Cathedral Ridge Report to Annual Diocesan Convention 2025

What a wonderful year we have had so far at Cathedral Ridge! God has been working in the lives of children, youth, adults and families through the experiences they have had at Cathedral Ridge. Our numbers tell the story of incredible growth and lives touched over this past year. By the end of the year 2025, we will have:

* Served 1,469 guests at Cathedral Ridge
* Hosted 40 retreats totaling 838 people from all over the State of Colorado, including 6 Abound Retreats totaling 105 people from congregations all over the diocese and 4 focused camps for PRIDE, Creation Care, Multicultural and Latino families.
* Sponsored 5 youth camps and 9 family camps attended by 631 people this past summer. We have almost tripled our summer youth and family camp attendance from 2023!
* Provided 2 first time offerings: a Creatives Multi-age Youth Camp and a partnership youth camp with Camp Quarterman (Diocese of Northwest Texas), which were a huge success
* Hosted 5 Parish Family Camps, all of which are coming back next year, and we will be adding 3 more Parish Family Camps for next year.

And next year, we will be bringing Cathedral Ridge to you! For those churches that are farther away from Cathedral Ridge, we plan to offer three new partnership day camps where Cathedral Ridge will team up with the congregation to hold a day camp at their church.

At Cathedral Ridge, there will be plenty of room in summer 2026 for more children and youth to sign up for youth camps and for families to attend the family camps.

Our Program Director, Abigail Jordan, did an outstanding job in her second summer at Cathedral Ridge. She recruited and worked with all the chaplains and teachers as well as the summer staff to offer the best experience at our youth and family camps. She coordinated the programs and speakers for the Abound Retreats for the fall and helped host the various retreat groups as well. Her husband, Jacob, filled various roles this past year involving both kitchen and camp activities. I am sad to announce that Abigail and Jacob will be leaving Cathedral Ridge this fall. They are in the process of discernment for holy orders in the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. Abigail will be serving as the Executive Assistant in the Diocesan Office with Bishop Jeremiah Williamson, while completing her clinical pastoral education. Jacob will be working as the Administrator for Christ the King Center in Greenwich, NY (part of the ECCC network). Abigail has done a tremendous job as the program director. She served our retreat guests, summer staff, and campers with excellence. Jacob did a wonderful job serving as the sous chef - the food this past year has been amazing. Thank you, Abigail and Jacob, for your faithful service to Cathedral Ridge. Our prayers go with you, and we wish you all the best in the next chapter of your journey.

The Rev. Linda Brown has been hard at work in her ministry as the Deacon at Cathedral Ridge. Her diaconal support includes assisting chaplains with services at youth and family camps and parish retreats. In her care of creation ministry, she shares her knowledge of the natural environment and the ways in which we can connect and care for God’s creation. She has led many nature hikes and helped children, youth and adults experience God in nature. She helped train our summer staff, so they were able to share this knowledge with the campers. She played a major role in our PRIDE and Care of Creation family camps, as well as providing support to several Abound and Parish Family retreats. She has also been instrumental in helping Cathedral Ridge apply for grants that we have received. Thank you, Linda, for your genuine and amazing service.

Tori Wynsma (our Chef and Kitchen Manager) has done an outstanding job this year. The retreat guests and summer campers love the food she prepares. The food is always ready on time, and she meets all the needs of our guests. The kitchen is amazingly well organized, and she recruits and works well with all her staff. Thank you, Tori, for making the retreat and camper experience so amazing through your excellence in cooking and service! You are awesome.

Luke and Kellye Nelson are a wonderful part of our team. Luke takes care of our facility, and Kellye is our Hospitality Director. Luke is gifted in so many ways. He has replaced the bathrooms in Bluebell and Aster cabins, redone multiple decks, found and fixed water leaks under the road, smoothed out the dirt roads around and entering the camp, and so many more tasks that are too numerous to list. Kellye prepares all the rooms for our guests so that every person who arrives is greeted with a fresh, clean room to call home while they are here. She meticulously cleans all the common spaces as well as the cabins. She takes care of all the little things so that guests don’t have to worry about anything. Thank you, Luke and Kellye, for your outstanding service.

