



944 24 1/4 Street  
Chetek WI 54728  
715-859-2215

Dear VBS Day Camp Coordinator:

We are excited you have chosen to partner with Luther Park for your 2017 VBS Day Camp Program. Enclosed you will find the following materials designed to assist you in planning your VBS Day Camp in your community:

- Congregational VBS Planning Guide

On our website [www.lutherpark.org/vacation-bible-school](http://www.lutherpark.org/vacation-bible-school) you will also find the following additional information that is helpful in planning for your congregations VBS Day Camp:

- Day Camp Scheduling Form – To be returned to Luther Park 2 weeks before the beginning of your VBS
- Camper Registration/Health Form – to be filled out by each camper
- Week at a Glance – A synopsis of the *The Jesus Way*
- Reproducible promotional posters and bulletin inserts
- VBS T-shirt information
- Example of Sign-in/Sign-Out Roster

The theme this year for Luther Park's VBS and on-site programming is *The Jesus Way*. VBS Day Campers will have the opportunity to explore and expand their faith through music, worship, Bible studies, crafts, recreation, fun and fellowship with the Luther Park Staff and other campers.

As you prepare for you VBS please feel free to contact us if you have questions or need any assistance at 715-859-2215 or [jacquie@lutherpark.org](mailto:jacquie@lutherpark.org). We are looking forward to a week filled with opportunities to nurture and help some of your youngest church members grow in their faith.

Blessings,

Jacquie Scoates  
Program Director  
715.859.2215  
[Jacquie@lutherpark.org](mailto:jacquie@lutherpark.org)



## LUTHER PARK MISSION STATEMENT:

Luther Park Bible Camp, in partnership with Lutheran congregations, ministers in a natural setting as Jesus did reaching out and touching people of all ages with the good news of salvation. "PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD." Isaiah 40:3

## VBS DAY CAMP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

VBS Day Camp is a program offered by Luther Park Bible Camp. It is intended to enhance Christian Education programs for the young people of our congregations—those going into 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grades—by providing them with Christ-centered day camp experiences in their own community.

### ➤ WHAT IS VBS DAY CAMP?

#### VBS DAY CAMP...

- ... is a Christ-centered camp experience for children going into grades 1-6.
- ... brings the programs of Luther Park Bible Camp to children in a familiar setting.
- ... enhances the whole Christian Education program of the congregations it touches.
- ... may replace or supplement Vacation Bible School in the congregation.
- ... is a renewing experience not only for the children involved, but also for the adult volunteers.
- ... is a unique blend of outdoor ministry and congregational ministry.
- ... is fueled by the VBS Day Camp team—a group of caring, committed young adults who are trained to lead Bible Studies, worship, songs, crafts, and recreation.
- ... is flexible to meet the needs of each individual congregation.

*The camp staff brings their enthusiasm, curriculum, schedule and leadership abilities.*

*Local volunteers bring similar gifts as well as their knowledge of the local church needs and community resources.*

### ➤ GENERAL WEEKLY SCHEDULE OUTLINE *(can be tailored to individual congregational needs)*

#### SUNDAY

- VBS Day Camp Team will arrive at a pre-arranged time after 5pm
- Evening "Kick-Off" Event for campers and their families (optional)
  - Invite families to attend.
  - Have refreshments or a pot-luck
  - Team will lead singing, devotions, and introduce the theme for the week.
  - Team and local volunteers may have a brief meeting following the event

#### MONDAY-THURSDAY

- 8:30—Team and volunteers meet for planning & devotions
- 9:00-2:30—VBS Day Camp Programming (worship(s), games, Bible study, crafts)
- 2:30—Team and volunteer evaluation meeting

#### FRIDAY

- 8:30—Final staff meeting
- 9:00-12:00—VBS Day Camp Programming
- Closing Program (optional)
  - For parents, families, and friends
  - Thursday evening or Friday morning
  - Campers can share songs, projects, and skits they have learned.

