Overnight Camp

A ministry of Spruce Lake Ministries

5389 RT. 447 CANADENSIS, PA 18325 PHONE: 800-822-7505X2 FAX: 570-595-0328 EMAIL: WC2026@SPRUCELAKE.ORG

Dear Parent,

Spruce Lake Summer Camp is excited to serve you and your child this summer! Each year we work hard to hire quality team members and thoroughly plan programs to ensure that camp remains a safe place for kids to grow in independence, make new friends, and experience Christ's love.

The theme for this summer is "Choose to Serve," based on Joshua 24:15. Each week of camp will include both intentional and naturally arising moments that keep Christ at the center.

This packet contains information for you, the parent, about your son/daughter's upcoming camping experience. We hope to answer common questions and be open about our policies and procedures. We know it is a lot of information, so please do not hesitate to call or email with questions.

God Bless,

Josh Reichart
Youth Programs Director

Things to do now that you have registered:

- Look over the *what to bring list & details* page for the camp your child is attending. There you will find arrival and departure details, a packing list, and much more.
- *Plan ahead on Health information*. You will need a health exam within 24 months of attending, a tetanus booster within 10 years, and if your child is taking prescription medication regularly (**including inhalers and epi-pens**) or while attending camp, enter all medication information in the online health form and bring the **original containers** to camp.

Items Due *3 weeks prior* to your child's camping experience (NOTE: you can do these online in the Forms section under Youth Camps and clicking on the appropriate link; you will need to log in to your online account):

- Make the final payment if you have not already done so.
- Mail / fill out online the completed Camper Health Form.
- Visit the *packing list & info* page for the camp your child is attending. This will help you pack & see important times.

Remember to contact us if:

1. You are aware of *any current issues* that arise after the health form is submitted such as a recent injury or illness, psychiatric issues, or traumatic events (parental issues, loss of a loved one).
2. *You made arrangements for someone to pick up your child not specified as an authorized adult while registering*.
3. You are planning to visit camp while in operation for any reason, please make arrangements in advance.
4. You have *travel-related issues* that affect your arrival or pick-up times for your camper; please try to conform to our normal times as much as possible.

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AFFILIATIONS

Christian Camp and Conference Association (CCCA)- Spruce Lake Ministries is a member of CCCA, which exists to proclaim the power and benefits of the Christian camp and conference experience, and to provide leaders at member organizations with ongoing encouragement, professional training, and timely resources. CCCA has over 1000 camps and organizations as members and can be found at www.ccca.org.

Mennonite Camping Association (MCA)- Spruce Lake Retreat is a member of MCA, which serves as a clearinghouse for directing and promoting Christian camping among Anabaptist/Mennonite conferences and congregations throughout Canada and the United States. See www.mennonitecamping.org for details.

American Camping Association (ACA)- Spruce Lake Wilderness Camp upholds the standards for health, safety and program quality set by the American Camping Association. See www.acacamps.org for details. Not accredited with ACA.

CONTACTING OVERNIGHT CAMP

Mailing Address:
SPRUCE LAKE SUMMER CAMP
5389 Route 447
CANADENSIS, PA 18325

Phone: 570-595-7505 x2 & 800-822-7505 x2
Fax: 570-595-0328
Website: https://www.sprucelake.org/summer-camp

Contacting Summer Camp when camp is <u>not</u> in session- Since we operate primarily for three months, we do not always have set year-round office hours. If you get our voicemail, we will return your call in a timely fashion. We can also be reached by e-mail through the contact us feature on our website https://www.sprucelake.org/summer-camp.

Contacting Summer Camp when camp is in session- While camp is in session, we maintain the following office hours:

Monday – Friday 8am-5pm ***Sunday 1pm-5pm***

We check phone messages on weekends while camp is in session. We encourage you to anticipate needs for upcoming weeks of camp (registration changes, directions, etc.) before the weekend prior so that you can take advantage of our regular office hours.

Please contact us in a timely fashion when:

- **You are aware of a camper wellness issue** that arises after submitting the Health Form, such as a recent injury or illness, psychiatric issues, or traumatic events (parental issues, death).
- **You are responding to our call** when your child is here at camp.
- **You have travel-related issues** that affect your arrival at the drop-off or pick-up times.
- **You made arrangements for a person not listed** on the Authorized Adults Form to pick up your camper.
- **You are planning to visit camp** while it is in operation for any reason. Let us know in advance and please understand that visiting with your son/daughter is not permitted while camp is in session.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

If you have an emergency and cannot get through to Overnight Camp on the phone, try the emergency cell phone/ ***Director's cell phone: 272-246-9633***. As a last resort call the Retreat Center 570-595-7505 ext. 1 or 800-822- 7505 ext. 1 and ask if they would be able to contact Overnight Camp by radio.

