

The Potter's Wheel



**CAMP
RAYBIRD**

A publication of Ray Bird Ministries "God's Hand Shaping Young Lives"



Update 2017
Winter

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www.raybird.org

P.O. Box 3717
South Bend, IN 46619

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From the Directors Desk: the power of Dad

Absent. Neglectful. Incarcerated. Abusive. Idle. Untrustworthy. Unknown. What comes to mind as you read these words? Sadly, for many campers at Camp Ray Bird, these words describe Dad. I've noticed that a lot of the kids who require special attention or intervention at camp have a poor relationship or no relationship with their dad. It grieves me to hear such similar stories time after time. Here are some that come to mind.

-Sorry for breaking down just then. But when we started talking about dads, I just couldn't take it. My dad died a while ago and it's been really hard.-

-Mom's the one who does all the work around the house. There's so much pressure on her. Dad is usually just watching TV and yells at us.-

-I haven't seen my dad in a few years. He always says he's going to pick me up and spend time with me but it never happens. I use to believe him, but now I don't get my hopes up.-

-I don't really see my dad because he does drugs and we can't trust him. -

Compared to some, these examples are the mild. But they tell me that *fathers are incredibly important*. Did you know that being fatherless strongly correlates to problems for children such as dropping out of high school, delinquency, confused sexual identity, aggression, drug use, behavioral disorders, suicide, teen pregnancy, running away, and rape? The statistics are even more extreme when it comes to low-income homes. Clearly the weight of fatherhood has great potential for good and bad.

The Bible acknowledges the importance of dads over and over again. God, in His great love for people, made it so. God knows how important fathers are and in the context of this broken, sinful world, He makes himself available. One of the best ways we come to grips with the new life that God offers us is by understanding ourselves as being adopted into His family. I find that for myself and for our camps this isn't a one-and-done kind of lesson. It's a perspective I have to keep bringing myself back to because so much of the world continues to speak a different message. Nevertheless, God fulfills our deepest personal and corporate needs for a perfect Father—a Father who is perfectly present, involved, caring, strong, protecting, trustworthy, and known. —David

“How can I get involved in the summer?”

1 Wk Commitment

Can't commit to the whole summer, but want to serve with us? Come for a week-long missions experience (for senior high youth groups and individuals). Work directly with urban youth as a junior counselor, paired with a senior counselor and eight campers.

- Apply at -
raybird.org/involved

3-4 Wk High School Internship

Apply to our new internship program, designed for leadership development. This experience is a mix between leadership training and practice. Each week will have an intentional focus on developing Christ-like character and competency. You could even earn high school credit!

- Email -
david@raybird.org

9-10 Wk Summer Staff

Being on staff is an amazing opportunity to serve low-income children with Christ's love and build friendships with fellow believers. Positions are full-time and include jobs such as counselors, waterfront, maintenance and more.

- Apply at -
raybird.org/involved



Camp Ray Bird invites you to attend:

Spring Forward

A casual dinner for the purpose of sponsoring children in poverty for a week of camp and growing the network of CRB friends — Join us and bring a friend for dinner, a ministry update, and an opportunity to meet and hear from some of those involved in our ministry.

Thursday, April 20th at Camp Ray Bird
25765 Edison Road, South Bend, IN 46628
Beginning at 6:00 PM

Kindly RSVP to david@raybird.org or our office at (574) 232-8523 by Friday, April 10th.

Highlights of Winter Mini Camp 2017

Feb 3rd-5th was Camp Ray Bird's Winter Mini Camp weekend. 30 campers from the summer completed their Snail Mail lessons and attended the weekend retreat for a mix of old and new activities. Cold temperature and a lack of snow prevented many activities, but campers still enjoyed some of their favorites including pit ball and indoor climbing wall. For arts and crafts, campers created wax art (pictured below) using crayons and blow dryers. Also pictured, campers made pine cone bird feeders and hung them up around camp.

