

Report to the 206th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine
Camp Bishopswood
October 2025

Camp Bishopswood had one of the best summers ever and is currently wrapping up a full and exciting fall.

We had a total of 370 different campers who came for a total of 640 weeks. Some campers stay 1 week, a few stay all 7 weeks, and a good mixture in between. Who are these campers?

- 51 campers self-reported belonging to an Episcopal Church, accounting for just about 14% of the total camp population.
- 114 campers self-reported coming from a religious background, just about 31% of the total camp population.
- That means about 54% of the total camp population reports coming from a religious background.
- 17 campers who came to camp are children of a priest or employee of the diocese, who the Bishop so kindly incentivized to attend camp.

Here is something essential to know. Camp Bishopswood is your camp, and we are here to serve the people of the diocese and all communities across the state, and beyond. What is essential to the people in the dioceses is also a significant part of Bishopswood's mission. I want to focus on a few of the priorities of the dioceses that are also top priorities for Bishopswood. Those include poverty, immigration, LGBTQ issues, racism, and caring for creation. This is how we are addressing these issues:

Poverty - We can't end poverty at Bishopswood, but we can ensure the camp is as accessible to all campers and provide them with well-balanced meals and proper care while they are at camp. Last summer, Bishopswood:

- Provided a total of \$111,580 in scholarships to 112 different campers. That means 32% of all campers received some assistance.

Immigrants and Refugees- Camp Bishopswood had the most Immigrant and Refugee campers and staff members this past summer across all of the summer camps in the state of Maine.

- 4 of our 32-program staff are from the Immigrant and Refugee community.
- 27 campers from this community made up 76 camper weeks, accounting for a total of 12% of all Bishopswood Camper Weeks.
- Close to \$57,000 in scholarships was provided to assist these campers in attending camp.

LGBTQ+ Campers: - This number is much harder to quantify, and we really don't want to. The most important thing is that any camper or staff member who identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community is welcomed and feels safe. Here is how Bishopswood does that:

- We have gender inclusive housing and any camper can stay in a cabin whose gender they identify with.
- Two of the weeks this summer, we had one cabin that was gender inclusive for 12 campers.
- 61 of our campers, or almost 17%, said they were open to staying in either a gendered or a gender-inclusive cabin.
- Name circles and introductions always include what pronouns people would like to use.

Racism- Like poverty, we may not be able to end racism in the outside world, but we work towards eliminating it at camp. Here are a few of the things we did this summer:

- We spent close to 5 hours of our 1-week staff training learning about DEI and how we can be a welcoming camp.
- We also trained the entire staff on restorative justice and how to engage in those difficult discussions.
- We inform staff and campers that there is no tolerance for hate at camp, and when we hear it, we take immediate action to address it and educate around it.

Creation-Stewardship is one of our five pillars at camp. We work very hard to consider our impact on God's amazing creation and explore ways to teach campers how to make a difference. Here are just a few of the things we do to try to teach this to campers:

- We continue to compost at every meal, and campers take turns processing the compost. We also conserve water at the end of meals, rather than dumping it down the drain. This waters the flower boxes.
- We teach campers that food is not an endless resource, and we can take a little and always have more to try to eliminate food waste.
- We partner with a local pig farmer to send as many of our kitchen scraps as we can to them.
- Campers who stay three weeks or more are given a cloth napkin so they can avoid using paper napkins at each meal.

We couldn't do this work without all of you! We are deeply grateful for all your support, prayers, and love. Currently, Bishopswood has an annual budget of nearly a million dollars, and we receive approximately 7% of our funding from the diocese. The rest comes from fees and donations. Please visit us, bring your parish for a retreat, send some kids to camp, and let's do this work together. After all, camp is here for you!