

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center
Oregon, Illinois

Situation Profile
As of October 2018

Mission Statement:

“Be the Church in outdoor settings, nurturing Christian faith and providing experiences connecting the Word of God with the World of God.”

History and Affiliations

Founded in 1974, Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) is the successor to several predecessor camps notably Camp Augustana (1927-1974) and Camp Alpine (1950-1974). LOMC is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, specifically with three geographic synods: Northern Illinois, on whose territory the camp is sited, Metro Chicago, and Central/Southern Illinois. It is separately incorporated in the State of Illinois as a non-profit corporation and is governed by a board of directors.

LOMC is a member of the ELCA Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Association and a member of Christian Camp and Conference Association.

Theology

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center attests to the saving and grace-filled power of God, manifest in the beauty and power of God’s creation, LOMC’s mission statement (connecting the word of God with the world of God) speaks directly to its theological core. As a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, LOMC centers itself in the confession of the Church as articulated in Article II of the Constitution of the ELCA.

- Christ-centered, unapologetically Christian with a Lutheran understanding;
- Intentionally welcoming to a diverse population;
- Faithful stewards of resources, including land, money and people,
- Committed to building community in all programs and within the wider Church we serve;
- Respectful of each other’s gifts
- Committed to building partnerships in ministry;
- Committed to accountability, integrity, and quality in both ministry and management

Programs

Programs include traditional summer youth camp, year-round confirmation camps, family camp, youth retreats, outdoor education, team building, adult retreats, offsite vacation bible

school, and leadership training. LOMC now hosts users from a wide range of diverse faiths and religious traditions.

Attendance

In 2016-2017 approximately 10,000 children, youth, adults and families participated in LOMC programs and activities. They represented more than 250 congregations in the supporting synods. Users of the camp come from all over the U.S. and Canada.

In common with most camps nationwide, LOMC has experienced a drop in attendance for traditional summer camp. However, we have had an increase in usage during retreat season.

Facilities and Staff

In 1973, a farm on the outskirts of Oregon, Illinois was purchased for development of the camp. Located on Illinois Route 6 near the Rock River and near White Pines, Lowden and Castle Rock state parks, the 650 acre site includes forest, prairie, hills and farmland. The site is located about 30 miles south of Rockford and 15 miles north of Dixon, Illinois.

More than fifteen permanent buildings, including a pool house, the Ragnar Moline Dining Hall, Norm Nelson Program Building (nature center and all-purpose use), and Freedom Tree Village (retreat and hospitality center) are in use 12 months a year for educational, recreational and religious programs. The site also includes a campground with trailer hookups, 7.5 acre pond stocked for fishing, trails maintained for hiking and cross country skiing, a zip line, a new archery range, and play fields. The site is home to diverse wildlife and a rich botanical mix.

Led by an executive director, 6 year round staff members serve LOMC. Key positions include development director, program director, maintenance manager, food service manager, retreat/business manager. Seasonal and part-time staff provide additional services.

Board Structure

A 23-member board of directors representing the supporting synods governs LOMC. The bishops are ex-officio members of the board, but are normally represented by appointees.

Support Base

LOMC conducts an Annual Fund and projects about \$175,000 in income from this source in FY2018. Gifts in kind, including substantial volunteer labor during the annual Memorial Day Work Weekend, also support LOMC. Fundraising activities include: Autumn Fest, two annual Giving Days, and Pedal For A Purpose.

Finances and Budget

With an annual budget of about \$750,000, LOMC is one of the largest camping and retreat ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LOMC is the only ELCA outdoor ministry center in Illinois. About 60 percent of the income derives from retreat guests and groups.

Declining program income, deficit budgeting and cash flow are concerns. Strong budget management and control of expenses, coupled with a thorough review of program costs and programs fees, are a top priority as the board seeks to regain a balanced budget and grow LOMC's ministries.

LOMC has indebtedness of \$250,000, guaranteed by a mortgage on its farmland. LOMC also maintains an endowment fund of \$184,000 and restricted funds totaling approximately \$80,000.

Marketing

A newsletter, annual summer program brochure, fundraising letters, lomc.org, and an LOMC Facebook page are LOMC's major ongoing marketing vehicles. Supporting synods provide additional communications support through their message boards. In addition, staff and camp alumni make presentations in congregations, to annual synod assemblies, and special interest groups throughout the year.