

A group of approximately seven people of various ages and ethnicities are standing in a line on an asphalt surface, holding up a large, vibrant rainbow flag. The flag is the central focus, with its colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) clearly visible. The people are dressed in casual summer attire like t-shirts and shorts. In the background, there is a chain-link fence and some greenery, suggesting an outdoor park or community area. The overall atmosphere is one of unity and celebration.

Capital Campaign Case Statement

A Place for All



CHRISTMOUNT

“Providing a place for all to discover community, acceptance and purpose.”

Founded in 1948, Christmount has long been a place where hospitality meets purpose. Over the past quarter century, that mission has taken concrete shape through a deep and sustained commitment to individuals with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Through Camp Lakey Gap and related adapted programs, Christmount has built a track record of providing safe, structured environments where belonging is not assumed — it is intentionally designed.

This commitment is embedded in the institution’s history and is central to its future.



Lifechanging for the campers

The lives of our campers are greatly enriched through their participation in Camp Lakey Gap. Parents see positive responses in their children.



Lifegiving for the caretakers

Parents who care for the daily needs of children and adults with autism and intellectual disabilities are provided with a much-needed respite and self-care during these events.

The Imperative: The Partnership with Camp Lakey Gap

For many years, Camp Lakey Gap operated in a building where staff have adapted creatively and faithfully to meet the needs of campers. That experience has shown both the resilience of the program and structural gaps that limit participation for some families. Dignity-centered design is about aligning our physical environment with the quality of care we are committed to providing.

Here are few ways the new Residential Lodge will remove barriers so campers can fully participate in the overnight camp experience.

Single-Occupancy Rooms

Several campers want to stay overnight but cannot share a room due to autism-related needs such as sensory sensitivities, sleep disruptions, or social barriers. Private rooms make overnight participation possible for these campers.

Bathtub Access

Some campers cannot tolerate showers due to sensory processing differences or a strong attachment to bath routines. While staff have created temporary workarounds, a dedicated bathtub will provide a safe, dignified, and developmentally appropriate solution.

Secure Medical Supply Closet

Currently, medications and first-aid supplies are stored in multiple locations across campus, increasing complexity and risk. The new Camper Lodge will include a dedicated, locking medical supply room to improve access, and accuracy.

Safer Medication Distribution

Medications are presently distributed at a picnic table on a screened porch—functional, but not ideal. The new lodge will allow medications to be dispensed through a secure half-door window, significantly improving safety and supervision.

On-Site Laundry Facilities

Many campers require frequent washing of clothing or bedding due to toileting accidents. In-building laundry will improve sanitation, reduce delays, and return clean items to campers more quickly.

Closer to Core Camp Spaces

The current lodge's distance from the pool and activity areas often results in delays when items are forgotten—delays that can trigger stress or behavioral challenges. The new lodge's central location minimizes disruptions and keeps campers on schedule.

Closer Access to On-Call Staff

Overnight supervision is supported by on-call leadership staff who currently live far from the camper lodge. The new design includes adjacent staff quarters, ensuring faster response to medical, behavioral, or safety needs while maintaining appropriate separation.

safety,

“Camp Lakey Gap is a lifeline for all caregivers. We need to be well to take care of our kids.” – Leah, parent of Camp Lakey Gap camper



Christmount's Legacy of Hospitality

For more than three-quarters of a century, Christmount has served as a vital sanctuary for those seeking rest, renewal, and a profound sense of belonging. Established in 1948 as the national conference center of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we welcome all regardless of religious affiliation, political persuasion, or favorite color. This 400-acre expanse of permanently protected land in the mountains of western North Carolina is far more than a retreat center; it is a **proven ecosystem of transformation**. Our 75-year history is not merely a measure of time, but a testament to a sustained track record of providing "sacred grounds" where the hurried pace of daily life gives way to mountain stillness and a rediscovered sense of purpose.



***“EVERYONE — REGARDLESS
OF ABILITY — DESERVES A
PLACE TO BELONG.”***

The heart of this institution is found in its commitment to the intersection of faith, ecology, justice, and community. This multifaceted approach ensures that Christmount remains relevant in a changing world while staying anchored to its core identity as a place of respite for all.

At Christmount, hospitality is not treated as a passive concept, but as an active, rigorous practice. This ethos transforms the physical landscape into a "second home" for a diverse community, ranging from eco-justice leaders to individuals with developmental disabilities. By treating hospitality as a practice, we ensure that every guest is met with absolute dignity. However, **to sustain this legacy, we have reached a pivotal moment where our physical infrastructure must finally evolve to match the magnitude and the specialized needs of our mission.**

Proven Momentum: Resilience and the Success of Phase I

In the world of philanthropy, past performance is the most reliable indicator of future viability. Christmount has recently demonstrated exceptional operational health and donor confidence by successfully raising and executing \$1.8 million for Phase I of our modernization efforts. This momentum, achieved independently of emergency relief funds, serves as a powerful proof of concept for the Residential Lodge project.

