



Summer Planning Guide

Big Creek Campus

This guide is for our week-long summer missions. If you're looking for information about our Spring and Fall missions, please go to www.bigcreekmissions.com/anytime. These trips can be hosted at any time in the spring, fall, and winter!

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Tip: CTRL+F Since this document is a PDF, and use the "find" feature to search for information. It's simple: Just hold down the Control key, and hit the letter "F". Then type in your search terms!



Big Creek Checklist & Timeline

HOW TO GET STARTED

- Print this checklist and hang it somewhere noticeable!
- Collect \$50 deposits from your group!
- Register your group online at www.bigcreekmissions.com/register
 - We encourage you to only register those who've paid deposits to you. Please don't overestimate numbers.
 - Hand out the "Info & How to Register" page to potential participants (last page of this guide)
 - Instruct them to register themselves as part of your group at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go
 - You can register yourself and manage your group registrations at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go
 - **Start planning transportation (Rent or Secure Your Vehicles):** Trucks, Cars, & Vans are GREAT! Mini-buses (26 or less) will likely be used for children's ministry only.
 - Plan your calendar & travels: arrive at Big Creek between 3-4 pm **Eastern** on your Sunday arrival day!

DEPOSIT AND PAYMENT DETAILS

- Your initial payment of \$50 per person is paid online. This payment is not refundable but may apply to future trips*
 - *If you lower your numbers before January 15th, we will apply all deposits to your final balance
 - *Spaces that are claimed, but deposits not paid, after January 15th, will lose their spaces
 - *IF you lower your numbers in the registration system & we are able to fill those spots, those deposits can be refunded.
- Please estimate your attendance reasonably. You can add more spaces later if spots are available.

TELL YOUR PARTICIPANTS TO REGISTER ASAP

- All participants should register at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go You can login and see who's registered! If everyone's registered 30 days before, balances are paid, & vehicles entered, participants receive a \$10 store credit
- After all participants register, List your drivers and their vehicles in the system 30 days before. (drivers & vehicles tab)
- After all participants register, tell us which participants to "keep together" (or separate) on the Group Roster page.

30 DAYS BEFORE YOUR TRIP

- Mail your final payment to: Big Creek Missions - PO BOX 211 – Bear Branch KY 41714
- Credit cards may be used to make the final payment online using the registration system – a 3% fee is added
- Map your driving route & adjust your departure time! We have suggested routes at www.bigcreekmissions.com/driving Plan to arrive between 3-4 pm EST Plan extra time for traffic! I-75 and I-81 both have constant traffic!
- Check & test drive your travel vehicles for safety! Check those tires, seat belts, lights, and all the fluids.

DAY OF YOUR TRIP

Give plenty of time for traffic delays. Plan to arrive at Big Creek between 3-4 pm. Gate won't open until 3.
Let us know of any delays by texting **865-705-4995**

QUESTIONS?

Registration questions? info@bigcreekmissions.com Financial questions? accounting@bigcreekmissions.com
Construction questions? construction@bigcreekmissions.com Children's ministry questions: kids@bigcreekmissions.com
Other questions? info@bigcreekmissions.com

Mailing address for FINAL payments: Big Creek Missions, PO BOX 211, Bear Branch KY 41714

*Please note: for 2025, we may move to an online payment system only, we will notify groups accordingly



Simple Southern Summary

Sometimes reading is just real hard. Here's a quick summary to get ya started. These are the main points, so make sure ya read the rest of this guide when ya get a minute.



At Big Creek, we talk a lot about Jesus! We're gonna worship by workin hard, servin Jesus, and servin others. Ain't nobody got time for laziness!



Y'all got three choices for ministry: Children's, construction, and community. Stick with one choice for the entire week!



If you're gonna contact us, please read this whole document before askin your questions! Its probably already here!



We all work together in kids ministry! Plan to help us lead & gather up supplies! Check out our kids ministry page – it's got good details after January 1!



If you do contact us, email is best! You can try callin but we're rarely in the office and phone service here stinks.



The daily schedule is pretty full...make sure to get here on Sunday between 3-4 pm EST. Otherwise, you'll be rushed, stressed & won't know what's goin on.



Don't go reservin' a bunch of spots unless yer folks have given you deposit money. Don't assume they're going, cause you gotta pay for them spots! If they back out, they lose their own money, not yours!



Wednesday night is your night "out." So you can support our town economy. Just go, eat, and enjoy our community. We'll talk about places when y'all get here!



30 days before the trip your final payment is due and your entire team needs to be registered online. We can't tell ya what you're doing until you tell us who's a comin!



Your group probably won't work together, unless everybody picks the same ministry. You'll meet some great new people. However, you will have a private church group time!



Cars and Mini-vans are great! 12-15 passenger vans are good! Trucks are REALLY good for construction! Leave an empty seat for every 7-8 folks! Mini-buses (26 or less) will be used for children's ministry! Tell us who your drivers are 30 days before!



Y'all can tell us who to keep together in the registration system online! Do it early, don't wait till the last minute.



We believe in southern hospitality. Our food's better than normal camp food! If ya got allergies, check out the menu!



One suggestion for ya: plan an info meeting with all your potential participants! Have laptops so folks can register there!



Bring good adults! This isn't just a youth trip. If ya bring a bunch of youngin's, they can't do as much & our staff ain't baby sitters. Bring enough adults to lead the mission trip. We need their help!



If your participants don have insurance, they can come on. Check with your insurance agent for more information



It's gonna be a great mission trip. Just come ready to serve, bless and be blessed



Welcome to Big Creek

We look forward to serving with you this summer! Big Creek's main campus is located in Leslie County, Kentucky. Our area has been hit hard by the decline of the coal industry and the lack of good paying jobs. Drug use is destroying families, children are hurting, and many residents are suffering. We believe the Lord has put us here to help our local churches minister to the needs in their local community.

