




FERNCLIFF
Parent Packet
Overnight Camp
2024



Who We Are

Ferncliff is a nonprofit camp and conference center located on 1,200 acres just west of Little Rock, Arkansas. We are affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA), though we welcome campers and guests of all traditions. Since our start as a summer camp in 1937, we have become a center of faith development, hospitality, mission, and Creation care. Ferncliff has grown to include year-round conference facilities, a Nature Preschool, and the Disaster Assistance Center alongside our camp programs.



Summer 2024

Why Ferncliff Summer Camp

At Ferncliff Summer Camp, we welcome campers into a life of caring for Creation, others, and themselves. Through our nature-based camp programs, we foster a connection between campers and the natural environment - which is growing increasingly challenging for the kids of today. We hike mountains, swim in the creek, fish in the lake, and learn to love and respect God's Creation. All of these activities (and more!) happen in small groups of campers with trusted young adult mentors. In their small groups, campers are able to develop interpersonal skills, strengthen their sense of identity, and explore their faith. Our camp programs have daily Bible studies and evening worships and provide lots of opportunities for campers to consider what they believe and what God is doing in their lives.

**Our campers will grow up to be
caretakers of Creation, peacemakers, and faithful disciples of Christ.**

Program Goals

Ferncliff's **mission statement** is "As an expression of God's love, Ferncliff welcomes people into a life of caring for Creation, others, and themselves."

After a week of camp, campers of all ages at Ferncliff will:

- Expand their independence
- Strengthen their sense of identity
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Interact with creation
- Explore their Christian faith

Contacting Ferncliff

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns. We are available throughout the year and during the summer.

Website: www.ferncliff.org

Office phone: 501-821-3063

Email: Jocelyn Wildwright, Camp Director & Chaplain; jocelyn@ferncliff.org

Cell phone: 501-291-0836 (Please call Camp Director Jocelyn on this number with any emergencies or for any questions/concerns after 4:00pm)

2024 Overnight Camp Info

Camp Check In & Check Out

When do Overnight Camp sessions begin and end?

Overnight Camp sessions generally begin on Sundays and end on Fridays. Check-in is from **4:00pm-5:00pm on Sundays**. Closing Program takes place at **4:00pm on Fridays** and is followed by Camper Check-out until 5:00pm. Drop off and pickup times will be strictly enforced due to staff duties in opening and closing camp sessions.

Discovery camps run for a shorter period of time. For Sunday-Tuesday Discovery camps, check-in is with all other campers, but Closing Program will take place at 4:00pm on Tuesday followed by Camper Check-out until 5:00pm. For Wednesday-Friday Discovery camps, check-in is from 4:00-5:00pm on Wednesday, and then Closing Program will take place with all other campers.

What else do I need to know about check-in and pick-up?

Prior to check-in time, staff members are busy preparing for campers, so we ask that all campers arrive during the scheduled times. Please arrive within the hour-long check-in window. We will send more information about where to go and what to expect at check-in the week prior to your camp session.

On Fridays, camp will conclude with a 20-30 minute Closing Program for parents and families. Closing Program will start at 4:00pm in the Christian Activity Building (CAB), and will include camper group skits, a slideshow of the week, and hearing from our Camp Chaplain. Camper Check-out will follow the Closing Program, and staff will direct you on how to sign your camper out and pick up your camper's luggage.

When dropping off and picking up your child, please stay on camp roads and obey the camp speed limit, which is 10 miles per hour. Be aware of any animals, pedestrians, or bike riders as you drive through camp.

Preparing for Camp

What's the camper-to-counselor ratio?

Our groups follow the counselor-to-camper ratios of the American Camp Association - 1:6 for overnight campers ages 6-8, 1:8 for campers ages 9-14, and 1:10 for ages 15-18. There will be one to two staff members with each cabin/group. All campers in a group will be the same approximate age, usually within a couple of grades. Most family groups are co-ed, though occasionally, a family group may be composed of all female campers and counselors or all male campers and counselors.

Do you have medical staff on duty?

Yes. We have a registered nurse on call at all times. In addition, all of our staff are trained and certified in First Aid and CPR.

Do you have lifeguards on duty? What if my child is not a good swimmer?

