



## Frequently Asked Questions 2015 Annual Conference

**FAQ 1: What is Kaleidoscope and how did that process work?** Kaleidoscope is a consulting firm that strives to help camps of all kinds and types thrive. Kaleidoscope was founded by the Dakotas own Kathy Trotter. Some of you may remember that Kathy and her husband Dick served at Storm Mountain Center in its early years. Kathy Trotter and Kaleidoscope were the consultants that helped the camping ministry with its first master plan in the late 90's and reviewed and updated that plan in 2004 and 2005.

Current Kaleidoscope work helped us identify strategic directions for the Dakotas Camping ministry to remain vital and relevant as well as sustainable in the future.

Jody Oates, our consultant, listened and asked lots of questions and listened some more to better understand the context of ministry in the Dakotas Conference as well as in the camping ministry itself. Pages and pages of historical and current data were analyzed. Our consultant met with us via DAVID and through other electronic methods as well as through face to face meetings. Jody spent five days in the Conference touring all three camp sites to better understand our physical facilities and the ministry happening in each. He also spent time visiting individually with each site director. Jody helped us wrestle with tough questions, flesh out our key outcomes and presented a process to help us move forward.

### **FAQ 2: What did you learn from the Kaleidoscope process?**

- *Kaleidoscope offered a new perspective that sees camps of all sizes and types:* religious versus secular, For Profit versus "For Impact" camps. The "eyes" that sees the trends, successes and challenges of all these camps was very informative.
- *New way to analyze and look at our data.* It isn't rocket science but we need someone to help gather the data and analyze it, point out trends and ask the hard questions

- *Our camping facilities are in good shape.* While there will always be buildings to update and things to fix our consultant was amazed at how well our facilities had been cared for and the updates that had been completed. It is to our advantage not to have a huge amount of deferred maintenance like many camps within the country.
- *A successful ministry starts with a clear mission and vision* that is then communicated through stories of lives changed. Through lots of honest conversation we developed and came to own our four outcomes. We need to continue to drill down on our mission and focus and become better at sharing it to grow the ministry in numbers of campers and guests that go back home to impact their churches, schools and communities and to improve the sustainability of the camps.

**FAQ 3: What are the next steps?** The Camping Ministry has a renewed clarity of our ministry work with a clear focus on specific outcomes. Earlier in this report Nancy shared those outcomes to help develop leaders who articulate faith, love and accept everyone, serve others and trust God. You saw in the video ways that campers already realize the impact camping had on their faith journeys. With this clarity of focus the camping ministry will then focus on five areas:

1. Increasing the summer camp registrations and users days for retreats as a place apart during the year.
2. Creating and implementing a comprehensive resource development plan to help reach operational apportionment neutrality by 2021, followed by capital improvement apportionment neutrality.
3. Exploring additional areas of ministry to insure long-term viability for generations to come. Areas to explore may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Different operating models (such as less than year round operations)
  - b. Creation of partnerships and collaborations with other organizations
  - c. Realigning property and facility oversight
  - d. Reducing the number of sites operated
4. Conducting a comprehensive review and assessment in 2018. The Camping Ministry is committed to reporting to this body annually. The Camping Board has made a commitment in 2018, midway through the 5-year process toward apportionment neutrality in the operational funds, to conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of all aspects of the ministry and the progress on the initiatives. That report will be made public to this body and be used to re-focus the next steps if necessary.
5. Listening and soliciting input. The Camping Ministry certainly has a great deal of work mapped out for it. We seek your feedback, your prayers, insights and wisdom for this ministry that has made a difference in the lives of so many individuals and in the life of this Conference.

**FAQ 4: Where can we learn more about the Kaleidoscope process?** The entire summary of the Kaleidoscope report from Jody Oates is included in your Annual Conference Workbook as a part of the Camping Report. It will also be included in the 2015 Journal when it is published later this year. You may also find the report summary in the “About Us” portion of the Dakotas Conference Camping website.