OUR MESSAGE

Our message at Big Creek missions will always be the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With Jesus as our message, lives will be changed by His power working in and through us. As humans, we can do some really good things and accomplish some great works. However, it is only when those works are accomplished in His name and His power that those work have eternal value. Therefore, we live out the following at Big Creek missions:

It's about worship - not work. Although mission trips are always a time where we work very hard and get dirty, Christians are never called to work to gain Gods favor. We are called to worship Him as a response to being saved by grace through faith. One of the ways we worship Him is by living a missional life. We don't serve on missions so we can brag about ourselves or our church "mission program," but rather, we serve on mission so people will worship Jesus. Jesus is the focus, and Jesus gets the Glory.

It's about surrender - not self-righteousness. Big Creek doesn't exist to glorify itself or our staff. We give Glory to Jesus for enabling and empowering us to do His work in and through our lives. Often, Christians have a "holier-than-thou" attitude when serving on missions. They have this subtle "superior" mindset that invites others to "look at me" and "see what I'm doing" and "give me a pat on the back." We often think that people need US, and we think that our skills matter. No: the people need Jesus, not us. We do not exist to lift up any man or ministry, but the name of Jesus. When serving on mission, we must adopt the attitude of a surrendered servant.

It's about people - not projects and programs. We must remember that our purpose on earth is not to build physical buildings. The projects we do, the homes we renovate, and the programs we offer are not our priority. The PEOPLE we serve are our priority. We must never lose sight of why we are here – to share with those people the life-changing message of Jesus. Our projects are only tools to share His truth.

OUR METHODS

Doctrine: We respect the differences between denominations and churches and when teaching strive to focus on the common truths of scripture. Please read our statement of beliefs at: www.bigcreekmissions.com under the "about us" tab. We're all different, and we are sensitive to these differences. We ask groups to support and communicate the beliefs of our mission center while serving our community.

Worship Services: We offer worship services every morning and evening. Our worship services are simple and incorporate a blend of songs that will be familiar to many age groups. Our straightforward, Christ-centered & Biblical teaching will challenge your participants to live a missional life obedient to Christ! We typically offer a full band, and our services last less than one hour so your group has time to gather privately.

Evangelism: We are an evangelical ministry and encourage volunteers to share their testimony through Word and action as the Spirit leads.

REGISTRATION SUMMARY

What does our donation of \$259 per person include?

- ***Staffing:** (Mission directors, ministry coordinators, worship band (staff led), and staff “guides”)
- ***Meals:** 5 hot cafeteria style breakfasts, 5 sack (or sometimes hot) lunches, and 5 cafeteria style hot (full) dinners
- ***Lodging:** Bunkrooms with bunk beds, mattresses, private dressing area, mattresses, A/C, 20 private showers.
- ***Worship Services:** Morning and nightly worship services with band
- ***Worksite materials and pre-project planning** (construction materials, tools, day camp materials as needed)
- ***5 Days of ministry in the community** (Monday – Friday) from about 9:30am-4pm
- ***BONUS:** if your (1) payments are made on time and (2) entire group is registered 30 days prior (3) driver and vehicle info provided: your team members receive a free \$10 t-shirt from our store.

What do groups (you) provide?

- *Transportation and fuel for your work teams. Plan 1-2 tanks of gas per vehicle while here.
- *Adults and Chaperones: 1:4 ratio recommended for High School. 1:3 recommended for Middle School.
- *Talented adults: Your adults will provide construction and ministry oversight at every work location.
- *Donations: All donations (supplies, monetary) help us expand our ministry here in Leslie and Clay County!
- *Children’s Ministry Planning: We ask our teams to help us plan amazing daycamps for kids! Check out our children’s ministry info at www.bigcreekmissions.com/volunteerinfo (password is kids2024)

WHO CAN ATTEND?

Anyone can attend! Churches, families, schools, colleges, social groups. All ages and group types are welcome.

SMALL GROUPS are welcome! If you don’t have a lot of students register – that’s ok! Bring who desires to come, as those who come will grow in grace and maturity!

WHO SHOULDN’T ATTEND?

We recommend you set requirements for attendance, host a training and set a high standard. Although we do desire to be a training ground for missions, we know a bad example can lead someone AWAY from Jesus.

Please make sure your participants can handle responsibility, work hard, and lead when necessary. Consider hosting a “mission training day” as a requirement for the trip. If a student can pay attention and complete the tasks (mowing a lawn, teaching a lesson, painting a wall) – then bring them on. **If a student constantly whines, needs constant attention, creates distractions, needs discipline, and can’t stay focused on the task, perhaps they’re not quite ready for a mission trip. Keep training them and try again next time!**

LOCATION, ARRIVAL TIMES, & DATES

Big Creek Main Campus Address: 90 Bullskin Road, Bear Branch, KY 41714

Full week groups arrive Sunday between 3-4 pm EST, and Depart Saturday morning by 8 am

Please contact us if: your group cannot stay the entire week! The earliest we recommend any group leaving is after the work day on Friday! Leaving before Friday afternoon affects all volunteers on site and affects transportation to every site.

PAYMENTS AND POLICIES

Before we talk finances, please know this: We're doing our best to keep our mission trip affordable for YOU. Therefore, we ask you to help us keep it affordable by following these expectations. If we charged as much as some of the "big box" mission trips (\$400++++) we could afford more flexible policies. **These policies help you.**

PAYMENTS

Your initial payment of \$50 per person is due upon initial registration. This is payable via credit card.

Your FINAL payment can be mailed via check OR paid online. If paid online, a credit card surcharge of approximately 3% will be added – as that's what it costs us to take card payments. Checks can be mailed to: Big Creek Missions, PO BOX 211, Bear Branch KY 41714.

