

Easter 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

Have you seen the new Walmart Easter advertisement? It is full of kids running around searching for Easter eggs with background music by Blondie – One way or another I'm gonna get you! The tagline is "***Easter like you mean it,***" turning a proper noun into a verb.

Are you going to "***Easter like you mean it***"?

Of course, in order to turn the noun into a verb, we will have to reflect on the sacrifice of Good Friday and the recognition that it should have been us hanging on that cross. It should have been us being scourged and mocked. It should have been each one of us crying out to our Father in heaven. When we do that, we have no choice but to Easter like we mean it.

Here at Lutheran Island Camp and Christ Serve Ranch we have been reflecting on how we will turn Easter into a verb this summer for the hundreds of children and families that will be coming to be spiritually nourished. We know that God works through the Bible studies, devotions, staff and activities that we share with them.

Last summer we heard from many of the parents and grandparents whose children and grandchildren came to camp. We wanted to share just a few of those comments with you.

*"Thank you, Thank you! I went to camp when I was 9 and it was a life changing experience for me. I prayed that my grandchildren would have the same kind of experience. They did. I cried when they asked me if they could come to church with me."* **A thankful Grandma.**

*"Our family has been coming to Family Week for many years. It is the highlight of our summer. This past week was no exception. We spent time together in ways that just aren't possible anywhere else. There is something so special about being here and knowing that God loves us. Thank you for another great Family Week."*

*"You were right. I talked to you at a jamboree last spring and you told me that Jeremy would be just fine. He has been like a different little boy since his week at camp. We know our struggles may not be over, but our little boy is smiling again. Thank God and Thank You!"* **A grateful mom and dad.**

Yes, we ***Easter like we mean it***, because we do. We know that sharing God's love is the most important thing we do. Please know that we ***Easter like we mean it*** during horseback riding camp, fishing camp, Family weeks, classic camps, and every event that we hold at Lutheran Island Camp and Christ Serve Ranch or when we come to congregations and communities throughout the upper Midwest.

But we cannot do this without your prayers, your volunteer time, your financial support, and your help in local congregations and communities. So we come humbly to you and ask that you join us and *Easter like you mean it*.

Most important, we do request your prayers. We ask that you encourage your congregation to remember Lutheran Island Camp and Christ Serve Ranch in their Sunday prayers, especially during this time as we prepare for Summer 2017. We also request your individual and family prayers for our staff, our campers, and our volunteers.

This spring we have many, many, many projects that we are attempting to complete. They range from remodeling cabins to planting trees; from staining buildings to completing 200 feet of boardwalk; from fencing at Christ Serve Ranch to planting flower gardens; from setting up the beach to putting in hundreds of feet of dock; from cleaning cabins to getting the canteen ready; from brushing horses to cutting wood; from cleaning up slash from tree harvesting to planting soy beans and so much more. April 29<sup>th</sup> is our Spring Work Day, but volunteers are welcome just about any time.

God is blessing us this year with so many opportunities. We are adding a satellite camp in the Elk River area to better serve children in the Highways 10 and 94 corridors. We are expanding our Day Camp programs both at camp, but also now at the Ranch as well. We are moving forward with our Christ Serve Academy to serve parochial schools, online students, and families. In order to do these things we need to add vehicles and trailers, we need to hire additional staff, and we need to improve our existing facilities. God's people have been wonderful in supporting these many efforts through their gifts and we do thank you for your support. We pray that your support will continue. Please use the enclosed form anytime this year.

Our theme in 2017 is "Standing on the Rock" and it is a wonderful theme. We are going to add a sub theme of "**Easter like you mean it**," remembering that each of us has been called to share the message of salvation and resurrection with everyone we come in contact with.

**Easter like you mean it!**

In Christ,

Kenneth W. Erlandson  
Executive Director