



## FRIENDS OF GROTONWOOD END OF YEAR UPDATE: 2021

Welcome to the second Friends of Grotonwood Newsletter! It's been a bustling and fruitful time for the Grotonwood team and we are going out in a blaze of Graceful Gray paint but more on that later!

At the beginning of this year, many things including the possibility of hosting summer camp were simply 'unknown'. Retreats were non-existent, Nature's Classroom, an outdoor education program that usually rents our facilities to run their program had not been at camp for over a year. It was bleak and we pondered our future.

As Christians we know that to have less than complete trust in God, even in uncertain times is to deny His sovereignty. God's unchanging character gives us a firm foundation when things feel unsteady and out of our control. In those times, it is even more important to trust God, and trust in God is what we did. We turned our focus from the things we could not control and lived a life of belief in and obedience to Him, even when it was difficult to plan and prepare camp programs.

It was cathartic to have the opportunity to be 'still' and allow the holy spirit's prompting to illuminate and guide us, and are we glad that we did! This has been a year foremost of great adventure as we launched several new programs and also a time of necessary 'stabilizing' after a difficult 2020. I am pleased to write that Natures Classroom returned for the fall season, and conferencing and weekend retreat groups came back strong after summer camp.

As we enter into our quiet period, I am reminded of the power of the winter season. It's God's way of speaking through nature, he invites us to take a moment to simply 'Selah' – to pause and reflect. As the first snow caresses your eyelashes and the warmth of the fire warms your soul, he is extending an invitation for us all to be still, to praise Him for all we have been able to accomplish in His name.

Next year, will bring its own triumphs and trials but right now as the nights draw in and the last leaves fall, we have the opportunity to, once again, wait on the Lord. To re-evaluate our trajectory, to bring ourselves in line with His plans and humbly prepare for all that 2022 will bring.

Enjoy all the latest from Grotonwood over the next few pages and whatever, or however, you celebrate, I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving, Hannukah, Kwanza, Christmas and New Year.

God bless you,

Breeze Everitt  
Director of Programs and Pastoral Care

**Pray For:** wisdom and vision for the leadership of the camp, and that we can resume our summer programs without any disruptions in 2022. For staffing needs to be met with Jesus-loving, kingdom focused individuals, who have hearts and mind honed to serve the least of these.

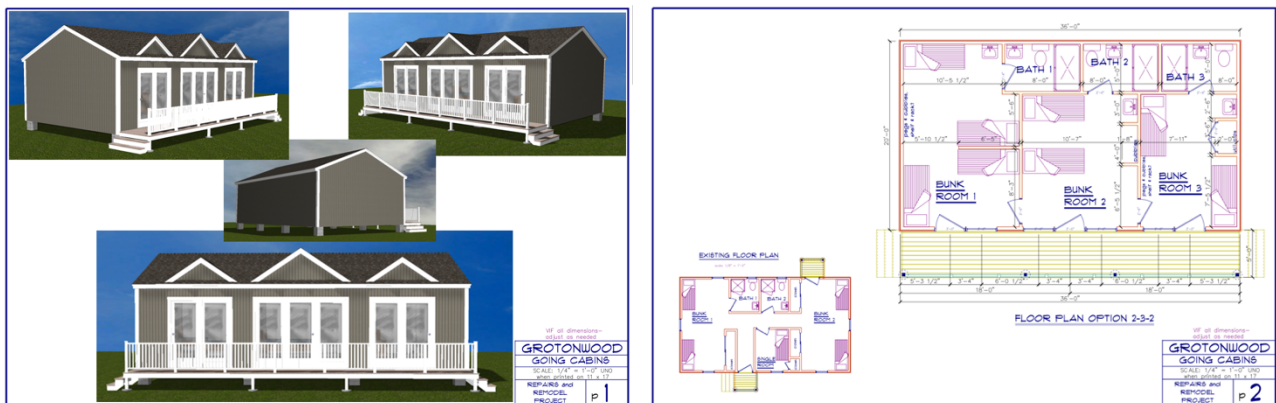
**Give:** Our Vision list is available online and donations can be made towards camperships or capital improvement projects: [grotonwood.org/support-us](https://grotonwood.org/support-us)

# FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Going Cabin Remodel:

In January we wrote about the Going cabins being in urgent need of repair. We are pleased to announce that it's FINALLY getting the TLC it so desperately requires! Before you get too excited, we want to level your expectations and explain that this project is being made possible through donations so it will be rolled out in phases over the next 5 years as and when we reach a funding milestone. When complete, each cabin will host 16 campers and staff across 3 adjoining rooms each with its own bathroom! We have a feeling they'll be more popular than Judson Village with our youth camper!

