

Camp Balsams

Policies & Procedures

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General Conduct

Camp Balsams is owned by Middleton Community Church as a retreat for church members and their guests. As such, those using the camp need to be aware that their words and actions while in camp and in the surrounding communities should reflect the positive values of Middleton Community Church. Campers are expected at all times to be considerate of other campers and our neighbors, including observing reasonable quiet hours. Access to the camp is dependent upon observance of this basic requirement and the other policies articulated below.

Fire Safety

The risk of fires spreading is usually greater in the north woods than in southern Wisconsin. We do not want to risk life or lose this valuable church asset due to the careless use of fire.

- Campfires are allowed only in the fire ring.
- **Campfires must be attended at all times and must be fully put out when not attended – even when unattended for short periods of time.**
- Do not let fires get too large, particularly in windy conditions.
- Douse coals and ashes in water to ensure the fire is completely out.

- Use the metal bucket by the fire ring for COLD ashes
- All ashes (including those from grills) must be completely COLD before spreading in the woods away from the cross.

Fireworks

Use of fireworks is prohibited on the property of Middleton Community Church at Camp Balsams. Due to reasons of the safety of campers, fire safety, potential property damage, respect for babies, children, neighbors and pets, and liability issues, the Camp Balsams Committee has adopted a policy against the use of fireworks in camp. Complaints have been received both from neighbors and our own campers.

Charlie's Cabin – Community Area/Storm Shelter:

Open Hours 10am – 8pm (or anytime as a storm shelter)

The community area (large room in the lower level, laundry room, and bathroom with shower/tub) of Charlie's Cabin is available to all campers as a shelter during tornado/severe weather. All campers may use the laundry facilities and bathroom with bathtub/shower during the open hours. If you need hours different than posted, please check with occupants in Charlie's Cabin. Occupants of Charlie's Cabin may be using the basement bedrooms, so we ask that you respect the open hours. Games, puzzles and books are also located in this space. Please be considerate of Charlie's Cabin residents.

Because this area is for use by all cabins as a storm shelter, the side patio door should always be unlocked for emergency use, except when the entire camp is unoccupied. There is a key for the patio door on the bulletin board in cabins 2, 3, 4 & 5. The door between the community area and the living area of Charlie's Cabin (at the bottom of the stairway) may be locked.

Lower-level windows and doors: Please keep the doors and windows closed whenever possible to help maintain a cool, dry environment during the summer months. Warm humid air from the outside will greatly increase humidity and mold growth in the lower level.

Water Safety

No lifeguards are provided by Camp Balsams. Campers are responsible for the safety of family members and guests during any water use.

Campers should be responsible in their use of watercraft and conscious of their own safety and the safety of others. Motorized watercraft should not follow other boats or skiers too closely and should be used with care around swimmers and non-motorized craft.

Pets

Campers who bring dogs or other pets are responsible for: cleaning up after them; keeping them from straying onto neighboring properties; and making sure the pets do not disturb other campers or neighbors. **Dogs that bark when left alone or pets that tend to cause**

damage to furniture or cabins should not be left unattended in cabins at any time. Campers are responsible for costs of damage done by pets. Pets should be kept off furniture and beds, and the cabin, furniture and beds should be thoroughly cleaned at the end of the week.

Cleaning the Cabin

There is a list of chores and cleaning duties that need to be done before you leave for home. It is posted on or near the bulletin board in each cabin. To the extent that you used the Charlie's Cabin Community Room, its bathroom and/or laundry area, please help clean those areas as well. Please try to leave the cabins cleaner than you found them.

Trash and Recycling

Each family is responsible for removing their trash and recycling when they leave.

The Town of Washington operates a transfer station, located at 1850 Rangeline Road, Eagle River, that accepts refuse and limited recycling. The transfer station is typically open from 8 am to noon, Friday through Sunday during winter months and Friday through Monday during summer months. Refer to the schedule posted on the cabin bulletin board for what may be recycled.

You must take one of our three permits with you to use the transfer station. The permits are tacked to wooden "paddles". Two permits are located inside Cabin 1 for use by Cabins 2-5. One permit is inside Charlie's Cabin for year-round use.

If you leave on a day when the transfer station is not open, please take your trash home with you.

Special Disposal Concerns

Pet Waste

Pick up after your dog/pet and take all waste to the transfer station at the end of your visit. Walk the field at the end of your week to make sure the field is in good condition for the next campers;

Fish Remains

Do not bury or toss fish waste in the woods. Place fish waste in a zip-lock bag (found in each cabin) and put in the freezer. Take waste home or to the transfer station at the end of your visit.