Please rest assured that in the event of a communications breakdown such as a power outage, regional crisis, or national incident, we are doing everything in our power to care for your child.

HEALTH CARE AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Camper Health Form and Release- These are significant forms that we need to help ensure your child's wellbeing during camp. The *Health Form* includes emergency contact information and health related information required to care for your child. The *Release Form* gives your child permission to participate, and the Authorized Pick-Up List gives us permission to dismiss your son/daughter to someone other than yourself. Both must be signed and fully completed for your camper to attend camp.

- **Please complete the form online or mail the Camper Health Form at least 3 weeks prior** to your son/daughter's week.
- You may attach a copy of your child's immunization records and a copy of both sides of your insurance card.
- You are responsible to provide health and safety updates after the form has been submitted. Updates include changes in your child's health, emergency contact information, adults permitted to pick up your child, and any other information that would help us in caring for your child.

Medications at camp- All medications must be sent in the **original container** with the **original label.** Over the counter medications should be brought only if they will be taken on a regular basis at camp.

Help us reduce the number of vitamins and drugs to administer by sending only what is essential. If your son/daughter has a medication that needs to be with them at all times (bee sting kit, inhaler, etc.), please provide a fanny pack for your child.

Health Care at Camp- A camp nurse is on the premises at all times while overnight camp is in session. They are responsible to administer medications, provide care under our standing orders, and inform counselors of health-related issues. Numerous team members are trained in CPR, First Aid, and Lifeguarding. In addition, 911, hospital, and clinic services are available as needed with an approximate 20-minute response time.

Accident Insurance- Your child needs insurance while at camp. There are plans available that provide coverage for one week while your child is at camp that can be purchased independently. Please contact camp if you need one of these.

TEAM MEMBER SCREENING AND TRAINING

Each summer Overnight Camp employs over 30 team members, ages 16 years and older. A quality team is our number one asset at Overnight Camp. We seek to find solid Christian men and women who are living out their faith authentically and with integrity and place them in roles that match their passions and skills.

Screening- Each team member at Spruce Lake Overnight Camp is carefully screened. We require each summer team member to go through the application process annually, even if previously hired. We review applications, screen at least three confidential references, review employment/education history, and conduct personal interviews. All potential team members are required to sign a voluntary disclosure statement giving us permission to complete background checks with the Pennsylvania Sexual Abuse registry, Pennsylvania Criminal History, FBI fingerprinting, and Social Security address verification.

Training- All team members are required to attend a summer team training event that covers both general subjects and subjects specific to their roles. Our general training involves sessions on Health and Safety, Abuse prevention and reporting, Risk Management, Age Group Characteristics, Organizational Mission, Supervision, and more. More specific trainings are offered for team members working with campers, leading expeditions, in the kitchen, supervising others, and so on depending on the role.

WEB FEATURES

Each camp week will have a page where details can be found. There is a printable version available.

- Forms: ***The Health Form MUST be filled out online OR printed and mailed to camp.***

Go to our website, https://www.sprucelake.org/youth-programs/summer-camp/ to find additional helpful information.

**Please note that certain links are only accessible with the username and password you used to register.*

You will be able to send a message to your camper and see their pictures in the following manner:

- We will be emailing you with information about camp, and one of those emails will give you instructions for sending a message to your camper. Messages will be printed and delivered to campers.
- You will receive an invite to view photos.
- After camp we will email you instructions to complete parent evaluations for camp weeks attended by your children.

CONTACTING/ VISITING YOUR CAMPER

Please partner with us in providing an authentic and quality camp experience by respecting the following camper contact policy:

Spruce Lake Summer Camp's highest priority is the well-being of your son/daughter. While we support good parent/ camp communications, our camps are largely tech-free. This promotes space for real connection, confidence-building, and meaningful relationships. We have found that these relationships flourish when campers are immersed in the camp environment without distractions. Direct parent contact is reserved for special/uncommon circumstances.

Please do not send your camper with a cell phone to avoid loss or damage. In keeping with Spruce Lake's low-tech and safety policies, any cell phones will be removed from campers' possession, stored in the office safe, and returned at the end of the week.

