



CAMPING & RETREAT MINISTRIES

The Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church has a vigorous camping and retreat program with several camps located throughout the conference. One of those is Buffalo Mountain Camp, located just 12 miles from Johnson City Tennessee and nestled in the Cherokee national Forest, home to clear mountain streams and forest wildlife. Buffalo Mountain Camp's goal is for all to delight in the beauty of God's creation and to experience the love of Christ through the avenue of Christian camping. It offers summer camps for children and youth as well as retreat ministries throughout the year for all ages as well as day and half-week environmental education programs for school field trips.

Camping Ministry

During the summer the camp ministry seeks to build Christian community through daily Bible studies and other small-group activities as well as through camp-wide worship and evening programs. Fun, acceptance, love, and adventure are part of each day. Each camper will have the opportunity to be part of a small family group. These camper groups consist of 8-12 campers of the same age group and are led by at least two counselors who have been trained in the camp ministry. Each group is assigned its own home-in-the-woods to use for Bible studies, cook-out fires, sleep-outs, or as place to hang out between activities. In this small-group atmosphere, campers have the chance to grow close to God and to one another while hiking, singing, crafts, cook-outs, swimming and other activities according to age level.

Retreat Ministry

Buffalo Mountain offers several options for many different types of groups. It can serve groups that want a quiet place to rest as well as other groups seeking a weekend of adventure and fun. All lodging options provide a

natural setting conducive to study, prayer and contemplation, as well as easy access to mountain scenery, fishing in its pond, moderate hiking trails up the mountain, and lots of nature to explore. Full-service meals and snacks served family style are available at extra cost.

Lodging

The **Retreat Center** is a motel-like facility offering double-occupancy rooms, kitchen and dining facilities, conference room, worship center, and a large all-purpose room, all contained in one building with all linens and soap provided. A favorite facility for retreats, conferences and family reunions.

Allison Lodge and cabins offers a more rustic experience. The lodge has an industrial-sized kitchen, large (warm-weather) dining facility, and a meeting/gathering room with large fireplace. There are six bunk-style cabins nearby, each housing about 20 people. The cabins share central guys' and girls' bath houses.

Gray UMC Involvement

Gray UMC actively utilizes the camping and retreat facilities & programs at Buffalo Mountain. The Youth hold an annual retreat there and a concerted effort is made to provide funding assistance to help as many kids as possible attend summer camps. Contact person- Rookie Sliger 423.477.3332. See also www.holstoncamping.com.