



16 CABINS for Youth Ministry Center

The Final Phase 2023-24

11/27/2023

Dear Spruce Lake Ministries Family,

Every year Thanksgiving rolls in and the holiday rush kicks into high gear. School programs, Christmas parties, shopping, and the to-do list begins to pile up. Not this year! I am choosing a different mindset as I approach the end of 2023. Maybe it's that Spruce Lake is completing its 60th year and Pinebrook its 90th—or maybe I am just getting older and more reflective.

I could choose to focus on the problems, hurdles and setbacks of our journey. I could focus on the kitchen fire at Pinebrook September 7th that closed the dining room and created an operational nightmare. I could focus on the staffing issues that seem to continue as people move in and out of the ministry. I could see inflation that continues to create financial pressure each day. I could focus on the issues of any day and gather enough worries for tomorrow that I could be overwhelmed.

OR—I can choose to see a past year of record-breaking numbers of guests at both campuses, all worshipping Jesus for who He is. I could choose to remember the amazing way God sustained the ministry through the pandemic. I might reflect on a long history of faithful staff who have poured life into these properties. I could be amazed by the visionary leaders who had a dream to found and launch these camps out of nothing. I could also look back at a history of faithful boards that guided us through the decades. I can decide to see the work of thousands of volunteers. I remember with awe the incredible generosity of our donors who funded the mission.

This season I choose to be amazed by the history of God's grace, mercy and provision.
When I am able to do that, there is only one word that rises to the top...**BLESSED!**

Only when remembering God's faithfulness can we move forward. With decades of history, trust and community behind us, **God is calling us forward!** Year-round ministry at our Wilderness Campus. The final phase of the cabin project which began September 18, 2023. Our goal of 16 winterized cabins that will allow year-round youth ministry. Ministry for "the kids" always was—and still is—at the heart of Spruce Lake.

God has already provided us with \$3,300,000 of the approximately \$4,280,000 needed to fund the Youth Campus. On top of the current gifts in hand, we received a **challenge gift of \$500,000** in October.

What does this mean?

It means that every dollar given toward this project is worth two. We have also created opportunities for skilled individuals to volunteer and help us in the construction process to reduce cost. If you would like to help, please email your interest to cabinvolunteer@sprucelake.org.

Our goal is to be fully funded and to finish the Youth Campus with **NO DEBT**. Please consider supporting this project. No gift is too small; each dollar counts as two moving forward.

So, as you finish out your 2023, choose to look for what God has done in and among the troubles of the day. I believe you will be blessed as you do. **THANK YOU, all of you, for watching GOD work** in the ministries of Spruce Lake and Pinebrook, and please keep us in your prayers.

Mark S. Swartley, CEO
Spruce Lake Ministries

P.S. Every dollar counts as **TWO** moving forward!