POLICIES

- 1) **Register only those who have paid you deposits.** Deposits are refundable until January 15th. After that point, your deposits are non-refundable. Please don't overestimate!
- 2) **The Number you register determines the final balance you owe.** That means, if you commit to bringing 15 people, we ask you to pay for 15 people. If two back out last minute, we still ask you to pay for 15 unless we can fill those spots. Please hold your team members financially responsible for their commitment to attend. We recommend that you maintain a "waiting list" to fill your empty spots
- 3) **If you find out you are bringing less than anticipated, please update your numbers in the registration system.** If your week is full, and we can fill those empty spots, we will reimburse deposits and lower your final invoice amount! *Our prime registration period for summer is February and March. If you lower your numbers before then, it's likely we can fill your spots!
- 4) **You may substitute participants at any time (even up until the day you leave!)** Example. If Susie drops out, you can replace her with Sarah! Using the registration system, you can change participants as necessary.
- 5) **If you drop your numbers, and we can't fill those spaces, remember, the final balance will not change.** Consider the "lost payments" a donation to Big Creek! We'll use those funds to continue doing ministry after your groups leave!

We are an independent mission fully funded by your donations. Help us keep our prices affordable!

Our commitment to you:

**In the event that Big Creek Missions is incapable of providing a mission experience to you, we will apply your funds towards a future mission trip within 18 months of cancellation. (Example: Covid 19 cancellation)

**If we have overbooked a week, or if we have a waiting list for a week, we will allow groups to lower their numbers without any penalty (first come first served)

**We are sensitive to the needs of our participants: should there be a legitimate family emergency or illness, or other unforeseen event, Please email us if this is the case to discuss refunds.

TRANSPORTATION

You'll be using your vehicles to transport your work teams to mission sites. **The vehicles will get dirty!**

What type vehicles should we bring? We love **TRUCKS, CARS, MINI-VANS, and VANS**

Cars are assigned generally to all three ministries

Trucks are needed in construction! Without trucks: vans and cars are used for lumber and supplies.

Mini-vans are assigned generally to all three ministries

12-15 passenger vans are assigned generally to all three ministries

Mini-buses & drivers are almost always assigned to children's ministry . Big buses aren't recommended

Please plan for 1 empty seat per 8 volunteers. This leaves room for our staff to ride along!

Plan room for luggage, lunch coolers & Ministry supplies in each vehicle!

Capable Drivers: *If your drivers aren't comfortable driving big vans, use mini-vans or personal cars instead.*

Multiple Drivers: Please try to have backup drivers for each vehicle. That way, we can switch vehicles to different ministries instead of switching a driver to a different ministry.

Example: Let's say Bob is driving a 15 passenger van – but signed up to work in construction. We may need that van in children's ministry. If Bob's the only driver for that van, we have to move Bob to children's ministry so that van's available! BUT ----- Brenda is assigned to that children's group. If Brenda is listed as a backup driver, SHE can drive that van – and Bob can stay in construction ministry!

Drivers Safety: Drivers should be responsible and comfortable with the vehicle they are driving, and should be willing to enforce ALL seat belt rules and drive safely while transporting students. Drivers are not to do anything that could compromise the safety of the volunteers they transport, including, but not limited to: Chinese fire-drills, donuts, unnecessarily fast acceleration or deceleration, and other actions that are dangerous or illegal.

Vehicle Safety: Please perform a safety check on your vehicles: Belts, hoses, tires, seat belts, lights, and more! We know church vans can tend to sit a lot ... so drive vans around several hours before leaving to make sure it's ready for the trip.

Driving Distances: Because we serve in three counties, drivers should be prepared to travel distances of close to 30 miles each way to their sites per day depending on your location.

Our Roads: We are located in the mountains. Most of the main travel roads to our mission are wide, paved, and well-marked. HOWEVER, as we go out to do ministry, you'll find that many of our roads are narrow, winding, and some are gravel. We ask that each driver be VERY comfortable driving the vehicle they're assigned to: please encourage your folks to practice driving their vehicles prior to arriving at the mission.

Use of spotters: While serving at Big Creek, we require that ANY vehicle backing up use a spotter to prevent accidents AND to avoid ditches.

CONTACTING US

We are happy to help you! However, most of your questions are typically answered in this guide OR the FAQ section at www.bigcreekmissions.com/summer Check there before you contact us!

Again, we hope you'll read this guide thoroughly prior to contacting us with common questions!

Email Is our preferred method of communication!

Phone calls and voicemails will take much longer for a response, as we are constantly in and out of the mission center.

Registration & Numbers Questions

info@bigcreekmissions.com

Financial Questions

accounting@bigcreekmissions.com

Children's Ministry Questions

kids@bigcreekmissions.com

Construction Ministry Questions

construction@bigcreekmissions.com

Community / General Ministry Questions

info@bigcreekmissions.com

Director's contact info:

kevinr@bigcreekmissions.com

By Mail

Our financial mailing address is: PO BOX 211, Bear Branch KY 41714

By Phone (you will wait longer for a response using the phone! Please email!

Our phone number is 888-355-4055.

Please understand that our phone coverage is weird & we're rarely in the office.

Emails are always best and will receive the fastest response!!!

PRE TRIP TRAINING MEETING SUGGESTIONS

We encourage you to host an informational meeting at your church. With this meeting, you can present information about the mission trip and allow folks to sign up!

Handouts for the meeting are located at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go

Meeting Agenda:

- Distribute the following documents:
 - Page 22 of this manual: (tells how to sign up)
 - Info for all participants / What to Bring (located at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go)
 - Expectations (located at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go)
- Show Promo / ministry videos (available at www.bigcreekmissions.com/summer - bottom of the page)
- Discuss / handout the 3 ministry options (next page)
- Discuss / handout the daily schedule
- Have laptops available, and direct students AND adults to www.bigcreekmissions.com/go to sign up for their ministry choices and complete their permission form online.
- Tell parents about our emergency contact information:
 - Phone: 888-355-4055 x99: leave a message and this will be sent to multiple staff.
 - Physical Address: 90 Bullskin Rd, Bear Branch KY 41714 (also for UPS and FEDEX)
 - US Postal Service Mail Address: PO BOX 211 Bear Branch KY 41714

Important Training Meeting Ideas:

Spiritual elements are very important to us. However, the PHYSICAL elements are also very important.

