



Solid Rock Day Camp Church Manual **Day Camp Program by the NALC Carolinas Mission Region**

What is Day Camp?

Day Camp is a 5 day program geared toward children, or middle-schoolers, where faithful, Christian, college-age counselors come to your church to lead camp activities and build relationships with your kids. Activities include worship and music, games, age-appropriate Bible study, crafts, special activities, and field trips.

Elementary children are usually the most excited about a Day Camp program, those finished 4K-5th grade. However, we are flexible and can work with middle-school aged kids as well.

Our counselors are interviewed, hired, and trained by our Carolinas Mission Region Day Camp team, consisting of the Youth Coordinator for the mission region, and several other pastors, church leaders, and parents. The Day Camp team will work with your church leadership and volunteers before Day Camp so that the goals of the Day Camp are met.

Why Day Camp?

Our kids need Christian community and they love camp and counselors! Counselors are college-aged students who love Jesus and want to share that love with children.

Parents love it because they have one week of inexpensive, quality, faith-based child care during the summer.

An equally important purpose of a Day Camp run by the Carolinas Mission Region of the NALC is to identify and train our college-age students for ministry. The ministry and leadership opportunities provided to these counselors raises up future leaders for our church, whether that be in ordained ministry, lay ministry, or a well-trained and educated lay person.

Day Camp can be flexible to meet each church's needs. This includes ages of the children or youth you want to attend Day Camp, the curriculum used (one developed by the Day Camp team with NALC approved materials) or your own bible study led by church staff, and schedule for day-to-day activities. Day Camps will be planned in coordination with each church's local Day Camp Coordinator and the Day Camp team, before counselors arrive to lead.

Local Church Responsibilities

1. Provide an appropriate and safe space(s) for Day Camp to take place. Consider large areas for games, smaller rooms for small groups, spaces to eat, and indoor or outdoor spaces.
2. Provide adult volunteers during the week of Day Camp. The Day Camp Coordinator counts as one volunteer, and should remain on-site for all or most of Day Camp. One volunteer per 15 kids is requested. Volunteers should be at least high school age, and mature enough to understand their role and responsibilities (help kids engage in activities, take kids to bathroom, help with snacks/ lunch).
3. Provide meals and housing for counselors. This could be housing within the church, or within host homes close to the church. At least 2 counselors should be housed together at all times. Meals should be provided from the time they are expected to be at your church until the time they leave, excepting one dinner meal during the week.
4. Provide snacks and water (and a meal if you desire) for participants at Day Camp.
5. Provide transportation, driven by insured adults, for all Day Camp participants if leaving the site for a field trip.
6. Publicize and register children for your Day Camp. Be sure all information per participant has been completed online at least 2 weeks prior to Day Camp. Registration should start by May 1, if not earlier. Many parents will want to plan their child's summer at this time.
7. Decide how you want to handle the cost of Day Camp and pay for it, according to how many kids attend your Day Camp. These fees provide salary for counselors, craft materials, transportation costs for counseling staff, one T-shirt per participant, and the use of recreation equipment. Any activities planned by the counseling staff will be covered. Any field trips planned by the church are covered by the church. **The Carolinas Mission Region has funds, so never let cost be an issue!**

Day Camp Team Responsibilities

1. Provide at least 1 counselor per 8 children.
2. Provide or work with church staff to create a biblical, Christ-centered curriculum to be used during worship and bible study times.
3. Interview, hire, and train college-age counseling staff. Necessary insurance will be provided for counseling staff.
4. Encourage counseling staff throughout the summer, attending to their spiritual and emotional needs through a Day Camp chaplain.
5. Arrange for transportation of the counseling staff to and from your church.
6. Prepare, in coordination with the local church, a schedule of activities to be carried out by counselors at Day Camp.

Counselor Responsibilities

1. Be the counselor and an exemplary faith role-model to a small group of up to 8 kids.
2. Prepare, plan, and lead games, crafts, music, bible study, worship times, and special activities, as scheduled by the Day Camp Team and local church.
3. Provide superior leadership, mentorship, and supervision of children.
4. Work with Day Camp Coordinator when questions or concerns arise, to solve problems.

