

Renewing Sacred Spaces.  
Inspiring Lifelong Adventures.



## Historic Santa Claus Campground

16670 N County Rd 625 E, Santa Claus, IN 47579



# Content

1	Mission & Vision
2	Historic Generosity
3	Why Now
4	A Unique Matching Opportunity
5	\$7.18M Vision
6	Foundations of Fellowship, Faith, & Fun
7	Expanding the Mission
8	Stewarding the Legacy
9	Next Generation Adventures
10	Top Priority Projects
11	\$3.59M Gift Range Chart
12	A Vibrant Future
13	Next Steps





## Mission & Vision

Our mission is simple and enduring: to create life-changing experiences where people **encounter Christ and grow through faith, fellowship, and fun.**

Our vision is a thriving, sustainable ministry that strengthens God's Kingdom by helping people encounter Christ, grow in faith, and live out their calling. Through intentional stewardship and a commitment to faith development, safety, and family, The Campground will remain a sacred refuge where lives are renewed and communities are equipped to **share God's love for generations to come.**



## A Sacred Space

For more than 175 years, these sacred grounds have offered sanctuary, renewal, and a place of encounter—where children, women, and men have discovered that God loves them and walks with them through every season of life.

Historic Santa Claus Campground stands today because generations of faithful believers gave generously and sacrificially so that others might know Jesus too. **Now, it's our turn to fan the flame for the next generation of Christ-followers.**

As we remain faithful to Christ, God continues to sustain and call us forward. This is a season of renewal and restoration—an opportunity to honor the past while preparing for a vibrant future of ministry.







# Historic Generosity

In 1847, four families joined their farms to create something far greater than land. They gave a place where God could move. From that act of faith, the Santa Claus German Methodist Episcopal Church was born, and with it, the beginnings of this holy ground.

In 1851, wagons lined the roads as more than a thousand people gathered for the first camp meeting—hungry for worship and renewal. By 1884, the Tabernacle rose from the trees cut on-site, standing as both a shelter and a symbol of God's presence. For 141 years, it has welcomed voices lifted in praise, heads bowed in prayer, and lives changed forever.

***From the beginning, this place has never been about buildings. It's been about God's Kingdom—built through faith, generosity, and the power of gathering in His name. For generations, lives have been changed here through fellowship, fun, and the transforming presence of Christ.***





## Why Now

The spaces that hold sacred moments are showing their age. The Tabernacle—the heartbeat of the camp—needs care to continue welcoming worshipers into the presence of God for the next hundred years. The dining hall strains to serve the growing number of campers who gather to share meals, laughter, and faith. Cabins built long ago no longer provide the safety or comfort today’s children and families deserve. Even the lakeside, once alive with joy and reflection, needs renewal to fully serve the next generation.

If this critical work is delayed, the strain on aging spaces will only grow.

- The Tabernacle will continue to need repair.
- The dining hall will struggle to meet demand.
- Outdated cabins will limit how the number of people we impact.

The camp will keep serving faithfully, but each year more time and resources will be spent on maintenance instead of ministry.

*This is why now matters.* These improvements are not simply about buildings—they are about renewing the spaces where people meet Christ, where faith deepens, and where lives are transformed for God’s Kingdom.



**By caring for these sacred places today, we ensure that generations to come will continue to encounter Christ, grow in faith, and live out their calling for God's Kingdom.**





# A Unique Matching Opportunity

Now, through a potential partnership with the Lilly Endowment, The Campground has an extraordinary opportunity before it. The Endowment has invited us to apply for a matching grant designed to help Indiana camps strengthen their facilities and expand their impact.

If selected, this partnership could **match local support dollar-for-dollar – half the total cost**. Through this opportunity, a **\$7.18 million vision** could be achieved by raising just **\$3.59 million** from generous friends and partners of the camp. While the outcome is still to be determined, this moment offers a rare chance to strengthen the campground's ministry for the next century and prepare for future growth.





# \$7.18 M Vision

This vision is simple and bold: create spaces that draw people closer to God and to one another, while ensuring the ministry thrives for generations to come. Each part of this plan strengthens what has always made the campground special— fellowship, faith, and fun.



## Foundations of Fellowship, Faith & Fun

**\$3,585,000**

Building and renewing the spaces that form the foundation of fellowship, faith & fun— where people gather to experience God’s presence.



