



LIVING RIVER
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

February 2023
Newsletter

2022 Living River Annual Report Thank you to our donors!

Every donation of time, talent, and resources makes Living River's ministry possible. All bolded names are of Living River Bedrock Sustaining Donors. More details about the Bedrock program can be found on Living River's website.

Mark & Diane Aldridge

Robert & Ree Almon

Steve & Carolyn Ashworth

James & Susan Bannon

Jonathan & Heather Benoit

Suzanne Benton

Don & Mary Blakeley

Ruth & John Brock

The Brown Family

Vernon Broyles III

Tom & Ashley Bryson

Mark & Leigh Ellyn Byars

John & Linda Carey

Coke & Molly Clark

Gretchen Cloud

Frank Covington

Paul Dimick

Joe & Beverly Dodson

Marilee Dukes

Kimble Forrister & Calli Patterson

Jane French

Yvonne Gauntt

Pat & Charles Goodman

Michael & Gillian Goodrich

Ellyn Grady

Mary Grant Dalrymple

Gene & Dorothy Grimes

Park & Ann Grimmer

Susan Grimmer

Ted Halley

Sam & Terry Hamilton-Poore

Dexter & Shelley Hancock

Kristen Hargreaves

James & Kay Harrington

Benga Harrison

Wyatt & Susan Haskell

Robert Haubein

Robert & Janice Hay

Robert & Morgan Hay

Scott & Angie Hayes

Mike Henderson

Sarah Hewitt

Thomas & Peggy Hill

Kent & Lisa Howard

Tony & Lora Hubbard

Steven & Stephanie Hunt

Calvin & June Hyer

Harvey & Johanna Jenkins

Sara Kaylor

Helen Keller

Leland & Marty Keller

Will & DeNay Kirkpatrick

Melinda & Norris Leavelle

Terry & Mari Ley

Bruce & Jeannine Ludwig

Virginia MacRae

Brian & Chris Anne Massengale

Rachel & Wesley Mathews

Lori Maxey

David & Ann McGiffert

George & Bess Miller

Carolyn D "Faye" Mills

Ira & Anne Mitchell

John & Debbie Mitchell

Allison Moore

John Moore

McKittrick Moss

Bill & Betsy Murphy

Al & Janet Nebrig

Robert Newman

Barbara & Robert Nicol

Ives Ort

Janet Ort

Ed & Gail Parrish

Jay & Ellen Patton

Lee Ann & Preston Peyton

Michael & Joan Pickett

Mary Porter

Ellen & Daniel Potts

John Powell

Jim & Fay Prince

Natalie Reed

Nick & Kathy Reed

Rick & Judy Reed

Mallory & Martha Reeves

Emily Roberts

Ed Senter & Jessica Germany

Jim & Katherine Shepherd

Anita Sherman

Jack & Anne Smalley

Alan & Linda Speaker

Frank & Fairy Sutherland

Stacey McGill Tarrant

Allen Tartt

Jenny & George Thagard

Sharon & Les Thagard

Kristi Thomson

Wendy & James Tucker

Steve & Laura Underhill

George & Patsy VanKirk

George VanKirk

Lawson & Lin Veasey

Myrna Walker

Howard Walthall & Family

Lee Walthall

Mike & Phyllis Ward

Dana Waters

Sue Westfall

Janet Widell

Jay Wilkins

Bill & Frances Woodruff

Helen Yarboro

Thank you to our Organizational Donors!

