

CROSS TRAILS MINISTRY



Trail post

Winter 2023



Summer Camp 2023



Do you ever feel like you are supposed to be a faith superhero, but you never got the cape? Thankfully, we know that God has already saved the world. We don't need to be superheroes, but this summer, Cross Trails campers explore what it means to be a part of the sainthood of all believers using superhero imagery. In the end,

campers will know that they are not meant to be superheroes, but everyday saints, called by God live their faith in the world.

We have programs at Camp Chrysalis and Ebert Ranch, Beach Camp in Corpus Christi and more! On-site programs are available for youth currently in grades 1-11, as well as Family Camp, Grandparent Camp and Women's Big R.

This year there are some new and revised programs at Ebert Ranch Camp. We have added a new program for Confirmation students called "What Does This Mean?! Confirmation Camp. We have also added Extreme Vaqueros for those who want a more adventurous experience including a day of play and off-site camping on the Llano River. Finally, we have revised our Trail Boss program to let youth choose a focus for their week on crafts, outdoor skills or horses.

As of early February, we already had over 1,100 campers signed up! Our early payment discount ends on March 31st, so don't miss this opportunity.

Camperships are available for youth and adults in all programs, so don't let anyone miss out! Who do you know who need to be at camp this summer?



We Raised \$105,918 for the Ebert Ranch Swimming Pond!

In August, Cross Trails was given an amazing opportunity. An anonymous donor saw the need for a new water play and swimming option at Ebert Ranch Camp and offered to match any funds we raised by the end of the year up \$50,000. We passed our goal and raised \$55,918!

These funds put us well on our way to adding a pond to Ebert. Our master plans include a 1-2 acre natural-looking swimming, fishing and nature play pond. As we said from the beginning, these matched funds won't cover all of the cost, but they will cover a major portion. Next steps are to get updated bids and permits. Our hope is to raise any remaining funds and start construction as soon as possible!

Thank you so much to all who gave to this special matching opportunity! It will be an exciting addition to the opportunities at Ebert Ranch. We will invite you to the dedication once it is complete!

CAMP CHRYSALIS & EBERT RANCH

Fall 2023 Cross Trails Retreats

Cross Trails Retreats are planned and led by Cross Trails staff. Full descriptions and fees will be on our webpage by March 1st. They are open to anyone in the target group and financial aid “camperships” are available for all. **Registration for Fall 2023 opens March 1st.** Early registration closes two weeks before the start date and all registration closes one week before. Sign up at CrossTrails.org!



Labor Day Friends and Family Camp Chrysalis—September 1-4 Families, Singles and Couples

Each family gets their own cabin and can do as much or as little as they like, and since it's still warm, you can enjoy the creek in ways that aren't possible outside of summer. Each family gets their own cabin room.



What Does This Mean?! Confirmation Retreat on the Lord's Prayer Camp Chrysalis—September 22-24

Youth in Grades 5-8 and an Adult from their Church

What does the Lord's Prayer mean?! Interactive camp experiences will enhance your congregational confirmation instruction as your youth explore the Lord's Prayer.



SWTS Middle School Gathering Camp Chrysalis—November 10-12

Synod Youth in Grades 6-8 and an Adult from their Church

Camp fun and interactive, faith-filled learning with other synod youth are all a part of The Gathering experience. Come to camp to get a bigger view of the church!

Family Advent Festival Retreats

Camp Chrysalis—Choose Your Family's Best Weekend—December 1-3, 8-10 or 15-17

Have meaningful and fun family time as you prepare for the Christmas season with Bible study, worship, crafts, and camp activities including decorating your own family gingerbread house. Each family gets their own cabin room.

Upper Elementary Advent Retreat Ebert Ranch—December 8-10

Youth in Grades 4-6 and an Adult from their Church

This is a great way to introduce youth to the Advent season. They will enjoy small group Bible studies, creative worships, crafts, and other camp activities to prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Gather a Group & Plan Your Own Retreat

Plan your own retreat or event! We can help! Both Camp Chrysalis and Ebert Ranch Camp have lodging, meeting and play space available for youth, adults and families.