So far, we've received enough support to begin the process of renovating one cabin! Will you help us raise the next \$100,000 needed for the next cabin?



## Family Center Bathroom Renovations

The outdated Family Dining Hall Bathrooms from the 1970s finally received a much-needed remodel at the start of the year. The result was two stunning gender-neutral ADA accessible bathrooms. The star of the show was the flooring, as many of our campers remarked, "it's like walking on clouds!". Props to the force behind the project, Mr. Chris Trout and his mighty maintenance team.



### Judson Village Cabin Makeovers:

For all those who call Judson Village their home away from home, you'll be pleased to know that all the cabins are getting a little end of year makeover. Each space will get a fresh lick of paint, *Graceful Gray* of course! New showers and new flooring and lighting will round out the finish. If you would like to support our campaign to add one full-length mirror and set of hooks to each room, the cost is \$75 per room, or \$225 per cabin.

Donations can be made online at [Grotonwood.org/support-us](http://Grotonwood.org/support-us), or by mailing a check to: 167 Prescott St Groton MA 01450 MEMO: Judson Mirrors & Hooks



### Chapel Roof and Cupola:



The Chapel roof has been a concern for the past few years, when it rains/snows water leaks in mainly through the Cupola, which is rotting and in serious need of repair. We explained this to Mr. Ed Guerard and he set to work rallying alumni and F.O.R.M donors to help us preserve the chapel by putting on a new roof. We reached our fundraising target of \$28,000 in October 2021 and contracted a Red Dog Roofing to complete the works. We cannot wait to show you the result in 2022. If you don't already, stay connected through our Facebook and Instagram pages.

### Alumni Work Day May 2021:

On May 15th, 2021, 22 people gathered at Grotonwood for a work day to spruce up the Memorial Garden and make it more worthy of the people who are honored and remembered there. There were over 8 churches represented among the volunteers including FBC Littleton, Weston Acton Baptist and New Life Christian Ministries in Lowell!



The Friends of Regional Ministries (F.O.R.M) provided funds to rent a chipper, purchase flowers, and provide other equipment and resources needed. Mike Socia, caretaker for the Garden, organized the day and the Grotonwood staff provided both expertise and leadership to help keep things running smoothly. Many of the volunteers were former full time and summer staff, current donors to the Friends of Regional Ministries, and members of many churches.

Brush and fallen trees were cleared and chipped, tons of leaves were raked and removed; a bell from the First Baptist Church of Littleton was prepared to be in-stalled in the Garden; and groundwork was done for the installation of a second tribute wall. The day ended with a delicious meal prepared by the Chef Daniel and the Grotonwood kitchen staff.



Volunteers were rewarded with a real sense of accomplishment, a reminder of the value of teamwork, a whole lot of appreciation, and a discovery of aches and pains they hadn't experienced in years!

If you are interested in volunteering for our next Work Day or learning more about Friends of Regional Ministries (Grotonwood's fundraising arm) please email Ed at [ed48@verizon.net](mailto:ed48@verizon.net).

**Meet Gator:**

Our new sturdy new nurse-mobile, arrived just in time for summer camp! It features a handy dump bed for medical equipment. Out of season, we use it to transport equipment around camp, to keep our wood stacks topped up, and of course for tours of the camp facilities for those requiring mobility assistance.

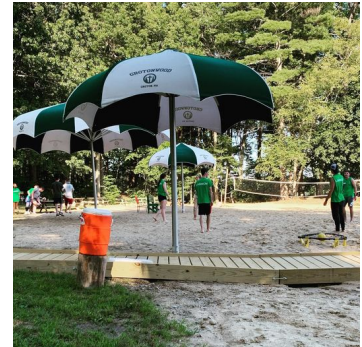
To all those who supported our appeal thank you! Through your generous donations we were able to raise a whopping \$11,178, which was \$5,000 more than we asked for! This robust little golf cart will take on the trails and go a great way towards ensuring our medical staff and campers have a safe and comfortable summer for many years to come!