Finally, Ryki Ferron is our incredible Operations Director and much more. Ryki has a gift of outrageous hospitality. He is always thinking about the needs of our guests and campers. He is always there to help no matter the situation. When there is a clogged toilet or dishes to be cleaned you can find Ryki there filling in to help. You can also find him listening to campers and guests so that everyone who comes to Cathedral Ridge feels loved and welcome. He takes care of all the behind-the-scenes operations so that the program leaders can focus on their ministry to our guests and campers. In doing so he is always mindful of supporting our staff from payroll, to reimbursements, to words of encouragement. We are so grateful to have Ryki on the team. I am sad to announce that Ryki will be leaving us in December. It is time for him to move on to the next part of his life. He is planning on moving to Las Vegas to work in the hospitality industry. He will be amazing! Ryki has done an outstanding job for Cathedral Ridge and has been the consistent servant leader for the past four years through the changes at Cathedral Ridge. Thank you, Ryki, for your faithful service to Cathedral Ridge. Our prayers are with you, and we wish you the best in the next chapter of your journey.

The Board of Directors has been busy updating the vision and mission of Cathedral Ridge, and confirming the goals that we have identified for the coming years. They are included at the end of this report. The Board has also started a strategic plan to raise capital to fund the necessary building of new guest accommodations to serve children, youth, adults and families. We have the initial plans for 3, two-story cabins that can convert into spaces for youth, families and adults. With these 3 cabins we will be able to expand our capacity of 1) youth camp to 120 campers per session, 2) family camp to 120 campers per session, and 3) adult retreats to 92 guests per retreat. The Board is also working on plans to build a new, large meeting space that could accommodate groups of up to 200 people. The strategic plan will also include raising funds for a maintenance endowment. There is a small task force working on these plans; and as this effort is a multi-year process, stay tuned for updates as these efforts unfold.

Thank you to all who participated in all the wonderful retreats and camps throughout the year! Thank you also to all who gave their time and talent to Cathedral Ridge! You are amazing! Thank you to our board -- Brian, Nancy, Bob, Erica, Deborah, Krista, Catie, Kimberly and Bishop Kym -- for their work this year, and I look forward to living into the plans we are envisioning together. Thank you especially to Brian, our President, and to Nancy, our Treasurer, for their hard work. Thank you to our full-time staff who spend many late nights serving with outrageous hospitality from the love of Christ. Thank you to all our support staff in food service, hospitality and facilities who work to prepare the place and the food for our campers and guests. Thank you to all of the chaplains, facilitators, and teachers this summer. You gave so much to help campers to learn and grow in faith. Thank you to Elizabeth who helped support our summer staff, chaplains and teachers. She was instrumental in helping Cathedral Ridge prepare for its annual state inspection. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped at various times to cook, clean, paint, plant, and so much more. Thank you to all our summer staff, support staff and Counselors-in-Training for the incredible support to our summer campers. Thank you to our Camp Nurse, Christi. You are amazing! Thanks be to God in Christ Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit who has moved in the lives of both guests and staff who shared the love of Christ through so many and wonderful ways in the ministry of Cathedral Ridge! May God continue to protect and lead Cathedral Ridge as we seek to share your love in the world through this ministry.



**Vision: Cathedral Ridge is a Sanctuary**

 A Place for Deep Connection and Transformation through a relationship with God in Christ, one another and creation.

**Mission:**

Cathedral Ridge is a gathering place for all, bringing together communities and programs that stimulate, explore, discover, and collaborate with each other, and deepen connections with God’s creation. We aim to provide innovative, creative, and transformative Christian formation for all ages

