

# 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW @LIVING RIVER



## PROGRAM

**RETREATS**—Living River was happy to host the following groups in 2021: First Baptist Alabaster Youth (2 retreats), South Highland Presbyterian Confirmation, Presbytery Visioning Committee, Presbytery Youth Council Retreat Spring, First Presbyterian Tuscaloosa Hiking Group, Jacksonville State UKirk, IPC Boy Scout Troop, FPC Wetumpka Boy Scout Troop, FPC Tuscaloosa Boy Scout Troop, Bethel Presbyterian, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Girls' Camp, Tuscaloosa Christian School Football Camp, Youth Serve Birmingham Service Camp, UAB University Honors Program 1st and 2nd year Retreats, Iron City Church College Ministry, First Pres Deutsch (Tuscaloosa) Confirmation, Vestavia Baptist Youth, Anchor Church Tuscaloosa Campus Ministry, Community Baptist Alabaster Youth, Vestavia First Responders, Presbytery Youth Retreat Fall

**SUMMER CAMP**—Living River held Senior High Work Camp, Middle School Night Owl Camp, You and Me Elementary Camp, Creative Elementary and Middle School Camp, and Elementary Camp. We welcomed 83 campers, 21 volunteers, and 10 young-adult staff, representing the following PSL and PCUSA churches along with campers from other denominations: Church of the Covenant, First-Auburn, Edgewood, First-Birmingham, Independent, Oakmont Chapel, Riverchase, Shades Valley, South Highland, Southminster, Westminster, First-Eufaula, First-Livingston, First-Tuscaloosa, Grace, First-Wetumpka, First-Covington, GA, First-Peachtree City, GA, Westminster, Dallas, TX

## PEOPLE

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**—The Living River Board of Directors has faithfully led Living River during 2021. Officers were Chair—Brian Massengale (Oakmont-Chapel); Treasurer—Tom Bryson (Southminster), Secretary—Shirley Finley (Westminster), Facilities Chair—Steve Ashworth (South Highland), Program Chair—Emily Roberts (First, Birmingham), Development Chair—Kent Howard (Southminster), Environmental Chair—Janet Ort (IPC), Personnel Chair—Jay Patton (First, Birmingham), and Governance Chair—Jonathn Yarboro (First, Wetumpka). Board Members included Scott Hayes (Immanuel), Mike Henderson (First, Tuscaloosa, Nick Reed (First, Auburn), Sam Hamilton-Poore (Montevallo), Laura Underhill (Church of the Covenant), Debra Love (First United, Forestdale), Allison Moore (First, Auburn), Frank Sutherland (IPC), Patrick Riley (Southminster), Sue Westfall (PSL Exec. Presbyter), Kimble Forrister (UCC—affiliated with Immanuel), Paul Dimick (First, Auburn), JD Powell (Shades Crest Baptist) Tom Bryson will serve as the 2022 Board Chair.

## FINANCES

**BUDGET** Our 2021 budget was \$320,000. We ended 2021 with \$19,000 excess revenue over expenses, thanks in large part to government PPP loans, grants, and increased giving.

**GRANTS** Living River applied for 2 grants in 2021, and received word that we have received both. The first grant is from the **Southminster Foundation for Ministry**, and will fund additional recreational equipment of kayaks, paddles, life jackets and an in-ground basketball goal. The funds were received in 2021. The second grant is from the **IPC Foundation** and is a multi-year grant that will fund a Development Director for 3 years. These funds will be awarded in February of 2022.

**DONATIONS** Charitable giving to Living River for operations increased in 2021 to \$ 116,000 . (In 2020 it was \$102,000.)

**MORTGAGE** In 2020 Living River converted a line of credit to a conventional mortgage of \$498,000. The Presbytery is the mortgage holder for the former Trinity Presbyterian property. The congregation who purchased that property makes its payments to the Presbytery and 90% of those payments go to Living River. These funds cover the monthly payment on the mortgage. In addition, thanks to an anonymous donor, Living River's mortgage will be reduced to \$326,000.