Typical Day at Day Camp

Monday-Thursday, 9 am- 4 pm

Friday, 9 am - 12 noon

*Special arrangements for different hours can be arranged, as long as we are notified in advance, or look for volunteers to help before or after day camp, as needed.

Sample schedule	
8:50 am	Day Camp church coordinator sign-in kids, Counselors ready to receive campers, whole group games and icebreakers
9:10 am	Opening devotion and “family hub” meet-up
9:30 am	Small group bible study time OR Crafts
10:30 am	Snack
10:45 am	Small group bible study time OR Crafts
11:45 am- 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30- 1 pm	Quiet time/ videos
1 pm	Field trips or special activities
3:30 pm	Closing devotion/ worship time
3:50 pm	Whole group games while waiting for pick-up
4 pm	Campers go home!

After 4 pm- Counselors will use this time to prepare and plan for the next day, eat, fellowship, and rest!

Note about field trips/ special activities: We find that it works best for host churches to plan at least 2 activities, leaving the counselors to plan at most 2 afternoon activities. You do not need to leave your church site to have a “field trip/ special activity.” Ideas include: water games (counselors can lead this if you help provide the hoses/ equipment needed), pool or splash pad outing, bring in the firetruck or police officers for a special talk, let the firetruck spray its hose for the kids to get wet on water day, do a hands-on service project like packing kits for disaster relief or making cards for someone, take a walk in the woods, go to a playground or park, have a special guest speaker, ask the local librarian to read a book, ask a church member with a great voice to tell stories, use the gifts of people in your congregation, do an “instrument petting zoo” where older youth and adults can share info about their instruments including your church organ,

take kids to sing at a local nursing home, have someone bring in their unique animal or collection to show kids, etc. Feel free to ask the Day Camp Team if you have questions.

Special Options for Day Camp

*Host churches can choose which of these will work best for them. You are welcome to discuss options or changes with the Day Camp Team.

- 1) Sunday afternoon social/ meet and greet time for parents and kids. This would be approximately 1 hour and could include a meal or snack, staff introducing themselves and the theme for the week, songs, prayer, and handouts with information parents need for the week.
- 2) Thursday evening “Closing Program” for parents and families. This would be around 1 hour, where children can present the songs, bible stories, or skits they’ve learned with leadership from the counselors. A meal could be provided.
- 3) Thursday evening Lock-in at the host church, where older children (finished grade 2 and up) sleep at the church overnight with counseling staff and Day Camp Coordinator/ at least one church adult for supervision. Counseling staff can prepare activities. Arrangements for snacks and breakfast would be made by the church.

Steps to Follow for Hosting a Day Camp

1. Choose one person to be the Day Camp coordinator. This person will communicate with Melanie/ Day Camp team.
2. The Day Camp coordinator signs the invoice confirming your Day Camp week and sends a hard copy along with \$500 deposit to our Carolinas Mission Region treasurer. (See pg. 6 or invoice for address.)
3. Publicize Day Camp within your congregation(s) and communities. Feel free to use our letter to parents or create your own. Use church newsletters, bulletins, social media pages, emails, and encourage children to invite a friend! (See pages 8-9)
4. Start registering children by May 1 or earlier. The Day Camp team will provide you with a link to online registration by mid-March. You will have access to the information provided online, as well as the Day Camp team. The online form will include basic information for the child, along with health information, permission to photograph, and take children offsite. This information will be provided to the counselors at least one week before your Day Camp.
5. Make plans for field trips or special activities. Recruit volunteers to manage food and snacks. Look for church members to host counselors in their homes OR make arrangements to house the counselors in the church and be sure they have opportunities to shower. Arrange for counselor meals, except for one. Consider having different families cook dinner for the counselors. Email Melanie this information by June 1 at the latest. (See page 7)
6. Send in Certificate of Liability Insurance for the host church to Melanie Corn at mcorn@stplchapin.com by June 1.
7. Email a confirmation letter to parents at least 2 weeks before Day Camp with details. Continually check your online registration to be sure parents have filled out all information. (See page 10.)