Yes. We have a team of certified lifeguards and we've got lots of opportunities for kids of all swim levels. At the beginning of the week of camp, our lifeguards have each camper complete a skills check - so that they're able to get a good sense of the swimming abilities of each camper and recommend areas accordingly. Our pool is a zero-entry sloped pool, with a large shallow area and a small deep area. Many of our younger campers spend the entire pool time playing in the shallow area or at the splash pad and fountains next to the pool.

We also swim in the creeks at camp. There are lots of shallow parts in our creek swim areas where kids can skip rocks, build forts, and play, as well as the deeper swimming areas. Lifeguards are on duty at all times kids are in the water - both at the pool and at the creek, and each group's camp counselors swim with the kids the entire time.

We know Ferncliff is a Presbyterian camp, but we're not Presbyterian. Can my camper still attend camp?

Of course! Campers come from many different faiths, including some who do not have a faith tradition. Our summer staff members are all Christian, but not all are Presbyterian, either. We only ask that all campers participate in the daily Bible studies and worship times that are part of our camp programs.

Can my camper's friend be in the same group as my camper?

Yes. While making new friends is an important part of the camp experience, in the registration process you will be asked if you have a buddy request. You can put in one friend's name and they can put your child's name on their registration form. We do not put larger groups together because it can put others in the group at a disadvantage; we do not want situations where, for instance, a single camper is put with a group of five campers who are already close friends.

If you have already registered for camp and would like to add a friend's name, you can do so through your online account. Log in and click on 'My Reservations' then choose the camp session. Under 'Additional Information' you can add the friend's name - just make sure to do so at least a week before camp!

Where will my overnight camper stay?

Your child will be in a cabin with campers of the same gender and approximate age. Our Belden Pond cabins have air conditioning, bunk beds, showers, and toilets. Our new Yurt Cabins have air conditioning and bunk beds in each, and a shared bathhouse with showers and toilets next door.



What should my camper bring, and what should my camper leave at home?

See the packing list!

What if my camper loses or forgets items at camp?

We collect any items we find each week in a Lost and Found area. If you arrive home and realize something is missing, let us know! We keep lost and found items until the end of the summer before donating them to a local shelter.

Please be aware that Ferncliff is not responsible for any items that are lost or damaged while at camp. Campers are also responsible for keeping up with their own items. As noted on the packing list, do not send anything with your camper that is irreplaceable or would be devastating to get dirty.

How can I stay in touch with my overnight camper?

Campers love receiving mail from home! We deliver mail each day after lunch. You can send good old-fashioned snail mail addressed to your camper to the camp address. Our address is:

1720 Ferncliff Road
Little Rock, AR 72223

You may also opt to purchase credits to send one-way emails to your camper. When you drop your child off at camp, you will be given information about this one-way email service. We print emails each morning to deliver with the mail each day after lunch.

Care packages are a nice treat for campers, but please do not send any food to your camper. We provide snacks multiple times a day, and our policy is to keep all food out of cabins. We also take all precautions to be as nut-free a site as possible due to nut allergies every week, and that is difficult to regulate with additional snacks coming in. If you do send food or snacks to your camper, the director will hold onto it until pickup on Friday.

We do not allow campers to make or receive phone calls, or carry cell phones. If you are concerned about your camper, feel free to give us a call or email and we will check on your child.

In addition, our summer staff will take photos of campers to post digitally. You will receive the access information to this secure website at camp check-in. Viewing photos is a great way to check up on your child and see what they're doing throughout the week!

Camper Accommodations

Can you accommodate campers with special dietary needs?

We can usually accommodate the most common dietary restrictions, including allergies. Let us know about dietary needs in advance by calling our office or emailing our director before your child comes to camp. In addition, please indicate dietary needs on the registration form. Parents of campers with allergies or dietary restrictions may bring 'safe' food for their child to be kept in the dining hall for meal times, if approved in advance.



Can you accommodate campers with special needs?

Our counselors generally are not trained with the specific skills required to work with children with special needs. In some instances, exceptions can be made after we consult with the child's parents and the child's doctors. Call our office or email our director before the summer starts so we can discuss what your camper would need to be successful at camp. Please do not send a child with special needs to camp without first consulting us.

Can you accommodate transgender campers?