Saturday, during the morning chapel session, David taught about the importance of being a part of a local church and highlighted key things to which to pay attention as campers visit different places. In the afternoon chapel session, Susan spoke about God's faithfulness in the story Abraham's family line, giving special attention to the life of Joseph. The campers were especially engaged because as Susan spoke, an artistic friend illustrated on a white board. Saturday night, David drove everyone downtown to the South Bend Civic Theatre for one of their last shows of the musical, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. From the looks of everyone's bright eyes and smiles, the campers and staff really enjoyed seeing the energetic singing and acting on stage. Going to the theatre was quite the experience and was probably the highlight for most. For most, it was the first time being in that kind of theatre and seeing a live show. They were spellbound.

Although it already felt like a full weekend, we ended on Sunday with our traditional visit to a local church. This time we attended one of camp's partnering churches, Harvest Bible Chapel, for their 9:00 a.m. service. Hopefully as campers experience what it's like at a church service they will feel more comfortable attending in the future.



A new craft activity — melting crayons to make an artistic design.
Morning has broken



Two players face off in pit ball!



Waiting for show time at the South Bend Civic Theatre!



Campers making pine-cone bird feeders and hanging them.



Setting goals and overcoming fears on the indoor climbing wall



Building friendships!



Learning how to play Bunco!

Prayer Requests & Praises

Praise

- We've been making progress on a variety of facilities projects and improvements.
- 30 campers completed the winter Snail Mail lessons and came to the Winter Mini Camp.
- We thank God for the many supporters whose financial gifts helped us finish well for 2016.
- 9 of about 40 staff have been hired for the coming summer.
- God gives us many opportunities to share His plan for salvation—even in the “off” season.
- Praise God for the people who make camp great—staff and volunteers!
- Praise God for raising up more and more people in our community who have a heart to minister to the low-income children in Michiana.
- Applications for campers have started coming in!

Prayer

- Pray that many campers participate in the next set of Snail Mail Lessons and come for the Spring Mini Camp in April. Snail Mail can now be done online!
- Pray that many campers would become part of a church and would build relationships there.
- Also pray for campers who are trying to live out their faith amid tough home situations.
- Pray that God would provide all the summer staff help we need for the 2017 summer season.
- That God would guide us as we form long-term plans for different facets of camp.
- Pray for continued support and new financial support from individuals, churches, and businesses.
- For 2 or 3 more volunteer youth groups who can serve with us for a week this summer.

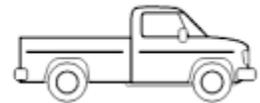
The Mission of Ray Bird Ministries is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with Michiana children and teens, nurture those believers, and prepare them for participation in local churches. Ray Bird Ministries specializes in serving families who could not otherwise afford meaningful camping experiences.

Ray Bird Ministries, Inc. [501(c)(3)] would like to extend a very special **THANK YOU** to our Board of Directors for their dedication and support of our efforts. Members include Linda Burrell, Kristen Haubold, Phyllis Hueni, Randy Meert, David Mui John Rader, Tom Thompson, Shawn Titus, Don Wierenga, and Keith Walatka.

Wish List

Gas weed whacker

Camp truck



Interested in helping? Give Jeremy a call at 574-232-8523 or email jeremy@raybird.org

Attn: [Youth] Pastors

Are you planning a retreat? Camp Ray Bird is a great place for one! Get 5% off a retreat with us for *each* week-long volunteer from your church that serves here this summer! Email david@raybird.org for more details.

Donation were made...

In honor of Kesha Bailey

(Damian Hopkins)

In honor of the Mitschelen boys

(Jim and Ruth Banner)

In memory of Robert Parson

(Douglas and Pamela Callantine)

In memory of John Byler

(Donald & Beth Troyer)

In memory of Judy Berlin

(Dale and Susan Archer)

 *
 * Saturday, April 1st *
 *
 * **SPRING WORK DAY** *
 *
 *  We will be mulching, trimming and doing odd jobs of various skill levels. Work begins at 9:00 AM. Lunch is provided. Let us know if you plan to attend! Call 574-232-8523 or email jeremy@raybird.org. *
 *

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