## ➤ **PROGRAM ESSENTIALS**

The program includes a variety of active and passive activities both indoors and outdoors that pertain to the theme “Say What?! The Parable of Jesus”. The following components will be included:

- Worship - Scripture, songs & skits to begin and end each day
- Bible study - Bible stories, activities and experiential learning
- Recreation – Large group games and fun
- Arts & Crafts -Creativity and self expression
- Lunch - Sack lunches are recommended, church provides beverage
- Snacks - Juice and something to nibble on (please no caffeinated beverages)  
Congregation can provide or ask parents to pack a snack. Please make sure water is available.

## ➤ **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Special events can be used to enhance the VBS program as well as include youth of other ages and their families. The Luther Park VBS team can lead or support these events working with your VBS coordinator to facilitate a quality program

- Sunday Night Kick-Off with BBQ, potluck or s’more buffet (with music around the “campfire”).
- Middle School/Confirmation Night with team building activities, recreation or music and worship.
- Work with a church service day

Planning Special Events makes the whole VBS Day Camp experience all the more memorable for the youth. Any extra cost involved in a Special Event will be the responsibility of the congregation, including transportation.

## ➤ **RESPONSIBILITIES: Luther Park and the Congregation**

### **LUTHER PARK**

- Luther Park will provide a **VBS Day Camp Team** of trained counselors (number dependent upon size of VBS Camp) and a complete program including Bible study, worship, arts and crafts materials, songs, games, equipment, rainy day options, etc.
- The VBS Team will **lead all programs and give leadership** to the local volunteers as they assist with the activities. One member of the team will be the VBS Team Leader. This staff member will serve as the team leader in addition to participating in programming and be the liaison with the local committee during the week.
- Luther Park will **assist in the promotion** of your VBS Camp by providing posters, sample letters, and the necessary registration forms.
- Luther Park Staff will make sure that safety is a primary importance in activities.
- Luther Park Staff will be prepared to lead VBS in a way that creates a camp like atmosphere, while being open to congregational input for the development of the VBS program.
- **Materials**
  - Luther Park will provide program specific materials for the Bible Studies and craft projects, (congregation can help with craft supplies )

### **CONGREGATION**

- The **cost** of VBS Day Camp is dependent upon the size of the VBS Team. Please remember the **staff-to-child ratio at VBS is to be no greater than 1:10**. Luther Park Staff as well as volunteers over 18 that will be present during VBS can be used in determining your ratio.
- Appoint a VBS Day Camp **Contact Person if you have not done so**. The Contact Person will serve as the liaison between Luther Park and the congregation. The Contact person will receive all VBS Camp mailings sent out by Luther Park.
- A **volunteer staff** is needed to assist the VBS Day Camp Team throughout the week. The volunteer staff must include at least one adult with enough other staff or volunteers to maintain necessary ratios. There is the option of using high school youth to round out the group. Junior High helpers are welcome, but maturity and responsibility are critical. Please see the enclosed handout for Day Camp Junior Counselors.
- **Housing** for the Luther Park Team must be provided for the entire duration of their stay. We prefer at least two Luther Park staff members be assigned together. Larger VBS teams can be broken up and housed by different host families or if possible VBS teams can be housed at one host location.
- Provide **snacks** each day for all participants. Children should be asked to bring a sack lunch - beverage provided by the congregation.
- All **meals** (including lunches) for the VBS Day Camp Team Sunday night through Friday noon will be the responsibility of the congregation and/or host families. Friday lunches could be made to go. Remember, these are very active college age students so they can be healthy eaters.
- VBS Day Camp **publicity** (see following pages)
- VBS Day **Camper Age Range**
  - The Luther Park VBS Day Camp Program is designed for campers who have complete grades K-5 this spring. We encourage congregations to use local volunteers to offer VBS programming for the preschool age. Your preschool age participants and their leaders are welcome to join the Luther Park VBS team for opening and closing worship.
- **Materials**
  - Luther Park appreciates having basic arts and crafts supplies available to supplement the primary arts and crafts we provide. If possible please allow your VBS team to have access to the following items: scissors, crayons, markers, pens, glue, etc.

- The congregation should provide table coverings to protect table surfaces when necessary.
- Children should be encouraged to bring their Bibles to VBS Day Camp
- **Insurance**
  - The family's insurance policy assumes primary coverage. The church's policy assumes secondary coverage. Luther Park provides workman's compensation coverage for Luther Park staff.

