

The Brookside Connexion

A publication of
Brookside Outdoor Center

Jesus is the Rock!

7th Edition

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Mission Statement

Brookside Outdoor Center is a Christian camp whose mission is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ through the camping experience by spending time in God's Word, building relationships and sharing adventures.

You know how sometimes things don't quite turn out the way you plan? You all know those days, right? When you have a perfectly planned schedule and everything is just supposed to fall in line but... well, it doesn't quite go that way? Though my temptation is always to stomp my feet a little, the wisdom of years is teaching me that there is usually a silver lining to the collapse of my tightly orchestrated plans. The kind of day I end up having, once I surrender to the inevitable, is often way more important in the scheme of life than the original plan, no matter how well thought-out it seemed to be.

Well, did I ever have one of those days in early November! My carefully and agonizingly organized plan for the day crumbled in the doctor's office with a diagnosis of breast cancer. I have to say I was a little too stunned to stomp my feet. I had the clear realization that all my planning and organizing was really useless in the face of this reality, *a reality that God had already known would happen*. God had already gone before me and that He had been guiding me surely everyday, even though I didn't know that I would be facing cancer. I realized that saying I trust Him is a lot easier than truly believing it.

Walking through the next few months of treatment taught me not to plan so much but to believe that God's plan included this and that He actually thought it was worth allowing this! His plan, which is infinitely better than anything I can imagine, included breast cancer. What kind of God allows curve balls like cancer and death? What kind of God allows my plans for my life, which I actually thought were pretty good and well-rounded by the way, go down the proverbial drain?

Well, as you may have suspected, countless books have been written on just this subject. It would be unkind of me to rattle off a glib answer to a question that often haunts our hearts. But I can tell you this. I know that cancer is supposed to be a bad thing but God made it a good thing in my life. I learned that just about anything can happen to me and when I stop falling, I will still be standing on Jesus. God promises never to leave us or forsake us, regardless of the diagnosis. I do not have the assurance that I will live or that it will never come back, but I know it doesn't matter. I know that if I live, it will be to glorify God through every shadowed valley and if I were to die it would be to glorify God through that very shadowed valley. Living and dying, God is with me. He didn't leave because I got cancer. He never leaves me, even when bad things happen.

So my journey through cancer has been filled with light and purpose. Cancer has a way of opening hearts and cutting through a lot of dignified masks we like to wear. Cancer has a way making every moment count, every tear and every hug. Cancer opened doors of friendship to acquaintances, and showed me how important it is to live every day to its fullest. I no longer want to put off what God asks me to do. I am finding the courage to step boldly forward to say "Here I am, Lord, send me." The things that held me back, kept me bound in fear have lost their power. Why fear life when I faced death and found that I was not afraid?

Now as we prepare for another summer at Brookside, I think of the campers who pray for sun and are disappointed by rain. So often our thoughts are in one direction and God's are in the other. It is a lesson of life to look for His handiwork in the "badly answered" prayers of our hearts. Campers come



with plans for their week of camp and plans for the coming school year, plans for their lives. And it is my prayer this summer that those highly orchestrated plans of theirs fall quickly apart and that they will raise up their eyes from the necessary destruction to the Creator whose plan is infinitely more beautiful than anything anyone can dream up! When our plans are ruined, when life throws us a curve ball, God is not absent. Oh no, nothing is further from the truth! He stands close as always, waiting for the invitation to pick up the broken pieces that we just can't ram together, and to show us the beautiful design that He has been planning for us all along since the beginning of time.

Heather

Summer Line Up

The summer at Brookside opens with our Adventure Camp for 12 to 15 year olds. This is a non-stop week of adventures from hiking and canoeing to overnight campouts to high ropes challenges and wall climbing. No experience necessary; we will provide all the equipment, teaching and supervision. Our adventures are about learning, trying new things for the first time, building character and gaining confidence. Immersed in

a safe, encouraging, positive environment, our campers have the chance to enhance self-confidence, social-interaction skills and achieve individual successes that will prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead in their lives.