- *Teach participants the basics of the Gospel message, and train students how to share their testimony
- *Train participants how to use **basic power tools** and **lawn equipment** ←
- *Train participants how to clean a bathroom (or simply use a **broom** and **mop!**) ←
- *Train participants how to **communicate** with residents in nursing homes ←
- *Challenge participants to view their **work as worship**: we are serving Jesus !!
- *Spend time working with participants who do NOT have a strong **work ethic!** ←
- *If participants don't desire to work, serve, or follow instructions, encourage them to **stay home** this year.

DO PARTICIPANTS NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?

We do not limit a person's participation at Big Creek even if they do not have personal health insurance. However, we HIGHLY recommend each participant does have some sort of accident coverage. Your church insurance company may offer a temporary plan for participants. Check with your insurance agent for details.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES & INSURANCE

Participant medical insurance is the primary coverage for medical emergencies. Please bring copies of medical insurance cards! We have multiple clinics addition to three hospitals nearby.

Big Creek ARH Clinic: 2 miles, 5 minute drive (Nurse practitioner)

Grace Health Hyden: 10 miles, 20 minute drive (Doctors)

Manchester Memorial Hospital: 15 miles / 25 minute drive

Hazard Hospital: 25 miles / 35 minute drive

We have multiple pharmacies: Walgreens in Hyden KY, Medicine Shoppe, Hyden KY, and Hometown Pharmacy, Hyden KY

WHAT ARE THE MINISTRY OPTIONS?

Your participants can choose their ministry options using our registration system at (register at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go). Most of our participants receive their first choice. We ask our participants to stick with one ministry for the entire week so we can build relationships with local residents!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES: KIDS & TEENS

In an area where there's not a lot going on – we desire to create a daycamp environment that is exciting, excellent, and educational. We need volunteers who are excited about Jesus and excited about life – so we can share this excitement with our children. The Gospel is not boring – nor should it be presented in a boring way. So, get ready to join us as we present the message of Jesus Christ in a captivating way! We need your group to come up with some creative ways to minister. **Would your team like to adopt a daycamp or provide a special outreach ministry for our kids (Examples: basketball camp, sewing classes, archery class, etc) PLEASE email kids@bigcreekmissions.com to let us know!**

We will offer a basic curriculum and framework and your volunteers will add their own talents to the curriculum we provide. The daycamps will begin at around 11:00 am each day, and we will provide a full lunch and about 4 hours of programming to the children each day. Drivers, be prepared to help us pick up some children who, because of transportation limitations, would not be able to attend! Daycamps are located throughout three counties – some are located in “town” settings, and some may be located way back in the hills with between 10 and 50 participants.

TEEN MINISTRIES: The teen ministry is for a select group of leaders age 17+. The teen out reach is a 4 hour daily program with activities, fieldtrips and more. If you're interested in leading teens, please email kids@bigcreekmissions.com It is very important that you are confident & experienced with teens if you choose to lead in this ministry area. **Our local teens are great, but won't attend if bored by inexperienced leaders!**

COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Big Creek works with various local organizations to help meet the needs of residents in our community. If your volunteers choose the community track, they will be serving in the community in a variety of ways.

- *Food Pantries
- *Clothing Centers
- *Painting
- *Mobile Feeding truck
- *Mowing Lawns
- *Adult Day Centers / Assisted Living
- *Local Outreaches (car washes, etc)
- *Other ministries

Community volunteers will need to bring some long pants and be prepared for outdoor work! Volunteers who choose community ministries will have the most variety in ministry at Big Creek. This is one of the favorite ministries for our volunteers because of the great exposure to the Appalachian culture.

CONSTRUCTION MINISTRIES

Big Creek works with various organizations to locate families who have home-repair needs. Your volunteers will help us provide much needed repairs on local homes. Projects include: roofing, flooring, siding, porches, wheelchair ramps, doors, windows, weatherization, framing, and multiple other projects. Our three most common projects are: Metal roofs, porches and ramps, and floor and joist replacement. **We do take on some major projects. Therefore, it's very important that you recruit talented construction supervisors. Our summer staff are not construction professionals: they are only guides to help manage students, not the project.**

BASIC SUMMER SCHEDULE

This gives you a general idea of our summer schedule. Times may vary. **We are in the EASTERN time zone**

Sunday

3:00-4:00 pm EST:	<i>Arrive in Kentucky, check-in & orientation.</i>
5:00 pm	<i>Dinner</i>
5:30 pm:	<i>Adult Meeting in Gym</i>
6:10 pm	<i>"Hoedown in the Holler" (this is where you are introduced to your groups!)</i>
6:20 – 8:15 pm	<i>Ministry Group Prep time</i>
8:30 pm:	<i>Opening worship</i>
9:30 pm	<i>Church Groups</i>
10:45 pm:	<i>Lights Out</i>

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

6:40 am:	<i>Wake-Up Call</i>
7:00 am:	<i>Breakfast Served. Doors close at 7:30</i>
7:45 am:	<i>Adult Meeting with director</i>
8:00 am:	<i>Morning Worship</i>
8:25 am:	<i>Team Meetings & Preparation time</i>
4:30 pm	<i>Return to Big Creek</i>
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm:	<i>Dinner (Doors close at 6:15)</i>
6:45-7:15	<i>Store & ice cream bar open (\$.50 each to help keep our machine alive!)</i>
7:20	<i>Prayer time in gym (optional)</i>
7:45 pm:	<i>Evening worship</i>
8:45 pm:	<i>Meet with church groups / quiet hallways</i>
10:45 pm:	<i>Lights out</i>

Wednesday Night Out: no dinner or activities at Big Creek.

