

St. Louis Camp Meeting Association of the Church of God

St. Louis Campground
8489 N. Bagley Rd.
St. Louis, MI 48880



(989) 681-2581
www.stlouiscampground.org

“Count your blessings, name them one by one...”

These words are part of an old hymn that we have sung for more than 100 years, and the message is still just as important today. We must take stock of the gifts God has given us. Psalm 136 has reminded people of this fact for well over 2,000 years, and it urges us to remember God’s goodness in community. “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever.”

The St. Louis Camp Meeting Association Board of Directors has many, many reasons to be thankful to God this year. We walked into the year 2020 with trepidation, and then put our faith in Jesus Christ to bless the campground and all those who stayed here this year. God did not disappoint!!! (But then again, does He ever?)

The Board of Directors prayed and sought the Lord’s will throughout this year. There were many times when we had longer meetings to discuss safety measures, health protocols, and whether or not to even have the St. Louis Camp Meeting this year. Through it all, God kept telling us to have faith. It was a never ending whisper in our meetings and in our prayer answers.... ‘have faith’. We then took the step of faith to have the St. Louis Church of God Camp Meeting this year, and it was one of the best we’ve had in years. The messages, the song services, and the gatherings (all socially distanced, of course) were all clearly God-breathed and blessed. Even in the midst of a pandemic, God led people to give financially in ways we’ve not seen in a long time at the St. Louis Campground and Camp Meeting Association. We ended camp meeting 2020 with numbers bigger than recent previous years! Indeed, we give thanks to the Lord – His love endures forever!

Another blessing that we absolutely need to say thanks for is Tom and Kathy Schaefer as campground caretaker and manager at the campground this year. They are both such hard workers and dedicate so much to the St. Louis Campground. Tom can always be found either on a mower or on the Gator, going to help someone out. Kathy is found cleaning bathrooms or working in the office, always with a smile on her face. We owe Tom and Kathy a heap of thanks for all that they do. If you would like to drop a line to Tom and Kathy during the off-season months, I am sure they would love to hear from you. You can send your card or letter to the campground—Tom checks the mail quite frequently.

Here are a few more things that we are thankful for which you might have noticed around the campground this year:

- We got a new sign on M-46! It has LED solar lights fixed to the top which stay nice and bright throughout the night and help folks see where Bagley road is once again.
- The rustic cabins, gaga ball pits, and a couple other wooden structures were stained this year. Tom did these projects, and we think they all look fantastic!
- The dorm was painted and broken doors were re-hung and fixed. Some people even thought that this was a new building to the campground. Wow!
- A number of trees were trimmed or cut down. This was partly due to two very strong storms that rolled through in June and downed multiple trees and limbs. The cleanup from these storms took days and lots of work. We were fortunate to have a few volunteers help with this cleanup, for which we are very grateful. (This is a great volunteer opportunity for youth groups or special projects...we’ll mention this again later on in this newsletter!)
- New metal roofs were added to the caretaker’s house, a children’s building, and the East side of the barn. There are a couple of remaining buildings on the campground needing a new steel roof, each of which are budgeted for 2021 or will be in the budget for 2022.

- A large number of LED lights were hung throughout the campground as part of a package deal being offered by Consumer's Energy. The old flood light/mercury fixtures used anywhere from 100 to 175 watts, and we replaced these lights with LED fixtures, which use only 50 watts each. Consumer's Energy had a bonus incentive for replacing with LED lights: (1) They will pay us \$0.25 per reduced wattage up to \$0.70, and (2) a total of \$3,000 to upgrade to LED. We saved so much in the initial purchase and installation of the fixtures and LED lights, and this will also save us approximately \$2,500 per year in electricity costs!
- New wiring is being installed in the youth area, between Letts Loft, the youth tabernacle, and the dorm. The current wiring in the dorm is extremely outdated and somewhat of a fire hazard, and many of the wires in the youth area are overhead instead of buried underground. We have made the decision that it's time to upgrade these buildings/areas to make them safer for the youth and for the folks staying in the dorm and Letts Loft.