The reasons for this policy are many including authority confusion, camper security, homesickness, misunderstandings, and technology issues. Camp is really about the special relationships formed in the camp setting. This is not to say that we will not allow contact as we or you have special circumstances, but we ask you to trust Spruce Lake with checking on and reporting to you the well-being of your son/daughter.

Letters and messages to campers are the best way to communicate with campers, and we will faithfully deliver those messages to your son/daughter. *Campers will be able to mail letters and postcards but will not have access to outgoing Fax or E-mail.*

Mail- *If you are mailing a letter to your camper please allow 3-4 days. Some parents choose to drop off notes at registration. Mailing Address:*

CAMPER NAME, Cabin# (If known)
SPRUCE LAKE SUMMER CAMP
5389 Route 447
CANADENSIS, PA 18325

Messages *received by 9AM will generally be delivered the same day. We cannot accept attachments.*

1. In the week before your camper's week of camp we will send you an email with more information about your child's week and how to send messages. Please note that messages are printed daily and given to campers. Campers do not have access to computers.

"Camper Checks" During Camp- We will gladly check in on your child and let you know how things are going. If you request a camper check for the Wilderness Camp program, the head counselor will speak personally with both your child and his/her counselor to see how the week is going. **Please note that due to the busy camp schedule, the best time of day to request a camper check is in the morning to give the head counselor the best chance of returning your call within the same day. Requests received after lunch will likely receive a response the following day.**

Visiting Spruce Lake- As mentioned, family and friends are asked not to visit with campers during camp operation. If you are visiting Spruce Lake, we ask that you not visit with your camper. If you desire to visit or become acquainted with our camp, please make arrangements ahead of time with the office. All visitors are asked to come to the office upon arrival, which is located in the Mountainview Gym/Activity Center at the Youth Campus. We will provide a VISITOR badge for you to wear until your departure. Please sign out upon departure.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

This statement shows all charges and credits that are applied to your child's account. Please use this statement to confirm the following information and ***let us know if you see any discrepancies:***

- The name and dates of the camp that we are expecting your child.
- Transportation details from Franconia or William Penn Hwy (To Camp, and/or Home From Camp)
- Any discounts from promotional codes
- Camper Bank Deposit is money available to spend at camp. Expedition campers need to bring cash.

If there is a balance due, submit payment prior to camp.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Camp is a time to meet new people as well as enjoy existing friendships. We ask that you communicate well with other parents and be prepared to help us find good solutions when friend requests are in conflict. Cabin assignments are done 1-2 weeks prior to your week of camp and it is our goal to:

1. Honor as many friend requests as we can
2. We will honor requests of no more than three campers together. All three campers must request each other.
3. Look for age compatibility within tent units.
4. Group several campers coming without a friend request together.

PACKING FOR CAMP

The camper details for your child's week can be found on the webpage on the Overnight Camp website. Look for the name of your camper's week camp (Discoverers, Explorers, Trekkers, Trailblazers, Adventurers, and Navigators.) Included in the **packing list & info** are important times and activity information. In addition to clothing items, some commonly overlooked items are unbreakable dishes, sleeping bags, flashlights, and rain gear.

- Please look over the packing list at least a week prior to camp.
- Please help your child plan what to take, making sure that they are bringing an appropriate amount and style of clothing, noting the **modesty standards**.
- Make sure that luggage and important items have your son's/daughter's full name on them.
- Campers in Adventurers & Navigators are asked to bring dark pants and long-sleeved shirt for an evening game. Navigator campers are asked to bring a casual dress outfit for the theme dinner.

MONEY AT CAMP

Please send camp store deposits prior to camp. Campers deposit spending money into the "camper bank" where a computerized "bank card" system will then be used to keep a record of each time a camper makes a purchase. Money not spent will be refunded to the account on file. Most campers find that $25-$50 per week is sufficient. Common purchases are:

- Spruce Lake apparel (Sweatshirt $24, T-Shirt $12)
- Miscellaneous Gift Shop items ($0.25 - $15.00 per item)
- Retreat Center Snack Shop money ($1.00-$5.00 per day for a drink and/or a snack)
- ***Freewill offering***- Campers are invited to participate in a freewill offering to support Compassion International and Set Free Ministries. (One-time offering taken on Thursday evenings.)

DIRECTIONS TO SUMMER CAMP

The Youth Campus entrance is located off Route 447, about 2 miles north of the traffic light in Canadensis (the intersection of Rt. 390 & Rt. 447). Turn left onto Long Rd. by the wooden Youth Camp sign. Make the first right, following the dirt road just less than 1 mile to the Pavilion. For more general directions to get to this area, visit our website at https://www.sprucelake.org/contact-us/directions/.