**Goal: Growing and Building Faith in the Church Family Together**

**Potential Program Response:**

* Offer summer youth camps for 3rd to 12th grades, including
	+ Overnight camps in an experiential, relational environment where children and youth experience living in community and growth through appropriate risk.
	+ Other camps with creative experiences such as in Music and Art.
* Gather families to spend time with one another, with God, and in nature thereby strengthening their interpersonal relationships and spirituality, through
	+ Parish Family Camps
	+ 3-Night Family Camps
	+ Multicultural Family Camps
	+ Latino Family Camps
	+ Pride/LGBTQIA+ Family Camps
	+ Weeklong Family Camps
* Offer camps for specific family members (such as mother/daughter, father/son, couples, etc.) to support and deepen their relationships
* Expand current offerings to include Parish Day Camps
* Offer youth gathering weekends in spring, fall and winter
	+ Similar to the currently offered Quest weekends, and
	+ Working in partnership with the Bishop’s Office of Faith Formation
* Actively plan for much needed future facilities, including Convertible Cabins that would have space for 120 campers and 24 counselors.

**Goal: Building Connections and Strengthening Relationships**

**Potential Program Response:**

* Promote intentional community of full-time staff who live on the Cathedral Ridge campus, modeling a community that works, eats, plays and prays together. The very culture of camp and retreat ministry will be transformed by the synergy of a residential community.
* Offer Abound Retreats
	+ - For clergy and laity called to particular ministries in the Church. Gathering together in person enables sharing of best practices, provides time to pray and encourage one another, and better equips them for their callings.
		- To include occasional speakers to help gatherings grow deeper in their ministries.
		- In 2025, eight gatherings are planned: music directors, 3 clergy ASA cohorts, LGBTQIA+ leaders, children and youth leaders, Care of Creation leaders, and the Colorado deacons.
* Host gatherings for at-risk communities: Our baptismal covenant calls us to respect the dignity of every human being. The larger religious culture in Colorado can exclude some who are Beloved Children of God. Cathedral Ridge as an Episcopal Camp and Retreat Center can be a safe harbor for those who are not fully accepted in other faith communities, including:
	+ - LGBTQIA+, BIPOC
		- Children with incarcerated parents
		- Veterans/wounded warriors
		- Other underserved demographics in Colorado that especially need safe places to gather
* Host Community Organizations from around Colorado
	+ - Specifically target organizations from the Denver and Colorado Springs areas that are within a 2 to 3 hour drive
		- Care for these groups with outrageous hospitality
* Host Businesses from around Colorado who are seeking a mountain retreat environment for leadership and employee training
	+ - Specifically target businesses from the Denver and Colorado Springs areas that are within a 2 to 3 hour drive
	+ Explore the potential for Cathedral Ridge to become a day-time and/or overnight destination for school youth to experience environmental education.
* Plan for future facilities including Convertible Cabins to host up to 12 families and a new lodge for 22 families

**Goal: Equipping Church Leaders and Members**

**Potential Program Response**:

* Host substantive continuing education programs for groups of 20-40 people. Recurring offerings can provide a cohort community with ongoing relationships among church leaders in different congregations. Possible programs include:
	+ - School of Iona
		- Lutheran Excellence in Leadership
		- Forma offerings
		- A speaker series for leaders in the Diocese
* Offer summer camp counselor-in-training (CIT) program
* Create a 9-month Residential Discernment Program for post-college and gap-year students
	+ Connect with faith formation parachurch ministries to use Cathedral Ridge for conferences and retreats and create partnerships to provide unique programming available to their own constituencies and Episcopal Church members. Examples include:
		- Spiritual Direction Colorado
		- South Colorado Koinonia
		- Via De Christo
		- Peterson AFB Women’s Chapel
		- Renovare
	+ Plan for future facilities including a second lodge, and three convertible cabins to
		- Increase the possibility of hosting the clergy conference
		- Make Cathedral Ridge a better fit for larger organizations and their events

**Goal: Care of all the Church Family and Creation**

**Potential Program Response**:

* + Continue expanding the ministry of cottage hospitality, providing respite for individual and family getaways
	+ Provide a chaplain-in-residence who will offer spiritual direction and a regular rhythm of worship
	+ Provide quarterly wellness retreats alternately facilitated by mental health professionals and marriage and family therapists
	+ Initiate plans to add a duplex hermitage and/or convert existing space to hermitage use
	+ Create a Land Ethic for the 160-acre campus that will serve as a guide for best practices in the stewardship of the natural resources of Cathedral Ridge and during any building and expansion efforts.