Work by Camp Balsams Committee

Camp Balsams Committee volunteers open and close the camp each year. In spring, the crew prepares the cabins and puts in sweat equity, including but not limited to painting,

mowing, cutting and splitting firewood, and putting in the piers and raft. In fall, the piers and raft are removed from the water and the cabins are winterized.

Work and/or Donations by All Campers

To help keep cabin rental rates low, it has been a long-standing tradition during the summer season that each family does a work project or donates a needed item while at camp. A list of work projects and needed donations is posted in each cabin. If you choose to do a project that is in the common areas of the camp, please confer with other campers and have them check it off on the list posted in their cabin. This will eliminate a duplication of supply purchases or inconvenience caused by scheduling.

Work Project Supplies

Prior to purchasing supplies, please check Cabin 1 or the lower level of Charlie's Cabin. If you need to purchase supplies, you may use the charge account at Nelson's Ace Hardware in Eagle River (listed under Middleton Community Church). If you purchase supplies elsewhere, you may be reimbursed by turning in your receipt to the church office.

Sharing and Care of Piers, Watercraft and Other Items

There are three piers at Camp Balsams, all of which may be shared by all campers. The pier nearest Cabin 3 is used for watercraft. The pier nearest Cabin 4 is used for swimming and has the sandiest bottom and stairs for easy entry to the water. There is another pier near Cabin 5.

The camp owns a few canoes, a few row boats, two kayaks, two paddle boards and two paddle boats that may be shared by campers in all cabins.

The back porch (furthest from lake) on Cabin 3 has paddles, oars and limited fishing gear that may be used by all in camp. There is a plastic storage box in the back of Cabin 3 containing personal floatation devices (PFDs) which may be shared by all in camp. If you have your own PFDs, you may want to bring them. Please do not leave paddles, oars and PFDs in boats or on the docks when not in use. They may be blown into the water and drift away. Oars and wooden paddles may delaminate if they are continually wet.

Be sure boats are securely tied to the dock when not in use. If storms are predicted, you may want to bring the watercraft on shore.

Boat Ramp and Invasive Species

There is a boat ramp of marginal quality between Cabins 4 and 5 that may be used by those staying at Camp Balsams. The water is very shallow and the bottom is mucky.

If you use this ramp, please observe the invasive species rules listed on the sign posted at the ramp. (image of Invasive Species sign is below)

Reservation Eligibility and Procedures

Eligibility

Summer season reservations (late May through late September or early October) for the cabins at Camp Balsams may only be made by members of Middleton Community Church, except in certain circumstances approved by the Camp Balsams Committee officers (co-chair or treasurer). Members of the Chase family and certain pastors of the Wisconsin Conference UCC and their families have already been approved. The Chase family reunion is reserved before the initial sign-up Sunday in February or March.

Off-season reservations for Charlie's Cabin (early October through late May) may only be made by church members. Exceptions may be made by camp officers.

Those eligible to make reservations may host non-eligible relatives and friends as guests; however, the eligible party is expected to stay in camp during the entirety of the guests' visit.

Procedures

A lottery signup for the summer season will be held on a Sunday in February or March. Church member households will be given an opportunity to sign up in advance to participate in the lottery for a week-long reservation. A drawing will determine the lottery sign-up order. Detailed description of the procedure will be available each year, and may be subject to change year-to-year.

Reservations for Charlie's Cabin for the off-season may be made by contacting the church office.

Payment and Key Pickup

Payment for cabin rental and pick up of the key should be made at the church office during normal business hours prior to traveling to Camp Balsams, usually the week prior.

Financial Hardship

It is the intention of the Camp Balsams Committee that the camp be **accessible to all members**. If the rates present a hardship, please contact Pastor Zayna (mccpastor@middletonucc.org) or one of the camp co-chairs, Ross Michaels (rossmichaels53@gmail.com) or Joe Tennies (tennies@gmail.com).

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF
INVASIVE SPECIES

HELP PROTECT BASS LAKE

Bass Lake has avoided invasive species that are in the chain of lakes. Let's keep it that way.

BEFORE LAUNCHING AND BEFORE LEAVING:

- ✓ **INSPECT**
your boat, trailer and equipment
- ✓ **REMOVE**
all attached aquatic plants, animals and mud
- ✓ **DRAIN**
all water from boats, vehicles and equipment
- ✓ **NEVER MOVE**
plants or live fish away from a waterbody

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!