REGISTRATION/ ARRIVAL

Registration opens Sunday after 3:15 PM in the Pavilion. Buses will arrive by 4pm.

To register, campers must have:

- Any special notes or instructions
- Medications clearly marked in **original containers**
- Camper Bank $ if not already sent
- Camper Health Form if not already completed. This is required to participate at camp.

SUMMER CAMP CONTACTING YOU

Non-emergencies and routine questions make up the vast majority of our phone calls. But we do ask you to be thoughtful in providing emergency contact information on the health form so that we are never without a method to contact you or a designated emergency contact during a camp week.

Typical reasons we may call:

- If following up on financial balances, lack of bank money, lost and found, or incomplete information on the Health Form.
- If there is any question about how or with whom your child is departing camp.
- In response to a request for us to check on your camper.
- If we need higher medical care than we offer within the camp setting for your child.

Other reasons we may call- As a camp, you are entrusting us to make reasonable decisions with regard to your child's welfare. Understand that we will not call home about every circumstance, but you are welcome to do camper checks at any time throughout the week, and we will give you an open and timely response. We generally call to get your perspective on a specific situation or when we feel the situation is uncommon. Below are some examples of how we deal with situations at camp:

Homesickness- It is common for children to miss their parents and home, especially in the later hours and less structured times of day; in these situations you probably would not get a call. It is uncommon for children to be homesick throughout whole days or cry or be withdrawn consistently. It is uncommon for children to become demanding, inconsolable, or shut themselves off from the counsel of others. In the last two situations, we will call. *Please know that you can help children avoid homesickness by helping them to know what to expect at camp and by sending timely and upbeat correspondence to them while they are at camp. When possible, avoid vacations directly prior to camp experiences for younger children.*

Illnesses/injury- It is common to have many children see the nurse about a range of issues that are easily managed. If the nurse sees the same child about similar issues repeatedly without progress, we will call. We will also call if your child will need extra medical care, stays overnight in the nurse's clinic, or is kept out of activities for more than half a day.

Behavioral issues- It is common to have disagreements among campers or for a camper to feel uncomfortable within a new setting. But it is uncommon to have relationships with ongoing, increasing tensions or for a child to feel continually out of place or sorts; therefore we will call home to keep you informed and ask for your perspective. Also, if a behavior occurs that gives us concern for the physical or emotional wellbeing of your child or another child, we will call.

DISMISSAL & DISMISSAL POLICY

Dismissal is at 3:30 PM on Friday. Discoverers, Explorers, Trekkers, Trailblazers, Adventurers, and Navigators are dismissed at **3:30 PM**. Dismissal for Parent-Child Mini-Week and Family Camp will be at 6:30 PM.

Camper Dismissal Policy- ***Only authorized persons will be permitted to pick up a camper from camp.*** Parents/Guardians will be asked to list authorized adults who have permission to pick up their child/children. Campers not riding the bus will remain at their table with their counselor and wait for an authorized adult to sign them out. If the person picking up your child is not on the list of authorized persons, they will not be able to leave with your child until we contact you or another emergency contact person for permission.

This procedure will also be followed at the Bus Drop-Off Locations. You or the authorized person will be asked to sign out your child/children prior to departing. If you arrive early, you can sign your camper out before the bus arrives.

Early Dismissal/Pick-up at unusual time- Please try to limit early pick-ups to allow your child to have the full camp experience and not disrupt the experience for others. If your camper needs to be picked up for any reason at a time other than the normal dismissal, we ask that you make arrangements with the office ahead of time. You or your designated authorized person should come to the office, located in the Mountainview Gym/Activity Center, to sign out the camper prior to departing.

LOST AND FOUND

We will do our very best to return items left at camp by your camper. Contact our office to provide a description of the item lost, and we will contact you to let you know whether the item has or has not been found.

- Items with full camper names written or sewn in help us return lost articles with more success.
- Returns will occur at the cost of the camper family.
- Lost items not claimed by the deadline may be redistributed to a thrift store, disposed of, or set aside for future camper use.

TRANSPORTATION BY BUS

Bus registration and Fee for service- Add bus transportation to your registration if desired. We cannot guarantee a spot on the bus if a seat is not reserved and paid for at least 3 weeks prior to the week of camp. There is a $25 fee each way for the Franconia bus and $20 fee each way for the William Penn bus. Your transportation needs (to camp and home) and location (Franconia, William Penn Hwy) are indicated on the Statement of Accounts. *Please confirm the details and contact us to make changes*.