Yes. In alignment with our faith, vision, and mission, Ferncliff welcomes all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, as guests and as full participants in all our programs. Call our office or email our director before the summer starts so we can discuss what arrangements would best suit your camper. Our full policies regarding transgender campers and guests can be found on our website.

Can you accommodate service animals?

We do accommodate staff members and campers with service animals. A service animal is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities - please note that we do not allow pets or emotional support animals at camp. Call our office or email our director before the summer starts so we can discuss what your camper and their service animal would need to be successful at camp. Please do not send a child with a service animal to camp without first consulting us. All families should be aware that their camper may be staying in a facility with a service animal who is trained to serve a specific function for its owner. If your camper will be in a cabin with a service animal, you will be informed at camp registration on the first day of camp.

Payment & Cancellation Policy

Upon registration, a \$50 deposit is required with each Overnight Camp registration. The \$50 deposit is nonrefundable; however, any other payments made towards your registration are **fully refundable up to two weeks before the camp session start date**. Within two weeks of the camp session start date, **no refunds will be issued if you must cancel your registration**.

Final payment of your camp **balance is due two weeks prior to each camp session**. You can pay your balance in installments and can view your balance at any time by logging into your account.

In the event that Ferncliff must cancel a camp session, families can choose to have their payments donated to Ferncliff or fully/partially refunded.



Camper Behavior Covenant

At Ferncliff, we welcome our campers into a life of caring for Creation, others, and themselves. We want every camper in our programs to have the best camp experience possible, full of fun, learning, and growth.

To ensure that we maintain a relationally safe environment and each camper is free to experience camp life to its fullest, we will not tolerate any behavior that takes that opportunity away from other campers. We will address all incidents such as bullying and irresponsible behavior, and will train the staff to recognize and respond to such behavior.

Understanding that camp is for ALL campers, any behavior deemed by the camp to be outside of the camper behavior covenant and/or unmanageable may result in any or all of the following:

1. Meeting with the group counselor, coordinator, or program director to discuss the behavior.
2. A telephone call home to the parent/guardian to discuss the behavior.
3. Being sent home from the camp session.

During registration, parents are asked to discuss this behavior covenant with their camper and sign that they have read and agree to live within the covenant stated below.

AS A CAMPER I WILL:

- Know and follow the rules of camp.
- Show respect to other campers, and try to be a friend to all. Show respect to camp staff, and cooperate fully with their instructions.
- Understand that for my safety and the safety of others, I will always stay with my group and/or in a group of three, where one of those three is a staff member.
- Communicate in a camp-appropriate manner, which means I must not use foul language or gestures, discuss topics that are not camp/age-appropriate, or raise my voice at others in anger. I understand that unwelcome teasing or other unkind behaviors are not allowed.
- Refrain from deliberately causing physical harm to other campers or staff. I understand that pushing, kicking, hitting or fighting are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Respect the property of others and camp, which includes no stealing, property damage, graffiti, or vandalism. I will only enter the cabins and buildings that I am directed to enter.
- Remember that physical displays of affection or of a romantic nature are not appropriate at camp.
- Be fully responsible for my actions and understand that irresponsible behavior will result in disciplinary conversations and possibly being sent home from camp.
- Have lots of FUN, learn, grow, and have a GREAT time!

I'll do my part to help make camp fun for everyone! As a camper, I will help hold other campers and camp staff accountable to this covenant. If I encounter others who are not following this covenant, I will share that with my counselor or coordinator.



General Health & Wellness

Children are to be kept home or will be sent home if they have any of the symptoms or illnesses listed below:

- Fever of over 100.4 degrees
- 2 or more instances of diarrhea
- 2 or more instances of vomiting in 24 hours
- Sudden and severe change in behavior
- Mouth sores or rash with fever
- Pink eye (not yet treated with drops)
- Head lice
- Active tuberculosis
- Impetigo (not yet treated)
- Strep throat (until 24 hours after antibiotic has started)
- Chicken pox
- Rubella, pertussis, mumps, or measles
- Hepatitis A

If your child is home sick, or has to miss camp for any other reason, please notify a director by email or phone call.

Staff will be monitoring children throughout the week. If any child comes down with a contagious or infectious illness or is unable to participate in the typical routine of camp, they will be isolated and their parent/caregiver will be notified and asked to pick them up.

