

# Rhythms of Faith

## *Camps as Catalyst for Family Faith Practices*

### **A brief introduction:**

The Rhythms of Faith Project seeks to empower parents and caregivers in family faith formation by leveraging the power of camp experiences to establish rhythms of faith through regular Christian practices. It is a 5-year, nationwide, cross-denominational initiative coordinated by Wheaton College's Center for Leadership Development (HoneyRock), in partnership with Sacred Playgrounds, and generously funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. The project seeks faith formation through partnership: partnership among parents/caregivers; partnership among camps, congregations, and the home; partnership among practitioners and the academy; partnership among different Christian traditions. We bring together scholars and practitioners from Lutheran, United Methodist, and Evangelical traditions, drawing experience from camp, clergy, and academy.

Together, we will develop a model program that enables camps to be training centers that equip parents and congregations to maximize the impact of camp-like experiences in developing resilient faith and maturity in their youth. Throughout human history, God has used time away in temporary community to deepen faith, renew the people of God, and equip them for impact in critical historic moments. Prophets, kings, the nation of Israel, families, and Jesus' own disciples were transformed and prepared through Spirit-led times away. Christian camping, at its core, performs a similar role in today's world. The key characteristics and lasting impacts of Christian camping experiences are well-established, with a growing body of literature and scholarship confirming their value and potential. Rhythms of Faith will build on this research and seek to deepen the impacts of camp experiences.

This project will capitalize on the power of camp by equipping families and churches to deepen resilient faith in youth through an evidence-based action-research process. The project team will identify program elements, rhythms, faith practices, and training processes that impact youth directly and improve the partnership between camps, churches, and families. So often, the powerful faith experiences of camp are not understood, transferred to, or capitalized on by the permanent systems. We seek to help parents maximize the impact of these deeply transformational experiences and continue the lessons learned and growth into everyday life.

Once tested and refined, this program will be shared with the Christian camp movement, through denominational training, in churches and with families across the country and around the world. The project team's visibility, reputation, and prolific writing at the national and international level ensure global impact. As a result of this project, we hope that camps, in partnership with churches and parents, can become a more effective and pervasive catalyst for enduring faith formation, maturity, and leadership development in today's youth and emerging adults.

### **Project Co-Directors:**

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