4:00 –	<i>Return from Ministry Sites</i>
5:00 --	<i>Dinner & free-time in the community</i>
10:00 –	<i>Return to Big Creek, in bed,</i>
10:45 –	<i>Lights Out</i>

Departure Day: *Depart as needed (no later than 9 am) Basic continental breakfast served. Please instruct your students to be quiet and respectful towards other groups who may sleep in later. Please clean your beds and rooms as an act of service and love towards the NEXT guests staying in your room. Instructions can be found on the checkout cart in the hallway.*

WEDNESDAY NIGHT OUT

Wednesday night is left unscheduled so our teams can support our IMMEDIATE local economy. It's also a great opportunity to spend time with your group. **Don't worry about planning for this night out... keep it simple. We'll talk about this on Tuesday morning of your work week.**

What do we recommend for our night out?

- *Stay local In LESLIE COUNTY! Help support our local economy! That's the reason we offer the night out.
- *Take your group to one of our local restaurants to eat dinner. We have fast food and a few "sit-down" places
- *After you eat, go to the local park or pool! Keep it simple, keep it easy
- *The local pool should be available for groups. We do ask groups to make a donation to cover the costs of lifeguards and extra time (\$100 for 2 hours). Multiple groups can split the cost for the pool!
- *Many groups order pizza and go to the pool, or order food and eat at Big Creek. Regardless, our local businesses truly appreciate your support!
- *We respectfully ask that you not travel to adjoining towns to enjoy "better" experiences and entertainment – as that defeats the purpose of our "night out" Our sole purpose is to support our local economy in Leslie County!

Restaurants and Things to do in Hyden:

The Well – Coffee shop and Café (full menu with burgers, sandwiches, salads, milkshakes, smoothies, frappes)

El Sazon Mexican – our new Mexican restaurant in Leslie is "standard" Mexican with Italian / pizzas too!

Hyden Pizza (take out)

Subway

Hardees (we know Hardees can be sorta sketchy sometimes... but this one's much better than normal!)

Dairy Queen (full menu – burgers, chicken, salads, & ice cream)

Hyden Park

Hyden Pool

Dollar Store (you don't have to go to Walmart!)

Family Dollar (really, you don't have to go to Walmart!)

Do not worry about trying to entertain your group or pass the time. The rural setting provides an experience most volunteers are not accustomed to: peace and quiet. It allows groups to spend time together just growing closer. The slow pace is refreshing and relaxing. You may not want to leave!

WILL MY GROUP ALL WORK TOGETHER?

At Big Creek, we love different seeing groups working together and have seen the incredible benefits of students and adults working together as the body of Christ. We also enjoy allowing participants the opportunity to step outside their typical "friend group" and meet new friends.

We respect your role as the group leader. You will ultimately choose how your team is divided. However, After 22 years of hosting mission groups, our recommendation is that you allow us to divide your teams and not keep your entire group together! We will divide your team members in "pods" with adults, allowing interaction with others

Your participants have the choice of which ministry they serve in (construction, community, childrens). After your team has registered on our online system at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go, you will then have the opportunity to place your students into "subgroups."

Here's how it works:

Your participants create their profile at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go

After all participants complete their profile, you as the group leader can tell us who to "keep together" in your group. We can do this ANY way you like.

Let's say you bring 15 participants. 3 adults, and 12 students. 1 adult and 4 students chose construction ministry. We'd place those 5 together in a construction team along with 5-6 from another church to complete a team. If 5 chose children's we'd combine your team of 5 with others to complete a team. If 5 chose community, the same applies!

All our work teams typically have a Big Creek staff representative on site.

YOU have the ultimate choice where your students are placed. You simply have to communicate your desires to us in the registration system.

It is very important that you provide grouping information 30 days in advance of your trip. Last minute changes are very difficult.

When completing the group roster, your "Group With" column will look something like this:

Name:	Area of Ministry:	Group with: (you complete this column)
Bobby Wilson	Children	Martin Wilson
Martin Wilson	Children	Bobby Wilson
Stephen Walters	Construction	(do not pair with Brianna Smith)
Brianna Smith	Construction	(do not pair with Stephen Walters)
Walter Adams	Community	Place with anyone from our group
Chase Lewis	Community	Keep with an adult
Shawn Hart	Children	Place anywhere

Do you want your participants together in ministry tracks? We'll try to make that happen. Do you want your participants separated or with an adult? We'll try to make that happen!

****We cannot guarantee that we can keep entire groups together due to ministry space limitations****

WHAT ARE THE WORSHIP SERVICES LIKE?

Each night during your week of missions, we will provide worship services for you and your group. The services are appropriate for ALL ages!

Our simple worship services focus on two things:

Worship: Life change occurs when believers recognize who Jesus is and respond to Him

Word: The scriptures tell us who Jesus is and how to respond to Him.

Our services are simple and good quality. We don't go overboard with exquisite stage props, fancy lighting, smoke, and glitzy graphics. We keep it simple so the focus remains on **Jesus**.

The music: will be a blend of new and common worship music, blended with a few hymns here and there. We work hard to provide good quality worship music! The music will be upbeat, led by a full band. We don't want anyone to be surprised by our musical style. You'll hear us playing entrance / exit music written by new and emerging artists as well as "established" bands. You may hear Christian Rap, Southern Gospel, and other styles during the entrance and exit music. We are careful to choose worship songs that are supported with scripture.

If our band has completed their song choices early enough, we'll email you a list of our songs so you can share these with your students before your trip!

