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## CAMPER QUOTES

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"Just because you're not related by blood doesn't mean you can't be related by heart." 8th grader Creative Camp

"Living River is an amazing summer camp. You make a lot of new friends and you meet the coolest counselors." 6th grader Explore Camp

# LIVING RIVER

## A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

[www.livingriver.org](http://www.livingriver.org)  
[@livingriver.org](https://twitter.com/livingriver.org)

2000 Living River Parkway. Montevallo, AL 35115  
August 2019-Summer Camp Edition







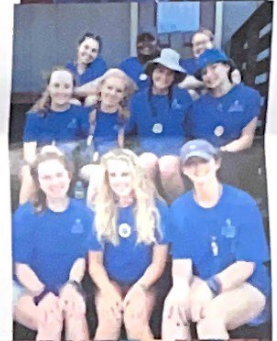
## SUMMER CAMP STATISTICS 2019

### OVERALL STATISTICS

- 143 Campers (up slightly from last year.)
- 18 volunteers (14 spiritual formation leaders, 2 volunteer nurses, 2 health coordinators)
- 5 lifesaver kitchen volunteers
- 1 donated church van and tents from Boy Scout Troop 93 (Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian)
- 550 Camper Days
- 77% campers from Presbytery
- 68 scholarships awarded from Presbytery camp fund—\$11,945

### PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS AND LAPSLEY CHURCHES REPRESENTED

• Cahaba Springs	1	• Grace	14
• Church of the Covenant	5	• Immanuel	7
• Edgewood	3	• Independent	5
• First, Auburn	21	• Montevallo	8
• First, Birmingham	10	• Mountain Brook	1
• First, Livingston	4	• Oakmont Chapel	13
• First, Sylacauga	1	• Shades Valley	1
• First, Tuscaloosa	16	• South Highland	7
		• Southminster	12





## LIVING RIVER'S FINANCIAL SITUATION

The Living River Board of Directors has made the difficult decision to operate without borrowing funds and increasing debt. The result of this decision has had the following outcomes:

- Living River's debt has decreased from \$849,155 in December 2018 to \$578,107 in July 2019 by using the BP settlement money.
- Living River has suspended operations of the Cahaba Environmental Center until a different, sustainable operating model can be developed.
- Living River has cut staff. The following positions have been eliminated: CEC Director, CEC Assistant Director, CEC Lead Educator, CEC seasonal Educators, Living River Food Service Manager, and Living River Office/Operations Manager. The Executive Director is currently working part time with a proportional reduction in salary. Living River currently has one full time employee, our Facilities Director.
- Projections in operational costs will deplete the Living River budget in December of 2019 without significant donations.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Give. Checks can be sent to our mailing address 2000 Living River Parkway, Montevallo, AL 35115.
- Encourage your congregation to include Living River in their 2020 budget.
- Book a retreat for your church, social club, business, family or group of friends at Living River.
- If you are connected with a higher education institution or environmental organization, serve on the steering committee to re-imagine our Cahaba Environmental Center. Email Jenny at [Jthagard@livingriver.org](mailto:Jthagard@livingriver.org).
- Volunteer to be a host for rental groups. Trainings will take place on the following dates: Saturday, August 24 from 9-11 and Wednesdays, August 28 and September 4 from 1 to 3.
- Volunteer your skills /labor to renovate the former Cahaba Environmental Center staff house as we turn it into a 16 person small group lodge with it's own kitchen, Wi-Fi, cell service and satellite television.
- Volunteer to work with our Facilities Director on a work day in the fall to stain our outside porches or any time to cut grass, clear trails, assist with jobs that require more than one person.



LIVING RIVER  
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway  
Montevallo, AL 35115







LIVING RIVER  
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

September 2019

Dear Friends of Living River,

Thank you for your ongoing support of Living River. The mission of Living River is to share Christ-like hospitality, foster the stewardship of creation and nourish faith. This summer we witnessed God at work in the life of children, youth and young adults. We swam and canoed, hunted fossils, hiked trails, played games, crafted, worshiped, prayed, sang, studied Scripture, and above all learned that God is at work in and through us. My extreme gratitude is extended to all of the volunteer leaders and summer staff, without whom we would not have been able to have camp. You will find a complete list of their names, roles, and home churches on the back of this letter.