8. Make any final arrangements for Day Camp. Communicate any changes with Melanie ASAP. Create a flyer to give to parents **and counseling staff** on the first day of Day Camp so they will know what to expect. (See page 11)
9. Create (or use form from your online registration) a final list of Day Camp participants. Make a column for sign-in signature, person picking up child, and sign-out signature. Make 6 copies, one for Monday-Friday, and one for counseling staff. (See page 12)

Payment Information

Send ALL payments for Day Camp to our Carolinas Mission Region Treasurer, Kathy Hefner.

Make checks payable to “Carolinas Mission Region”, for “Day Camp program.”

Address to: Carolinas Mission Region Treasurer
PO Box 6381
Hickory, NC, 28603

Cost per participant is \$100. This covers staff salary, staff transportation costs, special craft supplies, basic recreation supplies, T-shirt per participant, and a small budget for any extra materials.

In order to keep our participant costs down and be good stewards of our money, **we need payment for a minimum of 15 participants from each host church.**

When reserving a week for Day Camp, we will also need an estimate of how many kids you expect to attend. This gives us the ability to decide how many counselors we need to send for your week, and while still abiding by the 1:8 ratio, be good stewards of our funds.

1st Payment: \$500 (payment for 5 participants)

*Due along with invoice to reserve your week for Day Camp.

Last Payment: Remainder of balance, based on number of actual participants in Day Camp. Churches must pay for a minimum of 15 participants, \$1500, if actual number is less than this.

*Due ASAP after your Day Camp concludes.

Day Camp Plan

*Email to mcorn@stplchapin.com by June 1.

What time do you want counselors to arrive on Sunday? For worship? (If for worship, lunch needs to be provided)

Housing Arrangement for Counselors (place or name of individual(s) hosting counselors):

Meal Arrangement for Counselors:

*Typically breakfast could be provided by the host home, lunch at the Day Camp, and dinner with 3-4 families who need to cook only one meal each. Counselors do not need dinner on Wednesday night, their "free" evening for fun and worship with our Day Camp chaplain. You could also give them cash or a Visa prepaid card to buy their own breakfast and lunch foods.

Sunday afternoon plans, if any:

*Will you host a meet and greet/ social time where counselors are expected to lead?

What is your plan for Day Camp snacks and lunch?

*Please make a plan to provide at least water and one snack each day for all participants, including counselors. Volunteers are needed to make sure these things are available. Please have volunteers be, at least, responsible high school students or adults. Please note whether you plan to provide a lunch for participants, or if you plan to have participants bring lunch.

Special field trips or activities being planned:

Thursday evening "Closing Program" plan and Lock-in plan, if any:

*Volunteers who are aged 18 and over, who will be on-site for Day Camp are encouraged to be background checked by the local church. All counseling staff will have current background checks.



Calling all children grades 4K- 5th...
Day Camp is coming your way!

Hosted by: _____ Lutheran Church and the Carolinas Mission Region Day Camp Team and Counselors

When: The week of _____
9 am - 4 pm Monday-Thursday, 9 am- 12 noon Friday

Bible study, singing, games, crafts, skits, and lots of fun!
Friends welcome!

Cost is only ___ for a full week of childcare and fun!

Contact _____ for more information and to register!



*Sample RECRUITMENT
to recruit kids!*

Letter to send to parents

Dear Parents,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

My name is _____ and I am a member/ staff member of _____ Lutheran Church. I am excited to let you know about our summer Day Camp opportunity for your children, grades K4-5th grade.

I know that you and your children have tons of things to do over the summer- sports camps, family vacations, jobs- but if we believe that growing in faith and devoting our lives to Jesus Christ is top priority, then please invest in Day Camp, the week of _____ for your kids.