The teaching: We talk about Jesus a lot around here! The teaching will be Jesus-centered and scripture based. It is VERY important that you read over our statement of beliefs, as these beliefs will be evident through our teaching. Most likely one of our directors will be teaching each night and support staff teaching in the mornings. We typically follow, in order, a section of scripture, and allow the scriptures to be our focal point, not a theme, outline, or illustration. One can expect there to be some encouraging moments, some challenging moments, and even some uncomfortable moments as we explore what God's Word is saying to us. **Our teaching is NOT condemning, judgmental, or political although it does teach the truth of scriptures. We let the Holy Spirit and Scriptures do the work of transformation and do not try to play on people's emotions.** We will be sensitive to social and personal issues while staying true to the Word of God. You can expect the teachings to be both evangelistic and discipling at times. We typically use the NIV or ESV version of the Bible.

Invitations & Church Group times: Although we do present evangelistic messages, we typically do not host "altar-calls" or "invitations." We will depart each night with a challenge, and allow the CHURCH groups to host their own decision time each night. Because all churches are different, we do not feel it is appropriate to host an invitation in this setting.

Your group will have a private meeting room for your church group time. (The meeting room will most likely be either your male or female bunkroom. Larger groups may be provided a larger space if needed)

WHO LEADS BIG CREEK?

The daily operations at Big Creek Missions are led by its founder and director, Kevin Rogers. 2025 marks his 23rd summer as director of this mission. As a recovering youth pastor working in big and small churches, he understands what groups are “wanting to get” out of a mission trip. He also understands the needs of the mission and community, and works hard to balance the two. Having worked with hundreds of group leaders and tens of thousands of volunteers, he strives to serve for the Glory of God and the benefit of the people.

As a ministry, we are working hard to increase the levels of accountability, transparency, and spiritual growth. To provide accountability to this ministry, we have instituted the following safeguards for our leadership and your volunteers:

- 1) All our staff (part and full time) have undergone local, state, and federal background checks.
- 2) We have instituted specific expectations for our staff and volunteers to make Big Creek a safe, secure, and healthy environment. Our facility and grounds are secured by working gates and all entrances are under video surveillance.
- 3) The overall ministry is led by a board of directors
- 4) We have strict rules for staff, adults & volunteers regarding bathrooms, dressing rooms, and accountability.

WHO ARE OUR SUMMER STAFF?

Each summer, we choose several young adults to serve as summer staff at Big Creek. Our staff are NOT the construction supervisors, nor are they the “ministry pros.” Our staff are on site to help manage the students, encourage, lead, provide insight, and a consistent connection in the community. Our summer staff are typically previous participants from churches just like yours – and were recommended by their own group leader!

Here are a few tips when relating to staff:

- Big Creek is also a training ground for missions. These staffers are simply “missionaries in training.” We are working with them and teaching them skills necessary for life as an everyday missionary! They may not have the experience you do – so be patient with them as they are growing in Christ. Use this as an opportunity to mentor them! Don’t look down on them because they are young, because they are working hard to set an example in speech, life, faith, love and purity. Don’t be mean!
- The Staff are humble and willing workers! They work long hours and don’t get a lot of rest or time off.
- The staff are there to work alongside you in ministry! The staff are not dictators, and they do not know everything! However, we do spend a LOT of time in training to prepare them for the missions, and to communicate the desires and heart of Big Creek Missions. They are the “official” representatives of Big Creek on each ministry team. They will communicate the heart of the mission and it’s directors at all times.
- You’re GOING TO LOVE THE STAFF! They will impress you with their enthusiasm and willingness to serve.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

If you know of a young person who would be an excellent addition to our staff, feel free to forward them to our staff information located at: www.bigcreekmissions.com/staff

WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF ADULT VOLUNTEERS?

We ask our adult volunteers to set an example in every way. We hope that you can provide encouragement, guidance, love, and humility to your team members. Be kind, be loving, and by all means, DON'T BE MEAN. In all reality, we hope that our adults show more maturity than teens...But that's not always the case. We ask our group leaders to set an extremely high level of expectations for all participants.

Background Checks: We require churches to run background checks on all adults attending the trip. You will be able to note these checks online at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go. **We do not need copies** of these background checks, but we do need you to simply note online that you have run background checks to meet your own church and insurance guidelines. .

Be passionate, flexible, and encouraging! We ask all adult volunteers to give their best. Each adult should be prepared to serve the Lord by being an encourager, a hard worker, and mentor. We hope you'll lead with integrity! **Please help us by recruiting hard-working leaders for your team!**

Expectations: It is important that adults set a high standard for behavior. We must guard ourselves against any accusation. Therefore, all adults are expected to follow, communicate, and enforce all written and verbal rules while on site.

Written expectations and policies are posted on the group documents page at www.bigcreekmissions.com/go. Adults are expected to participate in all worship opportunities, without question, to set an example. Please understand that this is not camp. This is a mission center where we place strong emphasis on worship (including the teaching of God's Word) and discipleship. Therefore, we set a high standard for adults to lead by positive example.

Immaturity, divisiveness, disregard for mission center policies, and disrespect of designated leadership will not be tolerated. In all situations, we will follow the example Christ set forth for Biblical reconciliation in Matthew 18:15-17. Adults who choose to be belligerent or not abide by center policies will be asked to leave immediately.

Alcohol / Tobacco products: No alcoholic beverages are allowed on site at any time for any reason. Students are not allowed to use tobacco products (regardless of parent permission). Tobacco products are not be used on any ministry sites. At the center, adults, only, may use tobacco products no less than 50 feet from any door and not in the view of students.

Weapons: Because we are a center participants of all ages, weapons must be in locked vaults, inaccessible by others. ***Active Police and Military may email director, kevinr@bigcreekmissions.com for more specific information regarding concealed carry, specific situations, and firearms.

Valuables: We recommend adults and students leave all valuables at home. Big Creek cannot guarantee the safety of valuables.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT BIG CREEK?