All staff are certified in CPR/First Aid. Any child who is injured will be cared for by the staff and/or camp nurse up to their abilities. More severe injuries may need to be treated off site. Parents will be notified by phone call and/or an incident report for all injuries depending on the severity of the injury.

Medication will be given to children only with signed parental permission which includes date, type, drug name, time, and dosage. It must be in the original container, not have an expired date, and be labeled with the child's name. Aspirin, ibuprofen, or acetaminophen may be provided by the facility if parental permission has been granted. These medications will be in the original container.

Children with special health care needs who require scheduled daily medications and/or emergency medications should have a care plan. A care plan will be created with a director and parent to include parameters, directions, and symptoms for needing the medications. A medication log will be kept and will include the time, date, dosage administered, and the initials of the staff who gave the medication.

There will be no refund of registration fees given for camp days missed due to illness. As a licensed child care provider, we are required to follow all health department guidelines.



2024 Overnight Camp Packing List

Clothing Items:

- Several pairs of shorts
- Several T-shirts
- Underwear and socks for a week
- One pair of long pants or jeans
- One long-sleeved shirt or sweatshirt
- Pajamas
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Swimsuit
- Water Shoes
- Two pairs of sturdy, close-toed shoes
- Sandals or flip-flops for cabin time or at the pool

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Shampoo, conditioner, soap
- Personal care items (deodorant, lotion, contact solution, etc.)
- Sunscreen
- Bug repellent
- Bath towel and washcloth
- Beach towel to use at the pool
- Any medications you take (*in a separate bag to give to the nurse*)

Miscellaneous Items:

- Sleeping bag or sheets and a blanket
- Pillow and pillowcase
- Bible (we have extras if you don't have one!)
- Laundry bag for dirty clothes
- Flashlight and batteries
- Refillable water bottle
- Hat and sunglasses
- Camera
- Paper, pens/pencils, stamps, and envelopes to write letters
- Book, coloring book and crayons, friendship bracelet string, or other quiet activities for rest time

Things to Leave at Home:

1. Electronic items such as cell phones, iPads, video game players, etc.
2. Food, snacks, or candy
3. Expensive/sentimental items
4. Clothes that can't get dirty
5. Pets and animals
6. Money and wallets

**Remember: At camp, you'll be playing outside in the summer heat.
No need to bring your Sunday best!**

Campers will receive a bag on the first day of camp, which makes it easy to carry daily items like water bottles and swimwear.

Packing Tips

Pack with your child

Packing with your child is a great opportunity to build excitement about camp and to talk about any anxieties or concerns your child may have about their upcoming camp experience. You can also make sure they pack everything that they need to bring and leave the stuff that should stay at home, and your child will know where everything is.

Use the list while packing and when coming home

Use the checklist when you pack, and make sure you include any extra items your camper needs for the week (such as sleeping comforts like stuffed animals, personal care toiletries, photos from home.) When you're finished, pack the checklist in your child's luggage and instruct them to use it when they pack up their stuff at the end of the week. That way you can be sure that everything makes it home!

Choose what you pack in wisely

Pack your camper's stuff in something easy to carry a short distance from the unloading area to the cabins. A duffel bag, suitcase, footlocker, or heavy-duty plastic tub with a secure lid are all good options. Pillows, bedding, or sleeping bags do fine in labeled plastic trash bags.

Label everything

Put your child's first and last name on everything with a permanent marker, including the luggage. If your child loses something, it may turn up in Lost and Found and names allow us to reunite it with your camper. All unclaimed items are disposed of or donated at the end of the summer, two weeks after the last camp session.

Pack appropriate attire for camp

Pack clothing that is comfortable in hot summer weather, suitable for outdoor play, and able to potentially get wet or dirty. Campers should not pack clothing that promotes/depicts alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sexual behavior, or inappropriate language.

A note about swimsuits

We prefer that campers wear swim trunks/shorts rather than Speedos or one-piece suits rather than bikinis. These types of suits are generally more secure while playing in the pool. All campers should be sufficiently covered and ready for play!

Keep your medication separate

All medications (prescription, non-prescription, and over-the-counter) are held and dispensed by the camp nurse. Please pack them separately from your luggage. At check-in on Sunday, you will turn them over to the nurse directly.

