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Holston Conference

Camp & Retreat Ministries

“Nothing has shaped me more in my faith than camp.”
~ Brandon Berg



Brandon Berg gets right to the point in explaining the impact church camp has had on his life. Over the last 18 years, Brandon has worked or served at each of the four camps supported by Holston Conference.

One camp had a particularly strong influence:

“I think I’d be hard pressed to say that anything has shaped me more in my faith than the time and effort I invested at Buffalo Mountain Camp,” he says.

Brandon’s home church is Fairview United Methodist in Maryville, Tenn. He grew up attending Boy Scout camp.

He was 19 years old and a music student at East Tennessee State University when his friends encouraged him to apply as a counselor at Buffalo Mountain Camp in Jonesborough, Tenn.

He not only got the job, he was on the Buffalo Mountain staff from 1996 to 2004. During that time, he also worked in environmental education at Camp Wesley Woods and helped with the ropes training program at Camp Lookout.

In 2004, Brandon says he “finally settled into a willingness to pursue ordained ministry,” a call he first heard in high school.

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“Working with the ‘ministers in residence’ at camp had as much to do with that as anything,” Brandon says of his decision to attend seminary and become a pastor.

Today, Brandon is a Holston Conference pastor who recently moved from the Nickelsville Circuit (in Big Stone Gap District) to a new appointment at Mt. Vale/ Savannah United Methodist Churches (in Wytheville District).

Brandon is married to schoolteacher Karoline Berg, who – by the way – he met through Holston Conference camping. They have three children: Noah, age 7; Sarah, 5; and Rebekah, 3.

Brandon still has a strong connection to church camps. For the last two summers, he served as a weekly “minister in residence” for Camp Dickenson, another Holston Conference camp. For the last four years, he and Karoline helped design and implement a day program at Fort Blackmore, a camp supported by the Big Stone Gap District.

“In our best moments, church camp is a model of the Kingdom of God,” Brandon says. “It’s a loving, caring environment that was so supportive, it helped me to come to an understanding that we can model the Kingdom of God, wherever we are.”



A camper tests her skills on the Ropes Course.

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Campers are ready for tubing fun.

That’s what Brandon wants for his own children when they, too, experience a week of summer at a Holston Conference camp. These experiences are all made possible by the regular and consistent giving of Holston church members.

Thank you, Holston Conference. You’ll never know how many lives you’ve changed.

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