C. Eugene Ireland Foundation
 Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
 E L Spencer Foundation
 First Presbyterian Church Birmingham
 First Presbyterian Church Tuscaloosa
 Montevallo Presbyterian Church
 Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church
 Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian Church
 Presbyterian Women, Brown Memorial
 Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery
 Riverchase Presbyterian Church
 South Highland Presbyterian Church
 Southminster Presbyterian Church

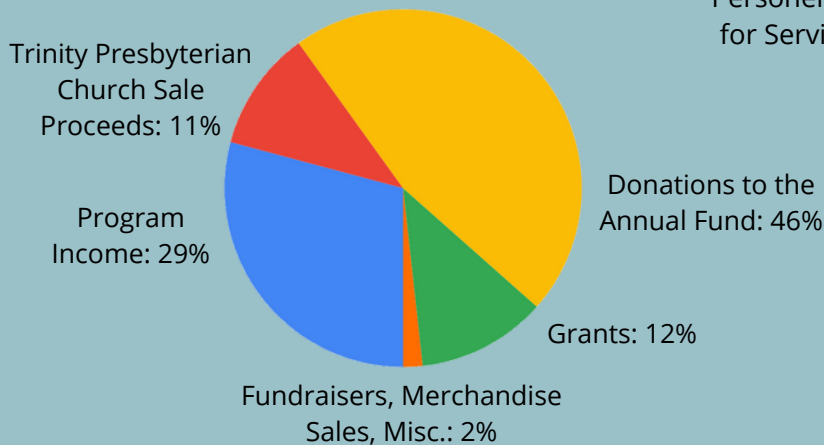
Living River Received Two Grants in 2022

The Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation gave a three year grant for a development staff position. Living River expanded from two part-time staff to three! Staff for development and programming are essential For Living River's growth. We are raising our Annual Fund target to fully fund this position by the end of the grant. Thank you to The IPC Foundation!

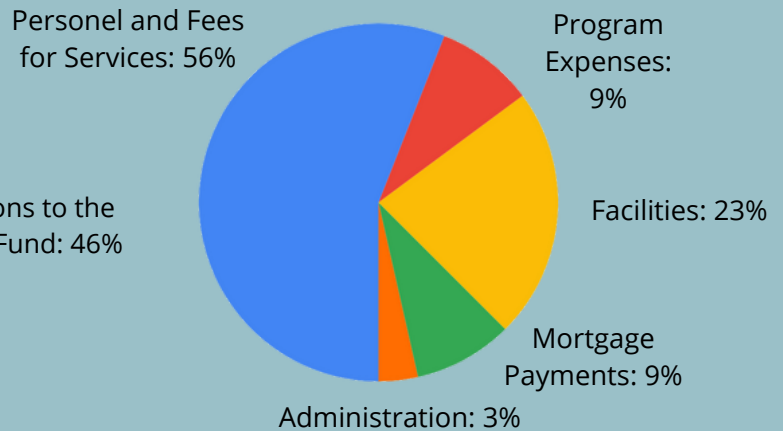
Shades Valley Presbyterian Church gave a grant to renovate the Shades Valley Lodge. The Living River board dreams of adding more adult programming and accommodations. Renovating the Shades Valley Lodge (accommodates 16) is a great step forward in hosting adult programming! Thank you Shades Valley!

Living River's Financial Health

2022 Revenue: \$307,240



2022 Expenses: \$337,453



- The mortgage reduced from \$479,328 on 12/31/21 to \$158,048 on 12/31/22 thanks to a generous donation to reduce the principal and our monthly payments of principal and interest.
- Donations to the Annual Fund for operations were up 25% from 2021.
- Program Revenue was up over 50% from 2021.

Living River's Impact

- Over 120 children and youth participated in retreats or camps in 2022.
- Rental groups from a diversity of faith backgrounds and organizational affiliations used Living River's facilities.
- Auburn University, The University of Alabama, and The Urban Turtle Project conducted separate research projects.



Upcoming at Living River Living River's Direction

Living River's Board has identified a vision for this year and years to come! You, your church, and our Central Alabama community were at the heart of the discussions. We plan to offer **more of our own programming (retreats designed to connect participants to God through different activities and lenses)** including an **adult retreat this year!** We hope to build a **second adult or small group lodge** in the near future to host more and bigger adult groups. The board's environmental committee and the staff will continue making academic and environmental connections and will advertise Living River as a research host site more widely. **We have a vision of Living River being a research hub from which the local community can learn!** Lastly, in order to thrive, **we must build and diversify our base of support.** It is because of Living River's friends and donors that we can continue camp, retreat, and environmental ministries. Please reach out to a board member (found on our website) or staff if you have ideas, connections, or want to know how you can plug in beyond our events listed below!

