gator Utility Vehicle
- Bobcat with a Backhoe Attachment
- 4 Queen Mattresses for Christ Lodge
- 20 Twin Mattresses for Christ Lodge
- 8' White Rectangle Plastic Tables
- Garden Supplies
- Standing Jig Saw
- **Office**
- Postage Stamps
- Marker/Highlighters

Leave-a-Legacy at Sky Ranch

You don't need a lot to leave your legacy at Sky Ranch!

By using Tithely, our online giving platform, you can set up a recurring donation for an amount that works for you.

\$5 a month helps us purchase new programming supplies—high ropes gear, arts & crafts supplies, and more!

\$10 a month provides funding to start up our greenhouse and gardens for the summer

\$20 a month allows us to pay a summer staff for a week

\$40 a month allows a child to attend camp on a full campership

Imagine our delight this past year when we received notice that two anonymous donors had recently included Sky Ranch in their estate plan through the ELCA Foundation. What a legacy! A good estate plan will help you prepare for the future and manage the present. It will benefit you and your loved ones enormously.

Simply defined, estate planning is the process of thoughtfully providing for the efficient transfer of your assets to loved ones and charitable interests in accordance with your wishes. It is a testament that affirms not only how your estate will be distributed, but also what kind of a legacy you leave behind and the impact it will have for future generations. You can touch the lives of generations to come by including Sky Ranch in your estate plan.

Estate planning isn't just for rich people or older people. Everyone should do it. It begins with writing a

will, but it can also involve trusts, changing beneficiaries of life

80% of givers give through bequests, but only 30% of people have a will when they pass away.

insurance policies and retirement accounts, selecting guardians for minor children, providing lifetime income for yourself and others, minimizing taxes and other estate settlement costs, and providing for your charitable interests.

Estate planning is usually not a do-it-yourself project. **As a partner with the ELCA Foundation, Sky Ranch has access to the services of an ELCA Gift Planner. We also have access to gift planners with the InFaith Community Foundation.** The planning services are at **no charge to you.**



Your gift will ensure that generations of campers, guests, and staff can encounter Christ on the mountaintops

Shine: 2019 Bible Study

This summer, campers and guests will explore how God's light is shining in the world and how we are called to share that light with others. Each day, campers will learn about a different way that God's light is shining upon us.

Light of Creation

God created light and darkness, which nourish the world and give life to all creation.

Light of Justice

Unfortunately, God's people sin and there is injustice, pain, and suffering in the world. God's light is not just warm sunshine that makes us feel good. It is also a fire that pushes us to end injustice and do God's work.

Light of Hope

God's work for justice sometimes seems impossible. That's why we are given hope through Jesus.

Light of Diversity

And because of the light of hope in our hearts, we are given the gift of diversity. God helps us to see that we are united in Christ while also having differences.

Light of the World

Knowing God's story and vision, we are sent out to be God's light in the world! We are called to celebrate the diversity of creation, while holding onto hope so that we can work against injustice to life up God's love.



Arise, shine;
for your light has
come,
and the glory of the
Lord has
risen upon you.

—Isaiah 60:1

Summer Offering

Each summer, Sky Ranch collects an offering to donate to organizations and ministries that serve vulnerable communities. This summer, Sky Ranch is excited to support two different organizations: Urban Peak & Homeward Alliance.

Monetary offerings will go to Urban Peak, a nonprofit which offers shelter, day centers, education, and outreach to youth experiencing homelessness in Denver and Colorado Springs. Urban Peak is the only organization that specifically works with youth and their programs

empower thousands of youth each year to achieve their goals.

In-kind offerings will go to Homeward Alliance, a local nonprofit serving those experiencing homelessness in Northern Colorado. Homeward Alliance is always in need supplies and gear for their clients. Bring any of these items to camp for closing worship on Friday:

- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Backpacks
- Sleeping Bags
- Tents
- Blankets
- Water bottles
- Flashlights/headlamps
- New socks and underwear (men & women's needed)



Where Are They Now?



Pictured left: former Sky Ranch Summer Staff Becca and Joe Natwick

Becca Natwick (formerly Simonds) served on summer staff from 2011-2013. She and her husband, Joe Natwick (also summer staff 2011 and 2013), live in Dickinson, ND where she is an educator and Joe is a pastor.

When I look back on my life there are many defining moments, but none as defining as working at Sky Ranch. The three summers I spent on staff serve as a benchmark in my life. I remember things as “pre-camp” and “post-camp.” Sure, I met my husband that first summer, but camp is not just a benchmark of “pre-Joe” and “post-Joe!” The reason camp is a benchmark for me is because of the transformation that happened in the core of my being. ‘Pre camp’ I was insecure, shy, and lived a life of doubting myself. ‘Post camp’ I am confident, friendly, and I live a life bearing my gifts in the world. I owe this

transformation to Sky Ranch’s intentional focus on hospitality. I experienced that hospitality the moment I arrived, and we were constantly reminded to be hospitable to all guests that stepped foot on camp property. Working at Sky Ranch taught me that facilitating an experience for somebody where they are cared for, valued, and known is one of the greatest gifts we can give. This gift has hugely impacted my work today. As a 4th grade educator, I am intimately involved in the lives of my students. My experience at Sky Ranch empowers me to facilitate experiences for my students in which they, too, feel loved, valued, and empowered to be themselves, sharing their gifts in the world. I believe this hospitality creates space for God to do incredible things in their lives. Who knows, perhaps they will benchmark their lives as “pre-4th grade” and “post-4th grade!”