Phase I Milestones: A Foundation of Excellence

- **Environmental Stewardship & Efficiency**
 - Integration of a solar panel array on the Guest House to reduce the institutional carbon footprint.
 - Installation of EV charging station, signaling a commitment to modern, sustainable infrastructure.
 - Replacement of outdated heating and cooling with high-efficiency mini-splits, prioritizing ecological responsibility alongside guest comfort.
 - Comprehensive electrical rewiring of Aldridge Hall to meet modern safety and efficiency codes.
- **Artisanal & Functional Upgrades**
 - Complete remodeling of 31 rooms in the Guest House and Guest House East, featuring energy-efficient windows, new flooring, and modern vanities.
 - The elevation of Aldridge Hall with radiant heat, professional stage lighting, and a beautifully hand-crafted lighting centerpiece.
 - Integration of artisanal "barn doors" in the Guest House and Aldridge Hall, maintaining the "sacred grounds" aesthetic while improving accessibility.
- **Future Readiness**
 - Successful demolition of the aging Davis Hall to clear the site for the new Lodge.
 - Healthy stewardship of \$1 million in cash reserves specifically designated for the Phase II construction.

The resilience of our institution was tested in the fall of 2024 by Hurricane Helene. While the storm tested our physical foundations, the immediate, overwhelming response from donors and volunteers proved that our spiritual and operational foundations are unbreakable. This ability to navigate a natural disaster while maintaining focus on long-term capital goals illustrates an organization that is both mission-driven and operationally elite. The successful modernization of our existing facilities has laid the groundwork; the final requirement is a purpose-built structure to provide lodging for our most critical programs.

“Camp Lakey Gap helped my son experience independence in a safe and joyful setting.”

The Architectural Vision: A New Standard for Inclusive Design

The proposed Residential Lodge is the physical manifestation of our commitment to radical inclusion. It is designed to be a space where "belonging" is built into the very walls. By replacing the outdated Davis Hall with a modern, fully accessible facility, Christmount sets a new standard for inclusive architectural design in a retreat setting.

Technical Specifications and Impact

- **Capacity:** Accommodations for up to 30 guests in a year-round, climate-controlled environment.
- **Accessibility:** Full ADA compliance, ensuring that every guest, regardless of mobility or sensory needs, can navigate the space with independence and ease.
- **Sustainability:** Elimination of the prohibitive maintenance costs and energy inefficiencies that plagued the former structure.



From Reliance to Institutional Autonomy

Beyond its service to Camp Lakey Gap, the Lodge will serve as a powerful engine for **institutional autonomy**. By expanding our capacity for year-round retreats and professional conferences, this facility significantly increases Christmount's earned revenue potential.

Utilized 25% by Camp Lakey Gap and 75% by other guests & groups, the new Lodge decreases our reliance on annual giving and creates a self-sustaining financial model. This project is not merely an expense; it is an **investment in an asset that will generate both social impact and financial stability for decades**.

Ways to Give

To facilitate high-level giving, Christmount offers flexible investment vehicles. These gifts are intended to be "above and beyond" annual support:

- **Multi-Year Pledges:** Distribute your impact over a multi-year period to maximize your total contribution.
- **Appreciated Stock:** Maximize tax benefits by gifting appreciated securities.
- **IRA Distributions:** A tax-efficient vehicle for donors to make a significant leadership gift.



"Design for accessibility is design for dignity."

"Beautiful programs deserve beautiful spaces."

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- 01 GATHERING
- 02 CAMPER GROUP SLEEPING
- 03 CAMPER INDIVIDUAL SLEEPING
- 04 LOBBY
- 05 MEDICAL STORAGE
- 06 LAUNDRY
- 07 STAFF LOUNGE
- 08 STORAGE
- 09 BATHROOM
- 10 TOILET ROOM
- 11 SCREENED PORCH
- 12 CAMPER LOUNGE
- 13 STAFF SLEEPING

"This camp provided opportunities my child could never access elsewhere. His laughter each day was the greatest gift we received."

The Invitation: Naming Opportunities and Financial Stewardship

With \$1 million already secured in reserve, this project is in a state of high readiness. We are seeking an additional \$2.2 million in new commitments to complete this vision.

Why Now?

The demand for inclusive, year-round programming is at an all-time high. With architectural plans complete, land preparation finished, and a \$1M reserve in place, Christmount is positioned for immediate execution. We have the momentum, the partners, and the plan; we now require the final capital to break ground.

Legacy Naming Opportunities

We invite you to join the distinguished group of leaders who have already begun to secure the future of this "Place for All."

