

Why Galilee?

February 25, 2005

With my multiple years of being deeply involved with Galilee and seeing the number of children and adult lives changed by various camps, conferences and simply the incredible environment, I wanted to share with you my thoughts on "Why Galilee". In addition to my ongoing experiences, my trip in January to the annual Episcopal Camp and Conference annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia furthered my thoughts of why all camps and conference centers are critical as we move forward in the Episcopal Church today. Camps are one of the most exciting ministries in the church today. Having listened to multiple keynote speakers including The Rt. Rev. Wayne P. Wright from the Diocese of Delaware, and The Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee from the Diocese of Virginia as well as the The Very Rev. Martha Horne, Dean of the Virginia Theological Seminary and listening to their positions on camps, you too would come away fully charged! I will recap some of the highlights of those talks, because to include all of the information would take several pages to review what I experienced in five days.

Camps today provide a formation for spiritual growth over parishes, partially because of the current "church wars" including the church battles of today over money – property – pensions which are in competition with spirituality. Although no surprise, the current church situation is quite similar to politics in our country today. Camps are simply outside of these issues. Camps have the opportunity to influence the young with Christian values not often found in homes, schools or in some parishes. Youth and adults can come to Galilee and learn their own Christian identity without outside influences. Out of their normal environment, children can learn and be accepted without the usual day to day ridicule and stress. Petty partisan squabbles turn off our young people because of the hypocrisy vs. the love one another philosophy of the past.

There are many growing churches and successful camps nationwide, but to listen to the press regarding the Episcopal Church, you'd never know it! Who talks about camps, anyhow? Of the dioceses I've observed that have successful camp and conference operations, the Bishop is deeply involved and very supportive. And the number of church leaders, priests and deacons that have had their grounding in camp experience is tremendous.

Who can we influence at our camps? If the USA has 75% Christians, who do you think is the second largest group? It's not what you'd probably guess, but it is non-Christians or non-believers, not the Jews or Muslims or Mormons who you may have guessed. There is a spiritual hunger out there today, and denominational loyalty is fading. Youth in their 20's and 30's today are trying other religions, but we have an opportunity to educate them and bring them to Christ. Seminaries are growing today with new, younger seminarians.

Dean Horne of the Virginia Theological Seminary believes that there are four hallmarks of a good Christian camp and conference center:

- 1) Radical Hospitality – where everyone becomes equal, everyone is welcome and almost no one leaves as a stranger. We want our hospitality to be so everyone leaves as friends. And hospitality has biblical values, and it's not only the staff, the smiles, shelter and good food, but also an ambiance that creates a faith environment permitting God to act.
- 2) A place to express faith - how we live our lives is more important than all the catechisms. You already know what Jesus has taught us and how to live. That's what we can expand on.
- 3) Camps are a safe place - guests are provided a new freedom in the camp environment to be themselves, and they can even fail, without being attacked. At camp, you can feel secure, safe and respected as a part of a community that accepts and values you as a child of God.
- 4) Place of physical beauty - camps, especially Galilee, are places of physical beauty that we all need to calm our spirit and our bodies, and revel in the beauty of God. Camps are simply set apart but still a very important part of the Church.

The education received at camp is not highlighted by swimming, hiking or boating, it's an experience of acceptance by adults and other attendees that permit them to experience acceptance, unrestricted love and friendships. Have you experienced kids leaving their session at camp? It's incredibly heart wrenching to see the reaction of love, kindness and sadness as they depart from new friends and teachers.

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Please consider the incredible value that Galilee provides our attendees. Help us grow with your support, in every way. Come and enjoy the beauty of Galilee.

Thank you for reading Faithfully,
Larry A. Morris <(((><
Galilee Acting Executive Director

(This article was written by Larry A. Morris in response to a request from the President of the Standing Committee to share his experience of attending the Episcopal Camp and Conference Center experience with them and with the Diocese through "The Galilean" and "The Desert Spirit.")

Wishes - Great and Small

To finish Frensdorff House interior = \$20,000	Snow Blower = \$1,200	12 new life vests = \$360
Living room furniture for Bishop's House = \$2,500	Furniture for Hamilton House = \$1000	Free standing basketball backboard = \$300
Audio/Video set-up for Hunting Lodge = \$1,500	<i>If you would like to fulfill a wish, contact Jason Arnold at 775/749-5546 or at ResidentDirector@Galilee.Tahoe.org</i>	
		Flowers for planters = \$200

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Church from Goldfield, Nevada to its present Galilee site. The elder Chambers was responsible for positioning the church so the "snow cross" on Mt. Tallac is visible through the church's Gothic window. With this legacy, it is not surprising that Chambers began attending Camp Galilee in 1984 and worked his way up to being a counselor before his tenure was up. It was his experiences at Galilee and over 20 years of being a Galilee "fan" that led him to accept a position on the Galilee Board and be part of its future. That inspired him to make this statement, "I hope that kids all over the Diocese and beyond will be lucky enough to experience what I and so many others have at this special place." Chambers has a Bachelor's Degree in Geosciences from Mississippi State University. He is a member of All Saints, Las Vegas where he has served on the Vestry. Chambers lives with his wife, three dogs, a cat and a turtle in Southern Nevada.



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\$10 (which covered most of the costs) provided by the Trinity Relief Society to youth choir members with perfect attendance. Goss graduated from Reno High School and earned a Bachelor's Degree in History at the University of Nevada. When she and her first husband returned to Reno after a stint in the Army, St. Stephen's became their family church. Her three children are also Galileans. This is an encore for Goss on the Galilee Board as she served for ten years in the 1970's being appointed first by Bishop Wright and then by Bishop Frensdorff. Her appointment by the latter was a particular honor as he had been her chaplain at Camp Galilee when he was serving as priest in Winnemucca and Elko. Goss and her husband, Hal, attend Family Camps at Galilee when they are not traveling or visiting with their eighteen grandchildren. They have volunteered on various projects for both the Galilee Board and the Galilee Foundation and Goss has stated that it is a privilege to have been appointed as a Galilee Trustee by Bishop Katharine Jefferts-Schori.



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She then spent two years at Cornell University studying human services program planning and evaluation. In Central New York, she was director of a multi-county child care coordinating council and later became coordinator of quality assurance projects and continuing education for a statewide medical association. She served as a Trustee for the Cazenovia Public Library, spent nine years on local and regional school boards, served on the boards of the local community chest and on local and state boards for the League of Women Voters. McCall serves as Parish Coordinator and is currently Senior Warden at St. Stephen's in Reno. She is also the Administrative Aide for the Diocesan Commission on Ministry. Her long-time interest in Galilee is reinforced by having four of her six grandchildren attend Camp Galilee with the other two soon to follow.