Marie Hynek worked at Sky Ranch in 2016, 2017, and 2018 as a counselor and as an onsite coordinator. She is from Broomfield, CO.

This past May I had the pleasure of celebrating my graduation from California Lutheran University; but I was shortly hit with the question of “so...what are you going to do next?”. That question terrified me as I had no clue what was up next for me. From June to August I spent another wonderful summer at my favorite place, Sky Ranch. The summer was filled with lots of fun, but also lots of deliberation about what I was going to do once camp ended. After the summer (and a lot of hard job searching), I accepted a position at EF, an international education company that has an office located in Denver, Colorado. Although I love my company and the work we do, I have recently been accepted into the Young Adults in Global Mission program, and I have accepted the call to serve in Rwanda from August 2019 – July 2020. The past three summers I have spent at Sky Ranch have had a massive impact on who I am today. If it wasn’t for camp and the exceptional support I have received from the people I have encountered there, I am not sure if these doors would have been opened for me. I can’t wait to see what the next year has in store for me...I just hope it includes at least one trip “up the mountain” to Sky Ranch!

Explorers Camp—New in 2019!

Not quite ready to attend camp on your own?

Campers who have completed 1st-3rd grade can bring their favorite adult to camp for the Explorers Program. Enjoy all the camp favorites, make new friends, and do it all with a parent, grandparent, aunt, or uncle!

July 31-August 2, 2019 | \$200 per participant

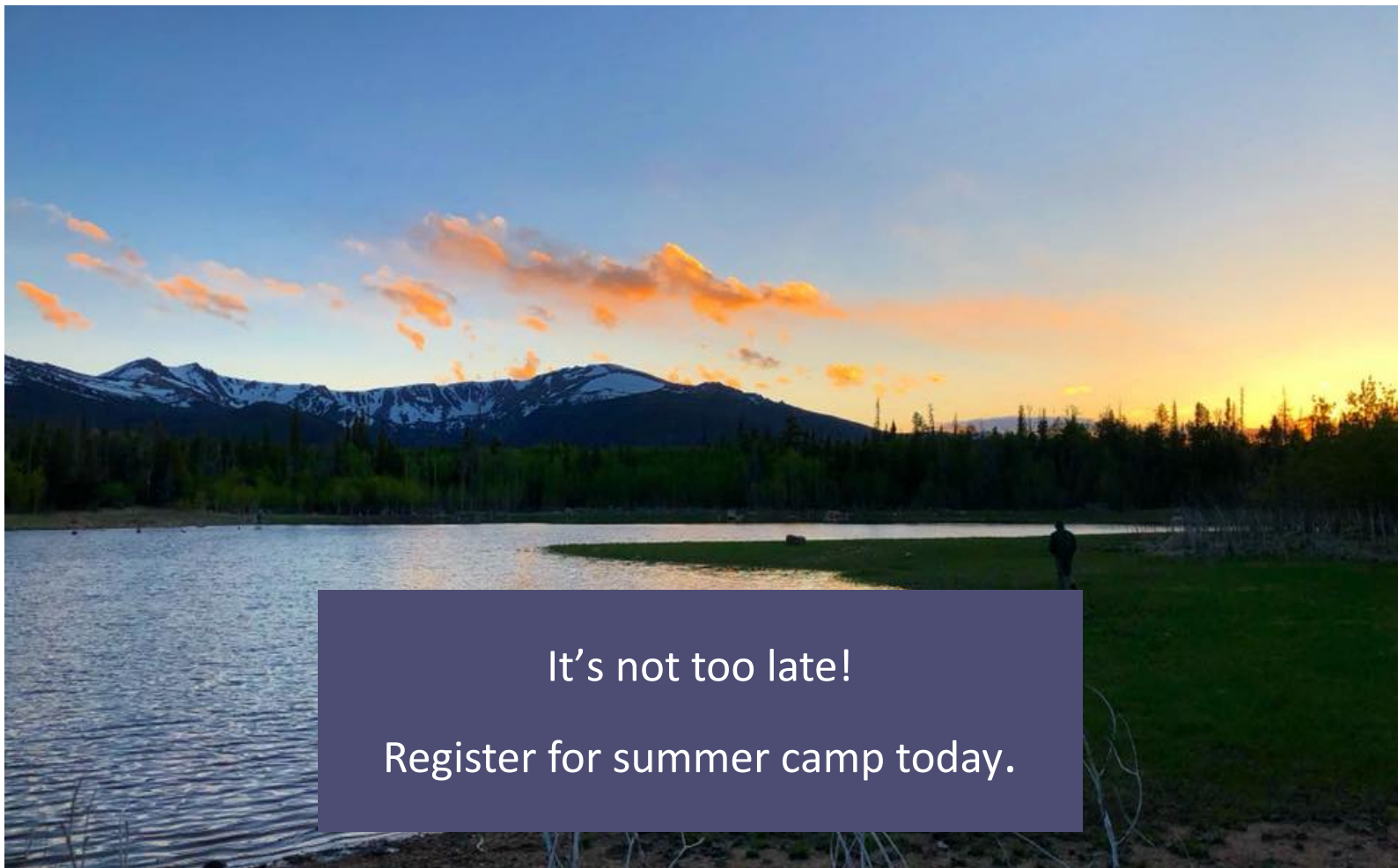


Summer Staff Joe Kiel, Marie Hynek, Sarah Gaiser, and Macy Kennedy will all serve as Young Adults in Global Mission this year.



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It's not too late!
Register for summer camp today.