

center to maintenance projects, and more! Skye Farm was also excited to partner again with Warren County Cooperative Extension which assisted new campers in experiencing camp for the first time.

Executive Director of Camp & Retreat Ministries, Mike Huber shared, "This summer dedicated staff, committed volunteers and faithful donors made it possible for over 2800 participants to be in nature, have fun, learn from one another, and know the love of God through Jesus. Grace changes everything!"

It was an excellent summer at all five sites as we continue to imple-

ment the Strategic Plan for Ministry as guided by our Committee on Camp & Retreat Ministries and led by the UMC mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. If you, your family, or your children were unable to join us this summer at one of our beautiful sites, we invite you to join us next summer. But why wait that long? If you are looking for a place to take a group on retreat or you have never visited our sites, we invite you to come experience one of our centers in the coming year. We look forward to seeing you soon!

## In Brief

### Hear what campers and staff loved about summer camp!

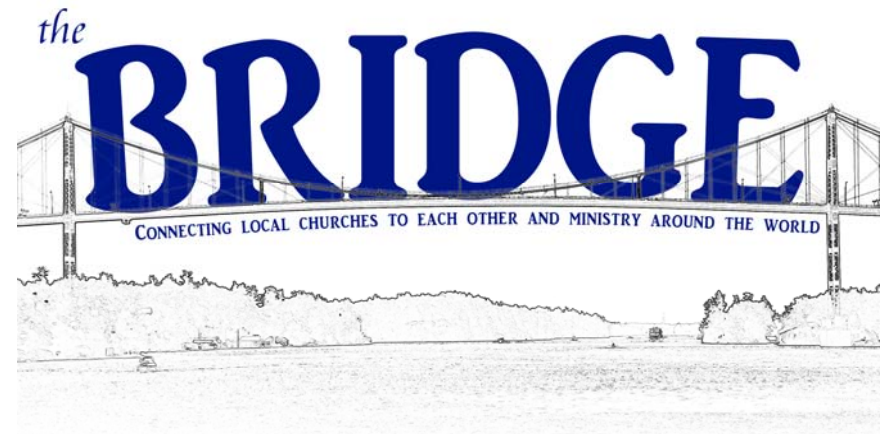
Visit <http://www.unyumc.org/news/perspectives> to watch videos of campers and staff throughout Upper New York's Camp & Retreat Centers explain what they love about summer camp as part of UNY's Calls from Camp series.

### Touching the lives of urban youth through Summer Fun 2018

The purpose of the Summer Fun Retreat 2018, held at Asbury Camp & Retreat Center, was to provide a faith-based camping experience for our city youth who may not have an opportunity to attend a Christian camp. By providing a time away from their day-to-day urban environment, the participants interact with peers and counselors in a safe, natural, environment while exploring ways to apply their faith in God to their daily lives. Visit <http://bit.ly/SummerFunRetreat2018> to learn how this retreat uplifted the lives of 14 children.

*The Bridge is a Conference Communications Ministry tool that delivers to local churches news and stories of ministry from around the Upper New York Conference and the world. For more news and stories visit:*

**[www.unyumc.org](http://www.unyumc.org)**



The Upper New York Conference's vision is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to be God's love with our neighbors in all places.

## A look inside!

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# A reflection on the 2018 summer camp season

**By Betsy Schuessler, Camp and Retreat Ministries Executive Assistant**

The summer season is coming to a close, as evidenced by cooler evenings, shorter days, and leaves starting to change, so it's time to reflect on the fun, challenges, growth, and relationships built and strengthened at our Upper New York Camp & Retreat Centers. Our theme this summer was based on Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."

Through daily morning watch, small group times, and communal worship, campers learned about how God's grace can change their hearts, identity, purpose, community, and perspective - giving them a better understanding of how God's love and grace can transform them, their relationships, their church, and the world.

Aldersgate was pleased to staff and run one day adventure, one week of our

summer camp, and family life weekend. Aldersgate was also privileged to provide hospitality to many summer camp programs needing a traditional camp facility: a church running their own summer program, a local organization assisting disabled children and adults, a girls and a boys camp for children with special medical needs, a running camp for high school youth, and a camp for children who have a parent with cancer. They also welcomed a church group that used Aldersgate as a launching pad for mission in the community.

Asbury Retreat Center is thankful for a busy summer: hosting quilters, women's retreats, youth programs, men's groups, college students, and couples' retreats. Asbury also provided hospitality to CCYM training camp, Orchard Park UMC for their church camp, Royal Family Kids Camp, Reach Out: Community Mission Experience, Asbury Express retreats, The United Methodist Women's Mission U,



Together Time for families, and a program for urban Rochester youth! Asbury looks forward to a busy fall of many groups exploring and enjoying their time on Silver Lake.

Casowasco had a fantastic summer with new programs (Art Gallery '46 and Master Chef for example) and old (including You Can't Do That at Camp and Summer's Last Blast), visiting chaplains, campers of all ages, and families, too! Daily worship included the talented band Inside Out, a creative dance team, and a drama troupe with powerful messages to share. Casowasco was pleased to work closely with the Rescue Mission of Auburn and Syracuse and the Syracuse Housing Authority which allowed some children the summer camp experience of a lifetime!

Sky Lake welcomed campers of all ages to new and improved programs (such as Summer Blast Off and Water & Woods) and those beloved standbys

(Music & Visual Arts and Team). Campers with special needs were welcomed and assisted by some compassionate, talented youth from the SNAP program. All were excited to see upgrades in North cabins, loved spending time in and learning more about nature, and enjoyed Thursday evening Hemlock community gathering as a special time of worship, communion, and an invitation to begin or deepen their relationship with God.

Skye Farm was filled with campers who loved the new programming available (Expedition Wilds, Super Hero Academy, and Walk In Her Shoes to name a few), had a ton of fun, and went home sharing about what they learned in small group and worship times. Dedicated volunteers are a key component to Skye Farm's program and their assistance was felt from the dining hall to the health

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