➤ **HOW DO I PLAN FOR VBS DAY CAMP?**

Make out a VBS planning calendar to organize your thinking and preparation for VBS Day Camp. Check off each item as you complete it. If you will follow a plan similar to the one below, you will be ready when the first day of VBS Day Camp arrives.

*3 MONTHS PRIOR TO VBS DAY CAMP*

- Appoint onsite VBS Coordinator for week of VBS Day Camp. (This may be you).
- Recruit adult volunteers to provide snacks for each day of VBS day camp.
- Recruit adult volunteers to set out and supervise kids during snack time each day for VBS day camp.
- Recruit adult volunteers to set out and help supervise kids during lunch break. Youth helpers can assist adult supervisors during this time.
- Organize a kickoff event for VBS Day Camp for Sunday night of VBS week. Luther Park can provide counselors beginning at 5pm on Sunday. Counselors can come prepared to introduce the week, the overall theme and sing songs.
- Order craft materials.
- Begin publicity (see following pages).

*2 MONTHS PRIOR TO VBS DAY CAMP*

- Plan dedication service for VBS Day Camp Volunteers. Secure the pastor's approval and assistance.
- Plan for pre-registration.
- Plan for a follow up program with Education Director. Discuss how VBS Day camp can feed into the upcoming Sunday School Year.
- Plan transportation (if needed) for field trips.
- Continue publicity.

*1 MONTH PRIOR TO VBS DAY CAMP*

- Order all supplies not previously ordered.
- Hold staff prayer meeting
- Continue publicity
- Recheck with volunteers and materials
- Plan decorations. (optional)
- Organize a closing program for Thursday night or Friday morning. The VBS Day Camp Team can facilitate the program. They will recap the week & will have the campers share songs and skits from the week.
- Conduct Pre-registration. Collect registration & health history forms provided by Luther Park.

*2 WEEKS PRIOR TO VBS DAY CAMP*

- Confirm the number of youth signed up for VBS Day Camp with Luther Park Program & Retreat Coordinator. Contact Luther Park at 715-859-2215 with final numbers. Be prepared to have a list of youth broken down by age and the grade they have just completed.
- Recheck all details.

### *1 WEEK PRIOR TO VBS DAY CAMP*

- Recheck all details.
- Set up decorations.
- Arrange classrooms.

### *DURING VBS DAY CAMP*

- Pray with and for your volunteers and the Luther Park counselors
- Maintain a spirit of enthusiasm and encourage volunteers and Luther Park counselors
- Secure additional supplies as needed. Check in with Luther Park VBS Team Leader. They will bring extra supplies as well.
- Have all emergency phone numbers readily accessible to the Luther Park staff. Give this information to Luther Park VBS Day Camp Team Leader.
- Make sure secretarial records are being kept properly.
- Touch base with Preschool VBS Day Camp program and volunteers.
- Touch base with Luther Park Team Leader daily. (It works out well to touch base with the Luther Park team and volunteers at the end of each day to discuss what is going well and where we can improve).
- Provide a full list of campers and parents/guardians including names, addresses, phone numbers, birth date, age, and grade just completed for the Luther Park VBS Day Camp Team Leader.

### *AFTER VBS*

- Thank the Lord for God's blessings
- Express appreciation to all workers.
- Begin follow-up program. (Optional)
- See that supplies are sorted, packed, labeled, and stored for next year.
- File names and addresses of volunteers to be contacted next year.
- Send a complete list of names of children & parents/ guardians, ages (birth date) and addresses to Luther Park. (You can send a hard copy with the Luther Park VBS Day Camp Team Leader at the conclusion of the VBS week or email a Excel spreadsheet with the following information to [Diana@lutherpark.org](mailto:Diana@lutherpark.org) the week following VBS Day Camp. Contact Diana if you would like an Excel template.
- Make written notes of all good ideas for VBS Day Camp next year. Note how problems were solved and how to avoid similar problems in the future.
- Collect volunteer evaluations.
- Fill out and send in Luther Park Evaluation.
- Expect to receive an invoice from Luther Park the week following your VBS Day Camp.
- Send in final payment to Luther Park. Contact [jacquie@lutherpark.org](mailto:jacquie@lutherpark.org) with any questions or call her at 715-859-2215.
- Be sure reports are completed (as needed). Include notes of necessary adjustments in schedules, additional supplies needed, etc.