1. This is a mission trip, NOT a summer camp!

Prior to your arrival at Big Creek, it's important to recognize some major differences between "camp" and "mission trip." We've worked with thousands of volunteers, and to be honest, the most difficult task we have is those who live in the "camp" mentality. Both the summer camp and mission trip are important parts of a student ministry. However, there are distinct differences between the two. Before signing your participants up for a mission trip, make sure they understand the nature of a mission trip.

Although summer camp seeks growth through worship, games, entertainment, music, and activities, a mission trip is all about serving others. We are here to focus on our community, and you are here to assist us in reaching out to this community. We don't exist to entertain you but rather to equip your team to serve in this community. With all that said, your participants will fall in love with the focus and enthusiasm of this mission experience!

2. This is a mission center, NOT a luxury hotel!

Big Creek has been blessed with an awesome facility. It is not a luxury hotel - but it's a GREAT place to call home for missions! It's a 60 year old school building that's been thoroughly renovated to house volunteers. Here are some things to expect about living at Big Creek. . .

- It will be lively! With up to 200 people sharing the same facility, it's an exciting place to be!
- Every person will have to be a part of the cleaning crew! We don't have a custodial staff. Expect to clean!
- No one will have a lot of "personal-time." There are not a lot of places to get away from people.
- Expect close quarters and busy bathrooms.

3. This is a place where flexibility is REQUIRED!

Here at Big Creek, and anytime you're serving on mission, it's important to realize that flexibility is of utmost importance. Here's why: Just as with any foreign or domestic mission trip, Eastern Kentucky is a different culture!

- **Construction:** You must remember that we're over 30 miles from the closest major building supply store. If you forget ONE little item on your construction site, it can cause a 3-4 hour delay! Volunteers must be willing to be flexible and patient. Those delays can be a huge blessing in ministry – as it gives us an opportunity to share with our homeowners and even their neighbors!
- **Community Ministries:** People here aren't interested in a quick, surface-level introduction. If you ask someone how they're doing, expect to sit and listen. So, plan to take extra time to share with your homeowner, or anyone else you contact. Conversations and relationships take time. Sometimes, you have to put aside time and schedules and build relationships.
- **Childrens Ministries:** We're trying to pull off a 4 hour "VBS" each day with volunteers from across the country. The logistics are near impossible! We run 6 buses to pick up kids – and sometimes buses break down. Kids have bad days. Things happen!
- **Inconveniences:** Just plan to be inconvenienced! Rough things are going to happen. That's what makes us grow when we're on a mission!

Regardless of the situation, be prepared to react with patience and kindness.

WHAT IS THE BIG CREEK CAMPUS LIKE?

You can view pictures of our facility at www.bigcreekmissions.com/the-facility

Security

- 1) When you first arrive at Big Creek, you may notice that our facility looks a little intimidating! The high fences and barbed wire were placed here when Big Creek was an elementary school, so we left it. We have added a secured entry gate & entry doors to keep students on campus and restrict unauthorized entry.
- 2) We have 16 security cameras recording all entrances and interior / exterior common areas.
- 3) At night, all our exterior doors are locked and we double check to make sure the campus is secure.
- 4) As staff, we are comfortable in our community. We have the support of our neighbors, and do not fear being in the area we serve. **We simply take precautions to help prevent any security issues.**

Outdoors

We have several acres of open fields, carpetball, 9-square in the air, gaugau pit, horseshoes, volleyball net, a playground, ball field, and a large outdoor pavilion. We have plenty of space for flag football, ultimate Frisbee, softball, or other games. Bring your lawn games!

Sleeping Areas

We currently have ten sleeping rooms. Nine of our rooms sleep 18 each, and one room sleeps 36. Bunkbeds were built in 2012 and new windows, and A/C units were installed in 2014/2015. Our entire facility was repainted in 2021. Our twin-sized 8" Mattresses are replaced on a rotating basis. **We do not have private accommodations for families during the summer months**

Gymnasium / Worship Area

The gym is air-conditioned and serves as our worship area. It is not available for activities during the summer

Restrooms / Showers

We have incredible new shower rooms, completed in summer 2017

Mens: 10 showers, 10 sinks, 6 toilets, 4 urinals. All showers and toilets have locking stall doors

Ladies: 10 showers, 10 sinks, 8 toilets. All showers and toilets have locking stall doors.

Washer / Dryer:

At this time, no laundry facilities are available for volunteers. Our facilities are for staff / kitchen use.

Kitchen/Cafeteria

Our cafeteria seats approximately 120 people. We will serve dinner and breakfast at two different times to accommodate all volunteers. Our lines typically move rather fast, and the food is served hot!

Our refrigerator is available for those with allergies to store food. We have a big ice machine – and we can typically offer free ice for personal coolers. NOTE: During peak (hot) times of summer, we may have to limit ice for personal coolers, as our machine may have troubles keeping up!

WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR THE FACILITY?

Other Groups in rooms: While staying with us, your group may not be the only one staying in your room. We simply ask groups to get to know, love, and respect each other when sharing rooms!

Rooming / Sleeping:

Your students will be housed in male OR female bunkrooms. Except for group times, we ask guys / girls to stay out of the opposite sex rooms.

The Kitchen: Because we are a licensed food-service facility, we must follow all rules of commercial kitchen sanitation and operations. Your team members are welcome to come join us prep for dinner. Typically volunteers will help prep the salad bar and other fresh items.

Cleaning and Maintenance: Big Creek Missions has no maintenance or custodial staff. During your week of missions, your group will assist with cleaning and maintenance of the facilities. We will all work together to provide a safe, sanitary facility. At the adult meeting on Sunday, we will offer adults the opportunity to sign up to supervise cleaning of one specific area (hallways, bathrooms, etc). The adult will be tasked with recruiting students to assist with that task.

During your stay, we may ask volunteers to assist with repairs at the facility – this is how we keep our mission costs affordable!

Accessibility issues: Our Big Creek Campus is on one level and is fully accessible. We have a fully accessible and private roll-in shower room. Contact us if a member of your group needs special care. We will strive to accommodate all requests.

