

About Camp Barakel



BARAKEL EXISTS TO PROCLAIM THE GLORY OF GOD

Camp Barakel exists to proclaim truth about the living God. We want people to feel the weight of God's glory, know the depth of Biblical truth and see the beauty of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. The glory of God is on display at camp in every season. His glory is **seen** in His majestic creation. Psalm 97 says "The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples have seen His glory." The proclamation of the written Word of God in chapel makes His glory **heard**. Like Paul in Acts 20 we say, "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God." Sometimes His glory is **felt** as the Holy Spirit brings conviction in a listener's heart and awakens that heart from the deadness of sin. Camp Barakel is here to show and tell of God. This proclamation is, at the same time, both old and new. We take our message from a very old book, but that message is more relevant for our day than much of what is considered fashionable. The story of Camp Barakel is the story of God's faithfulness, and that story is being added to every day. We trust your heart will be stirred to praise God as you read of what He has done.

HOW WE GOT STARTED

Camp Barakel was founded in the early 1940's by a young pastor named Holman "Johnnie" Johnson. Johnnie had recently graduated from Moody Bible Institute and was the pastor of a small rural congregation just west of Lansing, Michigan. As the church grew, Johnnie desired to have a ministry that would really get at the hearts of young people. The Lord led him to organize a summer camp for the church youth... and the roots of what is now Camp Barakel began to grow. In those early days, Barakel rented a former CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) campsite located on the shore of Lake Michigan near Muskegon. (Where they had an old blockhouse, which became our symbol.) Barakel grew from approximately 30 to nearly 800 summer campers during those first years. In 1952, through a series of events that can only be described as marvelous, the dear Lord provided our present campsite near Fairview, Michigan - originally two hundred acres. Today the property includes 350 acres (including all of the frontage on Shear Lake) and hosts 10,000 people per year.

WHAT'S A "BARAKEL?"

Our name is from a Hebrew word which means "blessing of God." It was originally a man's name in the Old Testament book of Job (chapter 32), and was suggested to us in the 1940's by a nine-year old camper. Thousands of people will agree that Camp Barakel is a place "where God has blessed."

WHO OWNS CAMP BARAKEL?

Camp Barakel is owned and operated by a group of 35 local churches, all located in Michigan's lower peninsula. These churches, from a variety of denominations, operate the camp as a non-denominational Gospel-centered ministry. We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.

WHAT IS CAMP BARAKEL LIKE?

The dear Lord has blessed Camp Barakel with a beautiful setting. Our property is located in Michigan's northern lower peninsula, approximately 45 miles east of Grayling along the northern edge of the Huron National Forest. We are surrounded by forest in all directions and our acreage is wooded with rolling hills and valleys. Shear Lake (the headwaters of the south branch of the Thunder Bay River) is completely spring-fed. The water in the lake is clear and pure... in fact, it still passes the drinking water standards established by the State of Michigan. The lake nestles at the bottom of a valley whose sides are covered with mature pine, oak, birch, cedar and poplar. It is a great place for swimming, fishing, kayaking, canoeing and paddle-boating. Since we border the National Forest, we are afforded the use of over 1,000 additional acres as a part of our year-'round camping season.

Over the years, we have worked very carefully to blend our buildings into the environment. We desire to have the beauty of God's creation be predominate — for His power and majesty to be most visible. Thus, our buildings are made of natural materials (wood and stone) that come from our local area. We have carefully laid out the buildings in an attempt to blend them with the surrounding forest. The interiors of our buildings are knotty pine — many have exposed shaved log trusses and fireplaces in an attempt to give a “northwoods atmosphere.” More than 400 campers and staff may be housed at any given time. There are two completely separate and self-sufficient camp facilities (one on each side of Shear Lake) with a total of more than 40 buildings. There are also accommodations in our 50-site RV Park.

We hope you'll venture up to the place “where God has blessed” and see the area for yourself. Our county (Oscoda) is the least populated in the lower peninsula — and is as fine a place to go camping as you can imagine.

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

Our mission is to give a thoroughly Biblical declaration of the glories of God among the entire Barakel community, with a view to gathering worshipers who magnify God through the gladness of radically obedient lives. All to the glory of God!

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Our Doctrinal Statement, taken from our Constitution and By-Laws:

We believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, the Triune God, the creation of man by the direct act of God, the incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, His identification as the Son of God, His vicarious sacrifice for the sins of mankind by the shedding of His blood on the cross, the resurrection of His body from the tomb, His imminent and pre-millennial return, His power to save men from sin, the New Birth through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and the gift of eternal life by the grace of God.