### ➤ **PUBLICITY GUIDELINES**

VBS Day Camp may be a "new idea" in many congregations. We do know that some of you have already developed a strong VBS Day Camp tradition in your congregations. Either way, VBS Day Camp should be promoted often in church bulletins, newsletters, and perhaps even local newspapers or radio/TV public announcements. Publicity is very important for the success of VBS Day Camp. Keep your entire congregation informed and excited about hosting VBS Day Camp. We encourage you to use your VBS as an outreach ministry.

➤ **CONGREGATIONAL PUBLICITY**

- List the VBS Day Camp on the church schedule and calendar.
- VBS Day Camp publicity should be geared to both parents and children.
- Put in a brief announcement in church bulletins and newsletters.
- A brief, but informative flyer should be distributed prior to the last Sunday of Sunday School to every child enrolled. (NOTE – one per child, NOT one per family.) You may choose to use the one enclosed or create your own.
- Have one or two temple talks as part of Sunday Worship. They need only be about three minutes long. The first talk should explain VBS Day Camp and the second could maybe kick-off registrations.
- Put up posters around the church in busy areas highlighting the VBS Day Camp, including the dates and key activities. You may choose to duplicate the one enclosed, or create your own. Be sure to have the name of the contact person listed on the poster.
- Send a letter to the parents of every child going into grades 1-6. Follow up the letter with phone calls.

➤ **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

- You may want to put notes in the local newspaper, or spots on the radio public announcements.
- If you want to reach out to the community to encourage unchurched youth to attend, put up posters around the neighborhood.
- Put up a big sign or banner at the VBS Day Camp site to promote the dates and key activities. Keep it up throughout the VBS Day Camp week.

➤ **YOUTH PUBLICITY AND REGISTRATION**

- Hold registration after Sunday worship for 2-3 weeks prior to the VBS Day Camp. Parental release and registration forms can be signed and any fees collected (if needed). Holding registration prior to the end of Sunday School would be to your advantage.
- Telephone calls or personal visits can be made to families of youth who have not registered.
- Send a confirmation letter to parents after registration has been received. (view sample on next page)

## SAMPLE CONFIRMATION LETTER TO PARENTS

(on church letterhead)

Dear VBS Day Camp Parent,

Greetings! Thank you for sharing your child(ren) with the Luther Park/ \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church VBS Day Camp.

We've got an exciting week of VBS Day Camp planned and are delighted that you can be a part of it. This is to confirm your child(ren)'s registration and review details for the week:

- The Luther Park counselors will present a program to kick-off VBS Day Camp on  
Sunday evening \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.  
(date) (time)
- We need a signed registration-medical release form on file for every child enrolled.
- Send a sack lunch along each day. The church will provide a cold drink and morning snack.
- Day Camp will conclude at 2:30 from Monday through Thursday, and 12:00 on Friday.
- A closing program will be held \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ for parents, family and friends.  
(date) (time)
- Please note that shirts with the summer theme will be available and optional. If you order ahead we can guarantee that you'll have the correct sizes for your children.

The Luther Park VBS Day Camp is a unique experience. VBS Day Camp is a time for young people to learn, grow, and discover more of God's love and what it means to be part of the family of God.

Please contact the church office or the camp (715-859-2215) if you have any questions, or if we can help further in your planning and preparations.