**ADA Path to the Shoreline at Lost Lake:**



A big thank you to Jessie Hendershot on the completion of his Eagle Scout Project, which consisted of an ADA accessible path to the shore at the beach. This project had been on our Wish List since 2017 and on August 13, 2021 our dream of accessibility for all finally become a reality! The project was completed the weekend after summer camp finished and in good time for next year. We can't wait to put it to good use!



**The Path to Prescott Lodge:**

The path to Prescott Lodge finally got paved this summer! We've had so much rain during summer camp that getting in and out of the building without stepping into big muddy puddles was becoming a 'Ninja Warrior' obstacle course! The building is now fully accessible to wheelchair users and our campers with an unsteady gait. A big shout out to Rick Cooper Paving for being the easiest and most efficient company to work with



## PROGRAMS & MINISTRY

### Military Kids Camp 2021



This past summer we welcomed 120 children of military families to Grotonwood for another awesome summer of fun, social connection and faith exploration! Our new model allowed families to register for whatever week worked best with their schedule, and it was a resounding success, with many families coordinating their kid's session so that they could attend camp with their friends.

We're coming into 2022 bigger and stronger than ever with 150 spots available for children of military families. With enrollment already open and taking registrations, we urge military families to book in sooner rather than later to avoid disappointment. Once all 150 spots are filled, the session will close and we will begin to waitlist, which does not guarantee a spot.



### Epilepsy Foundation Purple Camp 2021



We have been hosting a week of summer camp for Epilepsy Foundation New England (EFNE) since 2018. Each year, 32 children with varying levels of seizure activity attend camp for a week of fun, positive risk taking and social connection. A lot of campers speak of feeling isolated or 'othered' and would not have the opportunity to attend a standard week of camp due to their medical condition. However, an increased ratio of care and heightened medical supervision makes it all possible. We look forward to many more years of Keto-Friendly S'mores around the campfire! To learn more visit [epilepsynewengland.org](http://epilepsynewengland.org).

### Elevate Winter youth Retreat 2021: For grades 2-5 & 6-11

In February we hosted 30 youth for a 3-day midweek retreat during winter break. The theme was, 'Your Story' with our overarching scripture verse coming from Psalm 78:4. In seminars and chapel services the kids learned about Jesus' story and what it meant to tell their own story in a world that doesn't always welcome it. The kids worshipped their hearts out and went home changed and equipped with more of the Lord. The schedule included sledding, a snow sculpting competition and a hot chocolate and cookie bar. Evening activities featured lip-sync battles, and a Pirate costume Mystery Dinner Party!

Registration for Elevate 2022 is now live and taking registrations. Visit [Grotonwood.org](http://Grotonwood.org) for more information.



## Day Camp in the Spring 2021: For grades K-8



This year we hosted our first ever Day Camp program during April Vacation. It was a big success with over 30 children attending the week. Our theme was the Amazing Race and every day the kids would work in teams to complete tasks and challenges that worked on critical thinking, team work, creativity, hand eye coordination, patience and S.T.E.M. From creating 30inch high structures with toothpicks and gummies, to cracking riddles and racing around camp with a wooden spoon and a ping pong ball (which is wayyy harder than it sounds!) we had a blast. In chapel the kids learned how to run the race with God and what to do when we run in to life's road blocks. We

finished the week with Store-time, a game of human hungry Hippos and very happy hearts!

*Registration for Day Camp in the Spring is now live and taking registrations. Visit [Grotonwood.org](http://Grotonwood.org) for more information and financial aid resources.*



## Spring & Fall Vacation 2021: Weekend retreats for adults with disabilities.

Spring Vacation was another new retreat launched this past March by our Adults with Disabilities Program Director Lina Delrio. The retreat welcomed 20 campers back for a good time! In chapel we shared the Easter story, we enjoyed a Spring Carnival and even had a camp-wide Easter Egg Hunt.