Pre-registration/ Loading the bus- A camper bus registration table will be set up only at the Franconia location. Campers and parents/chaperones ***will visit the table prior to loading the luggage or the bus*** to verify necessary information and to receive a name tag for your camper. Campers must remain with parent/guardian until they board the bus. Please have your camper visit the restroom before boarding the bus they are assigned. A water bottle may be carried on.

Unloading the bus- Unloading is more involved; for your camper's security we cannot release a camper to any person not authorized by the parent or guardian. You or the authorized person will be asked to sign out your child/children prior to departing.

Chaperoning for the bus- We need chaperones on Sundays and Fridays to accompany the campers. If you indicate an interest in chaperoning, we will call you if we are in need of a chaperone for that week. Please note that only if you are a confirmed chaperone will you receive reimbursement for the bus fee.

Bus Supervision/Rules

Chaperones are asked to supervise the passengers, which enables the driver to concentrate on driving. Rules that campers should be following include:

1. Following the directions of the driver or chaperone.
2. Always staying seated while the bus is moving.
3. Keeping their heads and hands inside the windows if opened.
4. Maintaining a noise level that is acceptable to drivers and chaperones.
5. Being safe in your actions while loading and unloading.
6. Never throw anything out an open window- passengers may be cited for littering or held liable for damage to other vehicles on the road.
7. Treat others with respect- the way you want to be treated.
8. Snacks are permitted as long as trash is put in its proper place. Beverages- water bottles are preferred rather than juice boxes.
9. Vehicles may not exceed the passenger seating capacity established by the manufacturer.

Consequences for Breaking the Rules

1. Verbal warning by chaperone or driver.
2. Camper is assigned to a seat in the front of the bus.
3. Camper sent to the Director upon arrival and parents notified. If return trip, Director and parents notified.

Franconia Bus Location & Time

Bus location- Bus service is provided to camp from the Franconia Mennonite Church, located on Route 113 between Harleysville and Souderton (30 miles North of Philadelphia). Please use the Route 113 main entrance and NOT the Meeting House Rd. entrance.

Directions from PA Turnpike: Take the Lansdale, PA Rt. 63, exit #31 of the NE Extension, PA turnpike. Turn right onto Rt. 63 W. Continue 4-5 miles to the intersection of Rt. 113 & Rt. 63. Turn right at the light onto Rt. 113 N and continue about 2 miles. Turn left into the Rt. 113 main entrance of Franconia Mennonite Church.

Directions from Route 309: Travel PA Rt. 309 S. from Quakertown or Rt. 309 N. from Lansdale to the Souderton, PA Rt. 113 exit. Take Rt. 113 South and continue on Rt 113 South to the Church. (Note: within 2 miles Rt. 113 S. crosses a RR track and turns right. Within 6 miles it passes Bergey's GMC and Allentown Rd) Turn right into Franconia Mennonite Church.

Bus times- It is important that you arrive at least ***20 minutes early*** to Franconia to register.

- √ **Franconia Bus Departs:** Sundays at 2 PM.
- √ **Franconia Bus Returns:** Friday around 5:30 PM.

William Penn Hwy Bus Location & Time

Bus Location- Bus service is provided from the William Penn Hwy Park and Ride. The Park-n-Ride is a public parking area on the North West corner of the intersection of PA Rt 33 and the William Penn Hwy.

Directions from Route 309 Travel PA Rt. 309 North to I-78 and travel East approximately 10.5 miles to PA Rt 33 (Pocono Exit).

Directions from I-78: Exit PA Rt-33 (Poconos exit) 4 miles west of the PA-NJ border. Travel Rt-33 North approximately 2.5 miles to the William Penn Hwy exit and follow signs.

Directions from Rt 22: Exit PA Rt-33 (to I-78) 4 miles west of the PA-NJ border. Travel Rt-33 South for approximately 1 mile to the William Penn Hwy exit and follow signs.

Bus times- It is important to arrive at least ***15 minutes early*** to the William Penn Hwy Park and Ride. We cannot guarantee that the bus will wait beyond the scheduled departure. Cars may not be parked overnight, and there will be no formal registration.

- √ **WP Hwy Bus Departs:** Sundays at 3 PM**.**
- √ **WP Hwy Bus Returns:** Friday around 4:30 PM.