**ENDOWMENT** Thanks to a large estate bequest, Living River established 2 funds with the Presbyterian Foundation. One to grow and support operating expenses and one to support summer camp scholarships. Our initial investments totaled \$335,000 and the total value at 12/31/21 was \$422,000.

**PROGRAM** Revenue from Summer Camp was \$32,000 and rental revenue from other groups was \$26,000.

## FACILITIES

**PARKS' PAVILION** A 20x40 pavilion was built with volunteer labor and spearheaded by Charlie Durham to provide covered activity space on the big field adjacent to the fire pit.

**CATHERINE BINFORD ENNS LABYRINTH** was completed by our Senior High work camp during the summer and will be dedicated at a later date.

**REPAIRS/UPKEEP** Straight-line winds led to **roof damage** on the staff cabin building and thanks to the volunteer labor of roofer turned pastor, Jonathan Yarboro, we were able to complete repairs for materials alone. **Water damage** over the years in the shower areas of all of our cabins resulted in replacing the vinyl tile with porcelain tile floors in all of our cabin areas. **New stain** was applied on all porches, decks and railings.

## DEVELOPMENT

**DEDICATIONS** October 3 was a big day at Living River as we dedicated and celebrated the McQueen Office and Welcome Center, the Talbot Porch, the Terry Newland (now Shades Valley) Lodge, and Parks' Pavilion.

**CAMPAINS** The Living River Development Committee has been busy reaching out to former supporters and board members to establish sustained giving to support operations. Our increased December donations were a direct result of their efforts.

## ENVIRONMENT

**ASTA TEACHER OF THE YEAR** Living River had the opportunity to celebrate one of our own board members, Janet Ort, AP Environmental Science Teacher at Hoover High School, as the Alabama Science Teachers' Association High School Science Teacher of the Year for the State of Alabama. Janet chairs the Environmental Committee of the board and has been hard at work making connections for Living River.

**RESEARCH AT LIVING RIVER** Several different colleges and universities including Samford University, The University of Alabama, and Talladega College have had faculty and students onsite at Living River conducting research or holding class at Living River.

## SERVICE

**HURRICANE IDA EVACUEES** Following Hurricane Ida, Living River provided housing for a family of 20 from Eastern New Orleans for several weeks until they were able to return home. Many Living River supporters stepped up with donations and gift cards to help this family get through this difficult time. They were very grateful for all of the support.

# 2022 WHAT'S AHEAD?

### HOPES, DREAMS AND VISIONS FOR 2022

- Design and Construction of new Entry Gate
- Design and Construction of Bell Tower
- Construction of Canoe/Kayak dock at lake
- Construction of Shade Pavilion on Fossil Ridge
- Construction of Canoe trailer shelter
- Upgrade of Shades Valley Lodge
- Spring Dedication and Celebration of projects and Sustaining Donors
- Increased number of sustaining donors
- Increased participation in Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley Summer Camp
- Increased Retreat usage
- Establish organizational framework for the return of the Cahaba Environmental Center as a Freshwater Research Consortium.

### BEYOND 2022

- Pay off the mortgage of \$326,000
- Grow endowment to support operations and camp scholarships
- Install Solar Power to the Dining Hall and cabins. (\$200,000 estimate)
- Pavilion structure to cover canoe trailer (\$15,000)
- Large Playground in Youth-Camp area (\$10,000)
- Small Playground on field and at Shades Valley Lodge(\$7,000 each)
- Pave entry road (\$800,000)
- Manufactured Home for weekend host (\$150,000)
- Small storage building at lake for PFD's, fishing equipment, lifeguard equipment. (\$6000)
- Generator (\$20,000)

**WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?** Give on a continuing basis. **Serve** as a volunteer. **Advocate** for Living River in your congregation or community. **Include** Living River in your Estate Planning. **Pray** that God's will for Living River will be realized.