- Day Camp is offered by the Day Camp Team of the Carolinas Mission Region of the NALC.
- Camp counselors and area director, along with adults from our church, will lead the experience. Counselors are college-aged, well trained, enthusiastic for Jesus, and love children.
- Day Camp will meet at _____ church.
- Begins at 9:00 am and concludes at 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday.
- *Thursday evening at 6 pm there will be dinner and a closing program for parents and friends.*
- On Friday the week concludes at noon.
- *Extended care will be provided for those who need it starting at 7 am and ending at 6 pm.*
- Your child will participate in interactive singing, creative crafts, engaging Bible study, fun outings and games, and more fun than they could ever imagine!
- The cost will be \$100 or less. **DON'T LET COST BE AN ISSUE.** Scholarships are available for those who need it.
- Registration will start in April: online at _____.

I strongly encourage you to prayerfully consider signing up your child for this opportunity. They will come home singing new songs, telling bible stories, and talking about new friends! Friends of all denominations are welcome as well. **NEVER LET COST BE AN ISSUE.** We want every child who wants to attend to be able to!

In Christ,

Name and Title

Day Camp Coordinator

Sample Letter to send to parents AFTER they have registered their child, typically one month before Day Camp. You should be able to email this!

Dear Day Camp Parent,

Greetings! Thank you for sharing your child with _____ (church name) Day Camp from _____ (dates of camp).

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

- You owe, \$ _____. It is due by _____ (1st day of Day Camp) to _____.
- *On Sunday, _____, (name of church) will host an Ice Cream Social for parents and children from _____ (1 hour time frame) for everyone to meet each other and meet the counselors. We will discuss the schedule for the week and answer any questions.*
- Plan to arrive at the designated church no earlier than 8:50 am each morning to sign-in your child.
 - (Put down where Day Camp is located each day.)
- We will host the following field trips off-site. Drivers will be church adults on a _____ (type of vehicle).
 - *List where you are going if you are taking children off-site.*
- *Thursday night, _____, we will have a closing program and dinner for all parents and children at (Church name) at (time). Children entering 3rd grade and above may stay Thursday night for a lock-in led by the counselors and the local coordinator or pastor.*
- The church will provide cold drinks, a morning snack, *and a lunch*, Monday through Thursday. Speak with _____ (local day camp coordinator) if your child has particular dietary needs.
- Day Camp will conclude daily at 4:00pm. The Friday session concludes at 12:00pm. There will be no lunch on Friday. You must come inside every day to drop off and pick up your child and sign them out.

Day Camp is a unique experience. It 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 (Day camp Coordinator) if you have any questions.

We are excited to share in this faith-formatinal experience with your child!

In Christ,

Coordinator's Name and Contact Information

Sample Handout for Sunday afternoon social/ Monday morning- Be sure to tell parents everything they will need to know: meals in case of food allergies, special activities or outings, if they need to wear bathing suits or bring towels, if you want them to wear their T-shirts, etc.

I encourage you to “make this pretty” and print on colored paper.

Give this to counselors as well, and add their dinner plans to it, so they can be prepared!

Day Camp 2023

Theme

	Times and Location	Bible Story	Special activities	Meal Plan
Monday	9 am - 4 pm @ ____ Lutheran Church			
Tuesday	9 am - 4 pm @ ____ Lutheran Church			
Wednesday	9 am - 4 pm @ ____ Lutheran Church			
Thursday	9 am - 4 pm @ ____ Lutheran Church			
Friday	9 am - 12 noon @ ____ Lutheran Church			

Sample Participant List and Sign-In/ Sign-Out List

Participant's Name	Sign-in Signature	Person Picking Up Child	Sign-out Signature
Last Name, First Name	*leave blank for parent to sign	*whoever signs in the child, prints who will come back to pick up child	*The Day Camp Coordinator or other volunteer should watch to be sure the right person picks up the child. Counselors will play with kids until all kids are picked up.

**Use one table like this each day of Day Camp, Monday-Friday.*