

# LIVING RIVER: A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

## Report to the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

### February 2019

Living River and the Cahaba Environmental Center have such great potential. The support of the Presbytery shows that you believe in the ability of Living River to *nurture faith development* through **summer camping programs**, *educate youth about the stewardship of creation* through the **Cahaba Environmental Center**, and provide a space for groups to **retreat** from the chaos of everyday life to *re-group and renew*.

For 2018

- 137 Residential Campers and 110 Day Campers participated in Summer Camp for the summer of 2018.
- 1,176 students, teachers and parents participated in programs through the Cahaba Environmental Center in 2018, representing 19 different schools.
- 20 Retreats were held at Living River with over 600 individuals participating.

Our dreams for the future include a swimming pool and an adult lodge. The swimming pool will allow our summer campers and retreat groups to enjoy the water in a safe and clean way. There are times when the e-coli levels in the Cahaba are dangerously high and swimming is prohibited.

An adult lodge will allow us to expand opportunities for adult retreats and teacher training for the Cahaba Environmental Center, increasing the ability of Living River to sustain itself financially.

The Living River Board of Directors has made the pool a priority, and thanks to 2 generous donations of \$100,000 from First Presbyterian Wetumpka and \$50,000 from an individual donor from First Presbyterian, Auburn we are on our way to the \$607,000 quote for construction.

For January of 2019, we set a record with retreat groups on-site every weekend. Living River hosted the following groups:

- Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Elementary Retreat
- Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Small-Church Leadership Retreat
- Auburn UKirk for a Civil Rights MLK-Weekend Retreat
- The Living River Board of Directors Retreat
- Spanish Fort Presbyterian Youth Retreat
- First Presbyterian, Tuscaloosa Middle School Retreats

As Rev. Tom Bryson pointed out at our Living River Board Retreat, if every church would **use Living River** for \$7000 worth of business (summer camp, retreats, CEC trips), Living River would be on its way to financial sustainability.

Please like us on Facebook to keep up with updates on Living River's mission and activities.