## Expanding the Mission

**\$1,410,000**

Expanding spaces, staff, and scholarships to grow the campground’s reach and impact for generations to come.



## Stewarding the Legacy

**\$1,910,000**

Investing in care, maintenance, and sustainability to ensure the campground and its ministry endures for generations to come.



## Next Generation Adventures

**\$275,000**

Bringing fresh energy and modern experiences that make camp unforgettable.



# Foundations of Fellowship, Faith, & Fun



*(\*) Indicates top priority for matching funds from Lilly Endowment*

Project Area	Purpose	Estimated Cost
(*) New Dining Hall	A welcoming space where fellowship happens at every meal. Expands capacity, hospitality, and ministry reach.	\$3,000,000
(*) Tabernacle Renewal	Restoration that preserves the heart of the campground for the next century.	\$200,000
Chapel Enhancements	Enclosing stained glass and adding backlighting that preserves the chapel as a sacred place of worship.	\$20,000
(*) Lakeside Pavilion	Complete with restrooms, concessions, shade, and picnic areas, it expands safe, enjoyable access to the restored lake for all.	\$310,000
Beehive Cabin Museum	Celebrates & honors the camp's legacy for generations.	\$25,000
Conference Room Flooring	Refreshes an important indoor gathering space for retreats and ministry meetings.	\$30,000
Total		\$3,585,000



# Expanding the Mission



*\* Indicates top priority for matching funds from Lilly Endowment*

Project Area	Purpose	Estimated Cost
*New Cabins - 32 Beds & Detached Kitchen	Increases safe, modern lodging and capacity to impact more lives.	\$600,000
Scholarship Fund	Ensures every child can experience camp, regardless of financial barriers.	\$500,000
Convert Old Caretaker's Home to Cabin Housing	Repurposes existing space to expand capacity.	\$100,000
*Cabin Renovations	Improves existing spaces to improve safety, capacity, and longevity.	\$100,000
Fund 2 New Summer Positions for 3 Years	Strengthens capacity to serve more campers and enhance programming.	\$60,000
Website & Social Media Revamp	Extends the camp's message beyond its grounds, sharing testimonies, and inviting people of all ages to encounter Christ.	\$50,000
Total		\$1,410,000



# Stewarding the Legacy



⊛ Indicates top priority for matching funds from Lilly Endowment

Project Area	Purpose	Estimated Cost
⊛ Endowment	Provides financial stability and long-term ministry sustainability.	\$1,000,000
Maintenance Fund	Supports essential repairs and proactive stewardship.	\$300,000
New Caretaker's House	Optimizes location for caretakers housing supporting year-round care and hospitality.	\$500,000
Maintenance Shed Supplies	Equips caretakers with resources to maintain and care for campground	\$50,000
⊛ Mature Shade Trees	Renews the canopy for future generations through mature shade trees.	\$50,000
Parking Lot Bumpers	Small but vital safety upgrades for guests and volunteers, improves safety	\$10,000
Total		\$1,910,000



# Next Generation Adventures



*\* Indicates top priority for matching funds from Lilly Endowment*

Project Area	Purpose	Estimated Cost
* Playground & Sound Garden	Offers new creative and inclusive play spaces for campers and families.	\$50,000
* Basketball/Dodgeball/Pickleball Court	Increases fun and fellowship.	\$100,000
High Impact Challenge Course	Adventure-based learning that builds trust and leadership.	\$100,000
Slip 'n Slide	Simple, joyful fun that creates lasting memories.	\$10,000
Water Trampoline	Creates new and unforgettable experiences of summer fun on the lake.	\$7,000
Water Obstacle Course	A floating challenge that inspires new adventures, teamwork, and joy.	\$5,000
Log Rolling Activity	Water-based recreation that combines play, balance, and shared laughter.	\$3,000
Total		\$275,000



# Top Priority Projects



## Dining Hall

A new dining hall will nearly double our seating capacity with a **6,000-square-foot gathering space** designed for meals, worship, and community connection. It will also create new multipurpose space to be used to meet the needs of camps and groups.



## Tabernacle Restoration

For more than 140 years, the Tabernacle has stood as a symbol of faith and fellowship. Restoring its flooring, beams, and adding a protective canvas will **preserve its beauty and safety**, ensuring this sacred space continues to inspire worship and community for decades to come.



