California Camp Perseveres After 1960 Forest Fire to Celebrate 60 Years of Residential Experience

*The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Northern California-Nevada celebrates the Community of the Great Commission's 60th anniversary at region's Annual Gathering*

MICHIGAN BLUFF, Calif. (PRWEB) April 30, 2019 -- The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada recently held their Annual Gathering in Sunnyvale, CA. A time of celebration included a cake for the 60th birthday of their camp and retreat center, The Community of the Great Commission.

In 1959, John Holland and Josh Wilson, ministers with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Northern California-Nevada, began to search the California foothills for land to develop a camp for youth and adults to enjoy the great outdoors and participate in the unique aspects of residential camp and conference experiences.

They found a property located in Michigan Bluff, near Foresthill, CA, in the California Gold Country, at an elevation of 4000’. After negotiations with the land owner, the members of the Christian Church Region voted to purchase the land.

Even as they began development, in August 1960, almost exactly one year after the purchase of the camp property, a devastating forest fire swept through the foothills of Foresthill and severely damaged the camp forest. Nearly 80% of the trees were a loss and in some areas, the ash was 2 feet deep.

Nonetheless, the people of the region persevered and began building in earnest. In 1963, the retreat house, known as Claar House, which was named after Adelaide Claar, a laywoman from the San Jose Christian Church who made a sizeable donation, was begun. This building served as the indoor kitchen and dining area for more than 30 years until a larger, more commercial style dining hall was built in the late 1990’s.

In 1965 and 1966, respectively, eight cabins and a lodge were built, giving groups an indoor meeting area and sleeping quarters. Since then, many amenities have been added such as a swimming pool, amphitheater, and a variety of recreation areas.

The impact of these camp and conference centers that were built across the United States by church denominations in the 40’s, 50’s, and 60’s have had an everlasting impact on those who participated in this center of teaching, learning, and relaxing in a natural setting, set apart from the daily grind and technologies of life “down the mountain.”

Sixty years have passed since John Holland took church members up an old logging road to explore this forest on the ridge. American life has changed significantly with a much faster paced life than might have been imagined in 1959. Perhaps now more than ever, camps such as these offer modern people an opportunity to unplug and experience a simpler surrounding.

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada recently held their Annual Gathering in Sunnyvale, CA and celebrated the 60th birthday of their camp and retreat center, The Community of the Great Commission, with a cake.
The Community of the Great Commission is managed by United Camps, Conferences and Retreat, a camp and retreat management cooperative.

"On behalf of United Camps, Conferences and Retreats, we congratulate the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on the 60th Anniversary of their beautiful camp and all of the people that have had wonderful experiences there," writes Mike Carr, President of United Camps, Conferences, and Retreats.
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