Opportunity	Investment Amount	Status
Residential Lodge (Anchor Gift)	\$1,250,000	Naming Opportunity Available
Main Gathering Space	\$150,000	Naming Opportunity Available
Lobby & Welcome Area	\$100,000	NAMED
Large Porch	\$75,000	NAMED
Camper Lounge	\$75,000	NAMED
Sensory / Quiet Room	\$50,000	Naming Opportunity Available
Group Sleeping Rooms (6)	\$35,000 each	1 of 6 NAMED
Individual Bedrooms (4)	\$25,000 each	Naming Opportunity Available
Firepit & Outdoor Gathering Area	\$20,000	NAMED
Independent Cabins (6)	\$50,000	Naming Opportunity Available

"THESE RETREATS ARE NOT JUST EVENTS — THEY ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REAL FRIENDSHIP."



Conclusion: A Call to Bold Leadership

For 75 years, the "mountain stillness" of Christmount has been the backdrop for life-changing moments. However, the sacredness of these grounds must now be matched by the quality and accessibility of our facilities. We cannot continue to proclaim a mission of "belonging for all" without providing the physical space where that belonging is made possible for every person, regardless of their physical or developmental ability.

Together, we will ensure that Christmount remains

a place for all

now and for generations to come.



This is an invitation to invest wisely and lead boldly. We must ensure that the architecture of our campus is as inclusive as the spirit of our community. We invite you to help us build a future rooted in dignity, acceptance, and care.

To discuss your investment or a specific naming opportunity, please contact:

- **Rev. Rob Morris** *Executive Director* – rob@christmount.org
- **Jon Blalock** *Assistant Director & Adapted Programs Director* – jon@camplakeygap.org
- **Rev. Betsy Goehrig** *Director of Development* – betsy@christmount.org
- **Jeremy Hopkins** *Board Chair* - jeremy@hopkins-family.org
- **Randy Johnson** *Investments and Planned Gifts* - rjohnson@ccf.disciples.org

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“A strategic investment now unlocks sustainability and impact for years to come.”

"The first time we dropped Cal off at Camp Lakey Gap, I didn't make it to the car before the tears came."

Not because I was sad. Because for the first time in my son's life, he was walking into a place that was built for him — not a place we had to fight to get him into, but a place designed to meet him exactly where he is.

Cal is ten years old. He has autism, global apraxia, and complex medical needs. He is nonspeaking. He communicates through his actions, his body, and increasingly through spelling. He loves Mickey Mouse, fruit, swimming, deep hugs, and being around people who take the time to understand him.

And for three summers now, Camp Lakey Gap has given him something Bart and I cannot give him alone: a week where he is not the exception. He is simply Cal.

Year one was terrifying and beautiful. We drove over five hours from South Carolina with every anxiety a special needs parent carries. Jon didn't flinch at his needs. They didn't look overwhelmed by his four pages of care notes. They looked at Cal and saw a camper — their camper. That week, he discovered the pool was his happy place. He found the water slide and LOVED it. He heard music and moved his body to it. He had a counselor by his side every single day who learned that a chewy and a handful of snacks could turn a hard moment into a good one.



Year two, Cal seemed to sense the familiar mountain turns on the drive up. Jon remembered he'd eaten so much fruit the summer before they had to make an extra grocery run. The staff knew exactly which strategies worked when he needed to regulate. His counselor learned quickly that Cal's love language is physical — he's a hugger, a cuddler, a kid who will roughhouse with you when he's happy and curl into you when the world gets too loud. Watching someone earn that trust from my son in a matter of days breaks something open in you. That summer, he sat at the table longer. He engaged in crafts more. He connected with peers in ways that are hard to describe but impossible to miss.

Year three came after Hurricane Helene tore through the mountains and devastated the campus. Roads washed out. Buildings damaged. And yet — they rebuilt. They came back. Because families like ours needed them to. By year three, Camp Lakey Gap didn't just know Cal's needs — they knew his spirit. His laugh. The way he lights up around people who get him.

I want people to understand what this place means to families like ours. It is not babysitting. It is a lifeline. For Cal, it is the one place each year where he gets to be a kid at summer camp, surrounded by peers who understand his world, making leaps we didn't know were possible. For Bart and me, it is the week we breathe — the week we remember our marriage exists outside of medical appointments and therapy schedules, and we come back stronger for our son.

Camp Lakey Gap has become sacred ground for our family. It is nestled in the mountains we love, run by people who have become family, and anchored in a mission I believe in with my whole heart:

a place for all to discover community, acceptance, and purpose."

Cal has found all three. And so have we.

Kat Bodkin is a mother, advocate, and board council member at Christmount Christian Assembly. She lives in Mount Pleasant, SC with her husband Bart and their son Cal.