Pioneer Camp is basically a one-week rustic camping experience for children with little or no camp background: a sort of introduction to the joys and eternal moments of camping. Campers sleep in tents but are blessed with beds and mattresses! Most meals are cooked outdoors and food never tasted so good! Add to all that games, canoeing instruction, archery instruction, and an awesome team of new friends.

Our Leaders-in-Training program will be held during the first two weeks of camp. Our LIT program is all about excellence, respect, communication and teamwork. Campers gain independence while taking responsibility for themselves and their team mates. They'll be helping others, working as a team, problem solving with a great group of people, accomplishing things they never thought they'd accomplish, and just kicking back and being themselves. When they get back home, they'll have the skills to enjoy outdoor activities on their own and the leadership qualities to help them in the classroom, or on the playing fields, or anywhere they want to succeed.



We are welcoming day campers well as residential campers again this summer. There are quite a number of children in the local area who stand to benefit from this. It will not change our residential program at all; the day campers will just join us every day from 8 am to 4pm and participate in the program like any other camper.

The week of July 20 to 24 is strictly a day camp for kids of all ages.



We have a very exciting announcement to make about day camp. We will be running a second week of day camp this summer at Quebec Lodge Camp in nearby North Hatley. The venture is in association with the Quebec Lodge Foundation and we are excited to be running camp on the grounds of QL once again! For more information, please see our website or give us a call!

Our last camp of the summer will be Wilderness Survival Camp. A traditional favourite with our campers, wilderness survival is an awesome camp full of hands-on instruction on building emergency shelters, navigation, fire building, water purification, cooking on a fire and safely gathering and sampling wild edible plants.

Our programs are, as always, focused on adventures in the outdoors, traditional camping skills and team-building for small groups. We are reaching out to children with unique learning challenges because of our high staff to camper ratio and small size. We are still working with Angel Tree Camping to provide children from homes with one or more incarcerated parents the chance to go to camp. We are ready, set and excited to go for this summer! The hard part is waiting for the first day of camp!

Our Staff

Back with us this year are Alex, Rachel and Trish! They are really looking forward to this summer. And we are pleased to have Robert

Monk and John Helleur join us this summer! Colin and Karl will be dropping in on us from time to time this summer to help out. Colin will be working at McGill this summer in the area of cancer research. We are very proud of him! Sarah has graduated from McGill with her teaching degree and is already teaching across the ocean in England. We will miss her but couldn't be happier for her!

Trish has been busy with her studies in nursing this year and working at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute. But she **will** be with us at Brookside for the summer as our senior female counselor and program coordinator.

Robert Monk will be our assistant program coordinator for the summer, in addition to being our senior male counselor and a nationally certified lifeguard. This will help us to keep everything running smoothly while Brian and I race around in the background, pulling it all together! Some of you may remember him from a couple of summers ago. We are thrilled to have him on board with us!

John Helleur is also a nursing student at the University of Ottawa and is an experienced

Recipe corner

No Bake Cookies

- 2 cups of sugar
- 3 Tbsp. cocoa
- 1 stick butter
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 cups oatmeal
- 1/2 cup peanut butter

Mix sugar and cocoa in a pan. Add butter and milk. Bring to a boil. Boil 2 minutes while stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add vanilla and peanut butter. Stir. Put mixture in a bowl containing the oatmeal. Mix the oats into the mixture until they are coated. Drop by spoonfuls onto aluminum foil. Let cool and enjoy!

nationally certified lifeguard. He joins us as a counselor this summer. Welcome aboard John!

Rachel is returning to be our female counselor. Yippee! The biggest question is now, what color will her hair be this summer?????



Support a Camper

This is not to say we don't have other needs but the overwhelming need that we want to present is for our campers. Camp should be accessible to all children. So many of you know the difference that a week of camp can make in the life of a young person, that's why you are reading this letter. If you would like to help make it possible for children from financially struggling families to come to camp for a week, please visit our website or contact us for information on how to do this.



Jesus is the rock, And he rolls my blues away.

[Bop shoo-bop, shoo-bop, woo!]

When you wake up in the morning, And you're feeling down and blue, [Feeling down, down, down and blue.]

When you wake up in the morning, And the whole world's after you, [You know the whole world's after you.]

Just look to Jesus, He's gonna pull you through.

[You know that Jesus will pull you through.]



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