Service Animals: Trained, vested, leashed, and certified service animals are allowed. **Emotional support animals are not allowed.** Group leaders, please contact us to notify us of any service animals attending with your group, and let us know (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability? and (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

Telephone / Email / Internet: Group leaders will have use of telephone and Wi-Fi as needed. We have Wi-Fi (for adults only) and free long-distance calling. Internet speeds may be very limited due to high usage.

Cell Service: As of this publication (fall 2024) – ATT has the most decent coverage on campus and in the area. T-Mobile is decent on campus and in the area. Verizon stinks and keeps getting worse! If you roam off any of these carriers, the same applies to your carrier. Our mountainous terrain makes cell coverage difficult

Staff and Director's Living Quarters: are located in the same building and are off limits to students and adults.

Lounging Around: We recommend adults bring some sort of “sling chair” or “camping chair” so they can lounge around. We don't have a lot of padded, comfortable chairs or couches!

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT THE MISSION?

Check out our wishlist: www.bigcreekmissions.com/wishlist

We hope you'll help us serve our community. Perhaps your church can host a supply drive to gather items for our community? Here are three ways you can help us gather supplies:

Financial Donations

*Please share about our mission in Kentucky to your entire church! Perhaps those who cannot attend can support the mission financially!

*Perhaps your pastor would allow a "mission offering" prior to your departure! This offering can go towards construction materials, community ministries, or children's ministries during your week of ministry!

*Ongoing gifts: Perhaps your church would like to support our mission on a continuing basis. We would appreciate any budgeted gifts or offerings given to Big Creek Missions.

Donations / Giveaways:

**STUDENT SCHOOL SUPPLIES: We hope to have a "back to school" giveaway the week prior to school starting! We have about 300 children – we'd love to provide each with great back to school items!

**TEACHER SCHOOL SUPPLIES: We would like to provide EACH teacher in our community with a back-to-school basket full of teacher supplies! We will communicate this information soon!

**SHOE GIVEAWAY: We'd like to be able to provide several pairs of NICE shoes to our schools, so teachers have a supply of good shoes to give to needy children!

**OTHER GIVEAWAY IDEAS:

Hygiene items. Home goods / Linens

Baby necessities

Items you can donate to help us conserve much needed funds:

Construction Supplies

- a. 2" and 3" galvanized / coated decking screws
- b. ANY pressure treated lumber (2x4, 2x6, 2x8, 4x4, 5/4 decking boards)
- c. Avantek Flooring AND OSB – 1/2" or 3/4"
- d. Ryobi One+ batteries
- e. LOWES GIFT CARDS!

Facility Supplies

- a. Kitchen Garbage Bags: kitchen 13 gallon drawstring
- b. Large 33 Gallon Garbage Bags (Sams Club or Costco purple box 33 gallon with drawstring)
- c. 8 ounce disposable cups (Styrofoam or plastic)
- d. Coffee & Creamers (for all the coffee drinkers!)
- e. Toilet Paper & Paper Towels

MANAGING YOUR GROUP ONLINE REGISTRATION

Go to www.bigcreekmissions.com/go

Login using the same credentials you provided to register your group

Tabs:

1) My Group Registration

*This tab is only for you, the group leader: Your group participants won't see this tab. Here, you can update your registration information (address, leaders, phones, numbers).

Please review these important tabs in the "Group Management" area.

- a) **Financial Center:** You may view all your payment information and invoices.
- b) **View Your Group roster:** Make sure team members have selected appropriate ministry choices. Here, you'll also see a column titled, "Keep Together With." Use this column to tell us which team members to keep together (or keep apart) You'll simply write the name of the person in the box that you want the participant to be paired with. We will always have at least TWO people together per team, and typically will always have an adult from your team paired with students.
- c) **Drivers and Vehicles:** 30 days prior to your trip, please let us know who is driving for your team! We need to know the driver, number of seats per vehicle (including driver) and any backup drivers. **Why are backup drivers important?** Let's say Bob drove a 26 passenger bus. Buses typically are assigned to children's ministry. Bob wants construction! In that case, we'll allow the backup driver – Brenda – to drive the bus to children's ministry so Bob can have construction!
- d) **Other Tabs:** You may also modify your registration / change your week in the "group management" table!

2) Your Personal Profile

*Each participant in your group (including you) will see this tab. Here, you and each participant will register and tell us about your ministry choices, talents, and medical needs. Participants, and parents of those under age 18, will need to digitally sign this form. You may also register members of your family or team who do not have internet access. Simply click, "add a new participant"

*Please don't register the entire team under your personal profile. Let each team member register themselves!

3) About My Trip

This will provide some simple information about your trip! It's just informational.

NOTE: We can only have one group leader account per group. If another member needs access to the account, please provide your username and password to that person.



HOW TO REGISTER FOR YOUR BIG CREEK MISSION TRIP

For all participants

Go to www.bigcreekmissions.com/go

Select, "Click Here to Register for your mission trip"

If you've not registered before, click "sign up" at the bottom.

After you've signed up, Please LOG IN.

- 1) Under the heading, "Sign up for a Mission trip" – select "add a person."
 - a. You'll need our trip codename. Our trip codename for this year is: _____
 - b. Complete your basic information, medical history, ministry skills, & sign the permission form. If a participant is under age 18, a parent will need to create the profile and provide the signature.
 - c. You can create profiles for family members or friends who don't have internet access. The parent or adult (18+) participant must sign their own permission form.

2) Future Mission Trips:

This will confirm the people you've registered for future mission trips.

3) Past Mission Trips

Once your trip has passed, you can still view your information. Next year, you may also sign up for another mission trip using this same account!

Thank you for registering. We can't wait to serve with you this summer!

**please note. If your group leader can't find your registration, it's likely you've selected the wrong code name. Click "edit" on your future mission trips to select the correct code name!