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Greetings from Holston Camp and Retreat Center,

I am looking forward to Summer! Why? Because that's when we have the most fun here at Holston. I love the sight of cars roaring up the dirt road toward the Dining Hall--the doors fly open and out jumps our campers ready to get their FUN on.

Last year was grrrrreat, and this year will be more of the same. Of course, we are famous for our traditional, small group camping which means our counselors take time to get to know the kids and the kids get to know each other. After that, it's easy: we swim, we canoe, we kayak, we ride bikes, we sing, we dance, we play games, we eat "plenty good" thanks to Ms. Peggy, and we smell like campfire smoke for several days.

This year's theme is the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Matt. 7:12) It may be one of the most important lessons in the Bible. We'll talk about it at Worship Point and around the campfire in the evening with some helpful pastors from the Holston Presbytery churches.

This year we are offering a special CONFIRMATION class for rising 6th through 9th graders. Campers will take a big step on their spiritual journey as they learn about the Bible, Jesus, and the Church. Look for the dates on the schedule and plan to bring your pals at church.

I've been making plans for fun activities and outings, and I have asked some wonderful young people to help make it all happen. Our counselors are special people because they love they love to be with kids and share their stories. They will have two weeks of training before campers arrive so they will know how to lead activities in a safe way and make sure everyone has a comfortable and rewarding experience at camp.

Parents, I know you have questions so don't hesitate to call to speak with Lisa Jones, our Office Administrator, or me.

Love and Peace for all,

Jim Austin
Director

Why Holston Camp? (added May 24, 2017)

Maybe it's the cool mountain breeze or the cold water of Wildcat Lake. Or maybe its the kindness of a counselor who has respond to a personal call to share her faith and skills with a camper. Whatever the reason, kids that come to Holston Camp are changed. Our hope is that they depart from here more mindful of their world and more compassionate to their neighbors.

We hope they tell exciting stories of adventures with new friends, and they hold the memory of Holston in their hearts forever. Mostly, we want kids to realize they are engaged in a spiritual journey that enriches and informs their lives. Jesus said, " My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12). Join us this summer as we practice that love.

Other reasons:

- We hire Christian counselors who have undergone 2 weeks of group training in safety, behavioral issues, outdoor activities, faith, and first aid/CPR
- Kind, compassionate, and open-minded staff
- Tolerant and Inclusive to all
- Small-group camping with age-appropriate activities and skill acquisition
- Real mattresses on bunks in Main Camp
- Convenient, sanitary bathrooms
- ENO hammocks in cabins at Rustic Village
- 150 acres of pristine woods and streams
- Wildcat and Lyons Lakes with canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards
- Swimming lessons
- Two zip-Lines and natural rock faces for climbing
- Healthy meals incorporating special dietary needs
- Presbyterian Ministers leading daily worship
- Many on-campus and off campus events
- Music, dancing and crafts
- Promoting stewardship for the earth and its inhabitants

Jim Austin