## Lakeside Pavillion

A new lakeside pavilion will open **new opportunities for recreation, gatherings, and fun**. Complete with restrooms, concessions, shade, and picnic areas, it will enable full, family-friendly use of the restored lake.



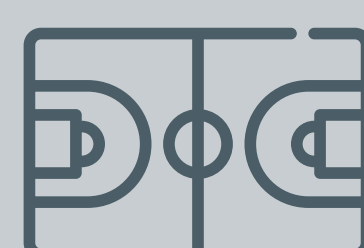
## New Cabins & Renovations

**Expanding from 280 to 350 beds** will increase capacity to invite more people to experience fellowship, faith and fun at the campground and encounter Jesus. New cabins will strengthen supervision and safety, enhance year-round retreat use, and include a dedicated kitchen—making the camp more welcoming and mission-ready than ever before.



## Mature Shade Trees

Many of the camp's trees are aging. Planting mature shade trees will **renew the natural canopy and preserve the beauty of the grounds** for generations to come.



## Playground, Soundgarden, & Sports Courts

From inclusive play and music experiences to courts for basketball, pickleball, and more—these **new recreation areas will bring new adventures** for people of all ages.





# Gift Range Chart - \$3.59 Million

We believe God is opening a new season of opportunity for Historic Santa Claus Campground. The Lilly Endowment has invited us to apply for a **special matching grant that could double every dollar raised locally**—meaning that by raising \$3.59 million, we could achieve this \$7.18 million vision to renew and expand the ministry for generations to come, so that more people can encounter Christ and deepen their relationship with Him.

As you look at the gift range chart below, we invite you to prayerfully consider how your support might help make this vision a reality.

Gift Amount	# Gifts Required	Cumulative # Gifts	\$ Per Range	Cumulative \$ Total	Cumulative %
\$1,000,000	1	1	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	28%
\$500,000	1	2	\$500,000	\$1,500,000	42%
\$250,000	2	4	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	56%
\$100,000	5	9	\$500,000	\$2,500,000	70%
\$50,000	10	19	\$500,000	\$3,000,000	84%
\$25,000	10	29	\$250,000	\$3,250,000	91%
\$10,000	15	44	\$150,000	\$3,400,000	95%
\$5,000	20	64	\$100,000	\$3,500,000	97%
\$2,500	20	84	\$50,000	\$3,550,000	99%
\$1,000	40	124	\$40,000	\$3,590,000	100%





# A Vibrant Future

With this work completed, the Historic Santa Claus Campground will stand renewed—ready to serve the next generation by creating life-changing experiences where people encounter Christ, grow in faith, and discover the joy of following Him.

- The camp will be **safer, more welcoming, and more vibrant** than ever before—a place where the presence of God can be experienced in tangible ways.
- Children and adults will find rest in God’s creation, renewal in His Spirit, and **deepen their relationship with Christ through fellowship and fun.**
- Staff will be **equipped and inspired to lead with excellence and purpose**, guiding others toward a deeper walk with God.
- Volunteers will have the tools and spaces they need to **serve faithfully and model Christ’s love in action.**

Every improvement will point to one simple truth—**this campground exists to draw people closer to Christ and equip them to live out their calling for His Kingdom.**







## Next Steps

This season is about listening and learning together. As part of this visioning process, we're reaching out to the people – like you – who know this place best—friends, advocates, and longtime partners in ministry.

We invite you to **reflect on this vision and share your honest thoughts**. What excites you? What feels most important? What questions or ideas rise to the surface? Your insight will help us see the path ahead more clearly.

Afterward, the camp's leadership will prayerfully gather what we've learned and discern the right next steps—what to pursue first, what to refine, and how to move forward in faith.

Your authenticity will make a real difference in shaping that future. **Thank you** for caring about this sacred place and for helping us listen well as we chart what comes next.





The Historic Santa Claus Campground is a sacred place where lives are changed as people experience Christ and grow together in faith, fellowship, and fun.

Contact  
The Historic Santa Claus Campground  
16670 N County Rd 625 E, Santa Claus, IN 47579

(812) 393-0652

[www.historicsantaclauscampground.org](http://www.historicsantaclauscampground.org)

Renewing Sacred Spaces.  
Inspiring Lifelong Adventures.