In Christ's Service,

Luther Park Programming Staff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Local Coordinator





**TO: VBS Day Camp Coordinators**  
**FROM: Luther Park Program & Retreat Coordinator**

A few things that may help you in your planning:

- 1) The staff can arrive at the church on Sunday anytime after 5pm. Let me know what time you would like the staff to arrive Sunday night by contacting me at 715-859-2215 or [wendy@lutherpark.org](mailto:wendy@lutherpark.org). When the staff arrives please be sure that someone is there to greet them. They will need some time to tour the building and grounds and make plans for certain activities.
- 2) A Sunday evening program can be a great way to start your VBS week. Some churches plan potluck meals, others just coffee and cookies. The Sunday schedule is up to you. Your VBS Day Camp Team Leader will need to know the Sunday schedule before they arrive. A Luther Park Staff member will call you the week before coming to ensure that everyone is on the same page concerning introductions, scheduling and programmatic expectations.
- 3) The number of campers that you were expecting when you signed the VBS Day Camp Agreement is considered tentative. Your Local Coordinator will need to confirm the number **two weeks prior to your start date**. Please contact me at 715-859-2215 or [wendy@lutherpark.org](mailto:wendy@lutherpark.org) with final numbers. Please be prepared to tell me the breakdown of your group according to age and grade they will have just completed. After your week is completed please supply a complete list of names of children & parents/guardians, ages (birth date) and addresses for us. You may give us forms with information to enter- OR, you may email the information on an Excel spreadsheet. (Sending an electronic copy would be greatly appreciated.) We will provide a template for an Excel spreadsheet this year. If you'd like you can email the list to me. Your bill will be sent the week **after** your VBS Day Camp week has concluded.
- 4) Luther Park will provide supplies for the planned arts and crafts activities. Again, we appreciate having access to basic supplies to use for supplemental arts and crafts as needed. Your Luther Park team may also need to make copies on your copy machine. If you have parents that support your VBS by donating arts and crafts items, please contact us and we will let you know what additional items could be donated beyond the basic school supply type items.
- 5) You may be interested in asking your Luther Park team to do a program for parents. Thursday evening often works well for this. You may also want to invite the team to be active in the life of the congregation on other evenings during the week, if there are events planned. Host families can expect that the staff will be available and at home most evenings.
- 6) Each day will begin and end with large group worship. This will be similar to a campfire program. All children, including preschool, as well as staff are invited to this all camp activity. Please have your local staff help manage discipline while the counselors are up front leading. If preschool kids join the older kids for opening and closing programs, please make sure preschool staff is with them.

- 7) Bible study will always be included in the small group events of the day. The Bible story will be presented in a variety of ways: sometimes read, sometimes told, and sometimes dramatized. The rest of the day will include crafts, nature study, organized recreation, music, etc. If you would like us to email additional curriculum materials to you to help create a preschool curriculum, please let me know.
- 8) Your local staff should provide a snack or beverage break each day. It is recommended that students come to a central location for their snack and that groups stagger times by about five minutes.
- 9) You may want to recruit "Jr. Counselors" to serve as helpers in each camper group. There are often middle or high school youth eager to help. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THESE HELPERS BE MATURE.** Age of helpers is not as important as maturity. Please recruit the best help rather than accepting all volunteers.
- 10) Included in this packet you will find a LPBC Day Camp Health Form to be completed by all campers. We ask Congregational Coordinators to review the forms and make a master list of children with allergies and/or medical conditions that the staff needs to be aware of for the safety of the campers. Luther Park Staff should know where these forms are whenever VBS Day Camp is in session.
- 11) Theme shirts will be available for purchase. This year on your **Scheduling Sheet** we ask that you estimate the number of T-shirts you anticipate needing in each size. Don't forget to include any adult and youth volunteers that may want a T-shirt. T-shirts are \$8.00 for 2014.
- 12) We ask that Congregational Coordinators and/or another designated volunteer be present when children are being signed into the program and signed out. For the safety of the campers it is a Luther Park policy that they must be signed out from the VBS Day Camp program by an appropriate guardian. If campers are walking/biking to and from church the Congregational Coordinator having prior written permission from parents can sign out these children.
- 13) We require all of our staff to go through background checks and we encourage you to make sure all volunteers 18 and older have had background checks.

We're really looking forward to this VBS Day Camp summer, and hope that you are too. Feel free to call whenever you need to. I look forward to being in further collaboration as summer approaches.

God's Peace,

Jacquie Scoates  
Program Director  
Luther Park Bible Camp  
944 24 1/4 Street  
Chetek, WI 54728

Office: 715-859-2215  
Email: [jacquie@lutherpark.org](mailto:jacquie@lutherpark.org)

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