Just gather at least 8 people and let us know which site and dates you want. You can come for the day, for the weekend or during the week. It can be a church group, family group, club, or any other gathering.

Visit our webpage, call 830-257-6340 or contact info@crosstrails.org for more information.



Family Advent Retreats Grew Large!

Cross Trails Ministry was excited to host 48 families and over 170 people at our three Family Advent Festival weekends! It is so much fun to see families enjoying their time together as they celebrated the Advent season!

This year families had the chance to play, make crafts, hike, explore the creek area and decorate gingerbread houses while also enjoying interactive and participatory worship and Bible study.

Registration for these retreats in 2023 will open on March 1st.



Leadership Alumni - Where Are You Now?!



If you have ever served on summer staff, or as a board member for Cross Trails Ministry, LORMS, LAOSC or earlier versions of Lutheran Camping in Texas, we want to know where you are now! We are updating our database and we want to make sure that we are not leaving anyone out.

Contact Jessica Jackson at Jessica@crosstrails.org to update your information and let us know when you served. You can also share a favorite memory and learn ways that leadership alumni can still be involved. Thank you for being a part of this ministry!

We Received a Big Check!



In December, Deacon John Dellis of the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest and Cross Trails' LFSW Board Representative Leslie Blalock presented Executive Director, Deanna Christensen, with a big check, literally!

The Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest has been a partner in ministry for a long time. As we have limited resources, they work with us to help people who want to establish charitable estate gifts. They do this at no charge!

Thanks to people who established endowments and gifts in the past, Cross Trails received a little over \$112,000 in 2022. Contact Deanna Christensen or visit LFSW.org to learn more.

Thank You Ron & Sally!

Ron and Sally Kettler came to Ebert Ranch Camp as RV volunteers and over the last 13 years ministered to thousands of people!

Cross Trails requires 25 hours per week from RV volunteers, but we know Ron put in many more. Even if he just did the minimum, he put in over 16,240 hours! His handiwork is all over both Chrysalis and Ebert Ranch.

Sally volunteered for mailings and became a connection point for Ebert in the local church and community. This fall they decided to move back to be with family in Tennessee. They are deeply missed.

Contact Jay Miller at jay@crosstrails.org to find out about serving as a RV volunteer at Ebert Ranch.



You Are Invited!

The Eleventh Annual Cross Trails Ministry

Gift of Faith Gala

Saturday, March 4, 2023

The Courtyard Marriott in New Braunfels

Join us for an evening of dining, entertainment, fundraising and fellowship as we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Ebert Ranch Camp & the 25th Anniversary of Cross Trails Ministry!



This event helps us to keep camp affordable for all and provides financial aid “camperships” to those who need them. No one should miss out on camp because of the cost!

Come and enjoy a wonderful time as you help to refill our Campership Fund. Our goal is to raise \$45,000 this year.

For more information go to crosstrails.org and click on support. Don't forget to share this information with others!



Here's what you need to do as soon as possible!

- ★ Buy your ticket(s)
- ★ Become a table sponsor, staff sponsor or event sponsor
- ★ Donate an auction item

The deadline for all of these is February 22nd.

If you can't make it, visit our Gala website. Starting on February 26 you can sign up to bid and start bidding online

on the silent auction items. Contact Jessica@crosstrails.org with questions. Scan this QR code to go directly Gala page.



Leadership Experience from Day 1!



Cross Trails Ministry is hiring for Summer 2023! If you know someone who would be a great role model who is a current college student or high school senior, encourage them to apply!

Working at camp is an opportunity that lets young adults step into leadership in very powerful ways. They learn to live and serve with dedication and purpose.

Positions available include counselors, lifeguards, ropes course coordinators, wranglers, outdoor recreation coordinators, Day Camp Directors and more! Full and half summer positions are available.

“Camp gives its employees so many opportunities to step out of their comfort zone and lead so many things, and these opportunities have helped me learn how to lead with grace, compassion, and confidence. I have learned how to take charge, but also how to step back, listen to others and their ideas, and follow when need be.” - Counselor 2022

More information can be found at: crosstrails.org/employment

Who do you know who needs to be at camp?