

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, 'I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.' John 8:12



Greetings Green Lake Friends!

Advent season is a time when the days grow short and the nights long. This season reminds us to wait for the coming of “The Light” in the darkness. We remember that death, darkness, and division do not have the final word. We are given hope that even when things seem bleak, the light will overcome.

But the waiting of Advent is not a passive stance. It is the active work of preparation. Christ did not come into the world as a light so that we do not need to be lights. Christ came into the world as light so we too can be lights in the darkness.

Green Lake Conference Center engages year-round in the active work of preparation as we live into our 1944 founding purpose statement to “nurture and train Christian leaders for the cause of Christianity and the world mission of the church.” In 1945 we identified that Green Lake is about ReCreation: recreation and rest after kingdom service while at the same time being ReCreated to go back out and serve for more impactful kingdom service.

In 2022, Christian leaders came often feeling beaten down and weary from dealing with the frustrations of COVID and the stress of ministry in a divisive and contentious age. Here are two examples of how we were able to shine Christ’s light into the lives of such weary servants:

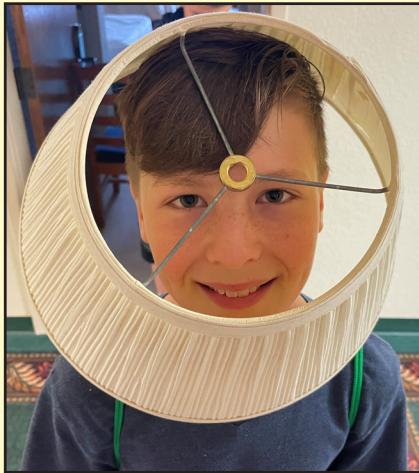
At our Quest Summer Youth Program, we serve the youth pastors or volunteers who bring their students to Quest, as well as the students themselves. Rev. Dr. Heather Henson, Quest Director, shared:

This summer served as a time to care for the youth leaders who attended. One youth leader arrived exhausted and frustrated. As a teacher and youth pastor, he was burned out. At one point in the week he said, ‘I have been really cranky and rude to your team and I need to tell them I’m sorry. I’m just so tired.’ I reassured him that this is exactly where God wanted him; that here at Quest he could also find rest and retreat for his soul. He left renewed and inspired and knowing he was also a beloved child of God. Quest isn’t just for the students!

In November the International Christian Alliance on Prostitution (ICAP) Global Conference convened again at Green Lake and 175 people attended from 32 countries! Rev. Lauran Bethell, Global Consultant for International Ministries ABC/USA said,

We chose our theme ‘Belonging’ in 2018, long before the pandemic—and at the time had no idea how prophetic it would be. After being apart and isolated for so long, people were hungry to be together, and many expressed their thankfulness to God that Green Lake provided the ‘homecoming’ they needed to sustain them for the journey into the future. Most of those who attended are ministering in the darkest places in the world,

bringing the light of Christ's love to those who have been trafficked into sexual exploitation. We give great thanks to God and to those who make it possible through sharing their resources that such warm and caring hospitality was offered by the GLCC staff, and that so many truly felt 'Welcomed Home!'



We seek to prepare and equip the Christian community to be better witnesses in dark times in part by providing a beautiful setting. One way we engage facility improvements and beautification is through work groups. Last June, 116 students from SouthField Church in Channahon, IL participated in a work retreat here. They brought a joyful spirit to shine Christ's light. The sixth graders had fun changing out hundreds of lamp shades in our hotel rooms, to literally let the lamps shine brighter, while beaming with smiles reflecting the light Jesus is shining in their hearts.



Southfield Church youth cleaned the Tea House and tidied Memory Lane

We hope you enjoy the enclosed photographs and stories of Christ's light shining in people's hearts at Green Lake. This year has been an amazing year of growth and blessings and we are grateful for your continued assistance and support. We invite you to pray and ask Christ to shine His light into the lives He wishes to transform, bless, and care for at Green Lake in 2023. We also invite you to give financially or through volunteer service to help us enable more people to experience a closer walk with God on these sacred grounds in 2023 and decades beyond.

May you and your family be blessed by Christ's light and love this Christmas season.

Rev. Michael Williams, D. Min.
Vice President of Development

Ben Mott
President/CEO



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