As we look forward with hope to how the Spirit will continue to guide us in the work of hospitality, stewardship, and nourishing faith at Living River, our Board of Directors has created a 2020 operation budget that demonstrates our commitment to faithful stewardship. This annual budget reflects many programmatic changes, including:

- Temporary closure of the Cahaba Environmental Education Center.
- Volunteer hosts from PSL churches instead of paid staff hosts.
- Groups using our facilities will cook for themselves instead of paid food service staff.
- Conversion of Cahaba Environmental Staff House into small group lodge rental space.

The 2020 budget also reflects a reduction of staff from eleven to two employees. Paul Fancher will remain the onsite Facilities Director and I will now be working four days a week.

**What this means for Living River is that in order to operate at a basic level in 2020 with a budget of \$280,457 we must raise \$150,000 in annual pledged giving.**

Your help is critical to us as we strive to steward well all that God has given us in this sacred place. Below are some practical steps you can take to help us grow the support network of Living River both deep and wide:

- Ask your congregation, and any local PC(USA) church you are connected with, to include Living River as a line item in their annual budget.
- Encourage other groups you are connected with: civic organizations, corporate groups, etc. to schedule a retreat or conference at Living River.
- If you know of partners who may be interested in the work of environmental education, ask them to contact a Living River staff or board member about future partnerships.
- Consider pledging as an individual to the 2020 Living River Annual Operating Budget.

Once again, thank you for your prayers and support. We hope you will join us in sustaining the ministry of Living River so that future generations of God's children will experience hospitality, the beauty of God's creation, and have their faith shaped and formed in this special place.

Jenny Thagard  
Executive Director

### Summer Volunteers and Staff

Our volunteer leadership teams gave of their time, love and energy to make each camp unique and meaningful for our campers. My extreme gratitude is extended to all of our leaders:

- Senior High Work and Mission: Rev. Joe Genau, Edgewood and Rev. Robert Hay, Honorably Retired Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
- Elementary: Rev. Elizabeth Goodrich, Member at Large Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley
- Explore Elementary and Middle: Rev. Nick Reed, First, Auburn and Robert Newman, Southminster
- Night Owl Middle and Senior High: Emily Roberts, First, Birmingham; Rev. Ben Acton, First, Garner, NC (formerly Southminster) Bennett Alldredge, First, Tuscaloosa; and Betsy Murphy, Southminster
- Mini Elementary: Phyllis Ward, Immanuel and Natalie Reed, Southminster
- You and Me: Patrick Riley, Southminster
- Creative Elementary and Middle: Rev. Cathy Hoop, Grace and Jane Shipley, Grace

Other volunteers for whom I am grateful and without whom we could not have had camp:

- Program Committee of Living River Board: Emily Roberts, First, Birmingham; Chair; Pat Goodman, Southminster; Past Chair; Patrick Riley, Southminster; Patti Winter, First, Birmingham; Rev. Joe Genau, Edgewood; Betsy Murphy, Southminster; Natalie Reed, Southminster; Tonya Redwine, Oakmont-Chapel; and Phyllis Ward, Immanuel
- Emergency Kitchen Workers: Brian Massengale, Oakmont-Chapel; Emily Roberts, First, Birmingham; Patti Winter, First, Birmingham; Patrick Riley, Southminster; Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed, Shades Valley
- Health Care Compliance Coordinators: Carolyn Ashworth, M.D., Southminster; Pat Goodman, Southminster
- Volunteer Nurses: Paula Neighbors, First, Tuscaloosa; Wendi Jones, Montevallo

Our summer camp counselors were outstanding! It is a privilege to have served with them and watched their growth over the summer.

- Jacob Adams, graduate of Jacksonville State and participant in JSU UKirk
- Mary Glenn Agee, junior at Mississippi State, member of First, Tuscaloosa, former PSL Youth Council
- Annabelle Beavers, sophomore at The University of Alabama, member of First Tuscaloosa, former PSL Youth Council
- Mary Evelyn Beavers, sophomore at Mississippi State University, member of First, Tuscaloosa, former PSL Youth Council
- AJ Connor, junior at The University of Montevallo majoring in Social Work
- Stuart Huddleston, freshman at Birmingham Southern College, member of South Highland Presbyterian
- Kay Montgomery, junior at The University of Montevallo majoring in Exercise Science
- Maria Potts, sophomore at Birmingham Southern College, member and elder of First, Tuscaloosa, former PSL Youth Council
- Shan Shelby, sophomore at The University of Montevallo majoring in Elementary Education