2023 Calendar

For more details about a specific event, visit our website!

- Feb. 19** Living River Sunday!
- March 4** Spring Volunteer Work Day
- April 28-30** You & Me Retreat
- April 29** Spring Volunteer Work Day
- May 19-21** Adult Cahaba Lily Retreat (ft. a keynote speaker and lilies excursion)
- May 20** Living River Day and Dinner (renewal time, keynote speaker, and dinner)
- May 30-June 9** Counselor Training
- June 11-16** Youth Work and Mission Camp
- June 18-22** Elementary Camp
- June 23-25** You & Me Camp
- June 26-July 1** Creative Elem./Middle Camp
- July 6-9** PHFC/Wilcox Co. Partner Camp
- September 9** Fall Volunteer Work Day
- October 22** Living River Day
- November 9-11** Elementary Retreat

Other Opportunities at Living River

Be a Summer Counselor or share the opportunity with a young adult. Being a counselor is a great way to gain skills, self-confidence, lifelong friendships, and find clarity about future your direction.

Be a Counselor in Training (CIT) or share the opportunity with a high schooler. High schoolers can be CITs at any elementary camp. It's a great opportunity to learn and build friendships!

Do you have administrative skills? We're a small staff! Living River can always use help with mailings, organization, or administrative tasks.

Living River needs a truck! Our onsite truck is beyond repair. Do you have a truck you're able to donate? There are always big facilities projects at Living River!

Come hike or visit us at Living River. We have miles of trails! If you've never been to Living River, come for a Living River Day or reach out to us about a visit. We know you'll feel God's nearness to us all at Living River!

Executive Director's Corner

Rounding the corner from 2022 to 2023, we have many exciting things happening at Living River. **Board Retreat:** In January we had an energy-filled board retreat. We looked back at where we've been, and ahead to where we're going. We welcome new board members, Benga Harrison, April Harrell, Lili Kane and J Benoit. Thank you to our board members who rolled off at the end of 2022, Steve Ashworth, Shirley Finley, Jay Patton, Nick Reed, Emily Roberts, and Laura Underhill. **Shades Valley Lodge Renovation:** The \$150,000 grant we received from the Shades Valley Presbyterian Church Foundation is renovating our 8 bedroom, 4 bath Shades Valley Lodge. The contractors are replacing flooring, tiling bathrooms, painting, upgrading countertops, and more.

Re-visioning our Environmental Mission: Intentional conversations are being held with those in congregations, higher education and environmental advocacy as we seek to redefine our mission of fostering the stewardship of creation.

Summer Camp Registration: As of the writing of this article, 32 campers are registered for this summer. At the beginning of February last year, we had 2 campers registered. Spread the word! Living River is the place for our children and youth this summer.

Home-base for Racial Justice Trips: As I sat with 500+ church educators, pastors, and seminarians at the Association of Partners in Christian Education conference at the BJCC Jan. 23-29, I had an incredible moment with the Director of Children and Youth from Winnetka Presbyterian Church in Winnetka, Illinois. We talked about the impactful dramatic presentation by the Red Mountain Theatre Company of the play, *Memorial*, by Alabama playwright, Quentin Cockrell. She told me about her moving experience at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and 16th Street Baptist Church. She had visited with Rachel in the marketplace area of the conference, and learned about Living River's central location for those seeking a home-base for groups wanting to learn about the struggle for civil rights. At midnight, she emailed me to reserve a week at Living River to bring her group to Alabama for their "Justice Journey" this summer. I feel strongly that God is using Living River to serve God's purposes of peace and reconciliation.

Hold on to your hats, friends! Great things are happening at Living River.

-Jenny Thagard



LIVING RIVER
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway
Montevallo, AL 35115