Fall Vacation is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year and proving a great success. We welcomed 6 new campers and 60% of our demographic was under the age of 28 a sign that there is a real need for safe and supportive recreational activities for young adults with developmental and cognitive disabilities. *Registration*

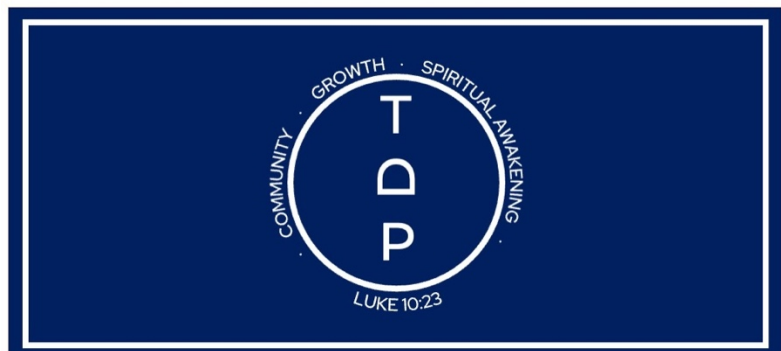


*for Spring Vacation '22 is live and taking registrations. Head to [Grotonwood.org](http://Grotonwood.org) for more info*

## Teen Discipleship Program: For grades 8-11

This October we launched our first Teen Discipleship Program (TDP) for grades 8-11. TDP is a four-month program for youth that are committed to taking their walk with God to the next level. The group is focused on growing their relationship with God within a small community of believers, just like Jesus did with his twelve disciples. Working through the bible study, "Something needs to Change", by David Platt they discuss what it means to follow Jesus in a world full of urgent physical and spiritual needs.

Our TDP community met in person for the first-time last week for study, and to share a meal together. it was heartwarming and encouraging to see their passion, energy and understanding. On the weeks that we do not meet there is a personal study assignment and some reading. *If you have a teenager age 14-17 interested in joining the next TDP cohort (October 2022), email [julia@grotonwood.org](mailto:julia@grotonwood.org). There is no cost for TDP, deadline for applications is September 7th, 2022.*



## What happens after TDP?

**Teens age 14-15:** Subject to progress and graduation from the program, teens age 14 - 15 will have the opportunity to enroll on to our new two-week Staff In Training (SIT) program in the summer of 2022. The SIT program is by invitation only and will introduce teens to mechanics of working at camp while still allowing them to be campers! SIT candidates will rotate through our various programs including Day Camp, Youth Overnight Camp, Adults with Disabilities Camp, Kitchen, Maintenance and our Activities & Events Team to give them a well-rounded experience.



**Teens age 16+:** Teens age 16+ will have to opportunity to be employed at Grotonwood for the summer. We only have a certain amount of staff positions allocated for youth age 16-17; Employment is competitive and subject to an interview and satisfactory progress on the Teen Discipleship Program.



**To close:** It is our earnest prayer and desire that our teen disciples will see, taste and know the things of God in a new, inspired and authentic way, choosing to grow and be molded by the scriptures and the power of the holy spirit. To really know the costly price of Grace in following Christ. That they have eyes to see and ears to hear the injustices of this world, that they would stand up and be heard and have open hearts to know the pure and redeeming love of God.

## Easter at Grotonwood 2021:

Our staff had some real fun hosting Grotonwood's first ever Easter Eggstravaganza in April! We had 45 children enroll to the event. They enjoy an afternoon filled with eggcellent activities, which included an Easter Egg Hunt, easter inspired crafts, a campfire worship session and a Bible study! The sun shone, and the kids had such a hoot socializing, meeting the Easter Bunny, playing together and hunting for those treasured eggs!

This was just one of over 25 weekend events hosted at Grotonwood over the course of 2021 for kids age 5-17. A big thank you to Julia, our Youth Program Director for planning and leading all these life-giving events with such gusto! They keep our little camp community connected and so happy. We hosted hikes, experiential adventure days, movie nights, baking sessions, Tea parties and more! We could also not do it without our volunteer staff who work so selflessly to bring events to life each month, thank you to them also!