We are so pleased with all the improvements and upgrades that are happening at the St. Louis Campground. We owe you all a great big thanks for your continued financial and prayerful support! We cannot do any of these improvements without you! But of course, with improvements and continual upkeep on the St. Louis Campground, we are certainly always in need. Would you prayerfully consider the following?

- We will eternally need volunteers! Storms can knock down branches and limbs and make a mess of the grounds; the limbs make it difficult to mow the grass without launching projectiles. Leaves come down in the fall and can be raked up. Painting and cleaning projects abound through the summer! If you have a youth group or other group of volunteers who would like to stay a night on the grounds for free while they work on a service project, please call Tom and Kathy at the campground. There is no shortage of projects in the summer time!
- Donations for new steel roofs. The North bathroom, one children's building, the dorm, and both tabernacles still need steel roofs. These roofs provide longevity for the building and help curb leaks and roof damage. We have budgeted for at least one new roof in the 2021 budget, but if a donation would happen to come in, we could move forward on new roofs for other buildings!
- Donations toward the sewer project. In the Annual Business meeting in August 2019, we voted to have a two-year allotment to raise half the funds for the sewer improvement project in the South end of the camp. We have a long way to go to get at our goal of \$96,000, but we know that if this is God's plan for our campground, He will provide the means. Upgrading to full sewer hookups in the South end will entice more of the windmill and soybean plant workers and/or seasonal campers to come join us. This will provide a nice boost in rental income and help us continually improve the campground!
- We need willing people to serve on committees. Thank you to those who stepped forward after the 2020 Annual Business meeting to submit your names for consideration to serve on a committee. However, there are still a couple of vacant positions needing able bodies: Finance and Budget, Business and Nominations (2 positions), Operations, and Development. To be considered for one of these positions, please send a letter of recommendation from your pastor and a short note stating why you would like to serve in that capacity to Emily Holm, Secretary to the Board of Directors, at:

Emily Holm
4273 Two Mile Road
Gladwin, MI 48624

-or-

horselovermich@yahoo.com

- Financial donations for the general funds. There are usually a couple/few emergent needs at the campground throughout the camping season, and we can always use extra funds to help pay for improvement and upkeep. Any monetary donations to the St. Louis Campground are tax-deductible. Be sure to get your donation sent in by the end of 2020 for the deduction to apply to this year's taxes! You can send your donation during the off-season to:

Sandy Turk, Treasurer
c/o St. Louis Campground
77 N. Baker Rd
Midland, MI 48640

- Partner with us in prayer. If you are unable to give financially, consider praying with us that the Lord would bless the St. Louis Campground and those who gather there. Pray that the Lord would meet our every need, and most importantly, that the board of directors seek and do only God's will on the campground. We feel your prayers in the best and worst of times, and it is a wonderful feeling knowing that the campground and the board of directors is being lifted up in prayer. We are eternally thankful for that.

As you can tell, a LOT has happened this year on the St. Louis Campground. The biggest takeaway from 2020 for us is that we need to be thankful, keep the faith, and to count our many blessings. No matter what is going on in the world or even in our lives, God will forever be there to bless you and love you. He is the one true constant that we can always rely on!

The All-Boards Meeting for 2021 is tentatively set for Saturday, April 24, 2021. It will be held at the Campground, at 9:00 a.m. Please plan to attend, and bring with you any ideas or suggestions for the St. Louis Campground or Camp Meeting. Even if you aren't on a committee, you are welcome to attend to share your thoughts and comments. We would love to hear what you have to say!

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever!”

Thank you again to Tom and Kathy Schaefer for their dedication and love for the St. Louis Campground. Thank you to Gary Puckett and Jeannette Lawrence for helping Tom and Kathy faithfully through thick and thin this year. Thank you to everyone who attended Camp Meeting this year, and to all who supported us financially and prayerfully. Thank you to those who pray for the St. Louis Campground. Most importantly, thanks be to God for His blessings and love, without which absolutely nothing would be possible.

Prayers for a safe and healthy holiday season for you and your family!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

In His Service,

The Board of Directors
St. Louis Camp Meeting Association of the Church of God

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Vice-Chairman
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Connie Graham
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Nancy Beecher
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