

CAMP MEETING & EVENT PLANNER

June 2015–May 2016

Welcome to the 2015–2016 Camp Year

A vibrant camp holds effective meetings and events that keep members active in their community. By planning meaningful events, your camp can grow stronger.

As you schedule your meetings this year, use the *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* (Item 125) online planning tool on *theConnection*, or download it. Work with your cabinet, your Auxiliary, and even your area director to come up with a 12-month plan that focuses on what your camp does well, and strive to do it even better.

To complete your *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* online:

- Go to Camp Activities, then Camp Admin
- Under Camp Tools (on the right), go to *Camp Meeting & Event Planners*
- On the next screen, click on *Online Meeting & Event Planner* to schedule your meetings and events. Make sure you are on the 2015–2016 page as displayed on the top right.

To complete your *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* manually:

- Go to *theConnection* store
- Select the DOCS tab on the left side
- You will find the *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* (Item 125) under the product list.

Planning Your Camp Year

Planning your monthly meetings and events is the responsibility of the camp cabinet. A special camp cabinet meeting should be scheduled just for this essential planning process. April and May are the best months for planning the next fiscal year.

The planning process should be an inclusive meeting with your camp Auxiliary cabinet to see which events should be held as joint or separate meetings. In addition, one way to improve your camp meetings is to simply ask your members for feedback—both those who attend and those who do not.

As you start to plan out your June to May meetings, certain events are going to take up the majority of your meeting dates: Annual Pastors Event, Annual Membership Dinner, Camp Elections, Faith Fund Rallies, Educational Videos, etc. Note that camp meeting videos will no longer be a series, which is a big difference this year. You can expect these videos to be released quarterly, starting in May, then August, November, and February. Plan to view each video in the quarter it is released.

If you are using the online *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* on *theConnection*, you can set the date by clicking on the meeting or event topic. This is the preferred method as your members can see online everything your camp has planned. If you are completing the *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* on paper, fill in the date for your meetings on the line beside each program (sharing copies of the completed *Planner* with your members).

A Note About Camp Goal Planning

Your camp goal planning is done in July, after the International Cabinet establishes our worldwide goals. The key elements of goals planning are receipts, placements, and membership. Each of these is broken down in the *Camp Goals Planner* tool on *theConnection*, accessible through Camp Admin. The schedule for locking in goals is sent in June of each year.

Content for Camp Meetings

Here's a summary of all camp meeting events or topics from which to choose:

Annual Pastors Event

It should be regarded as the single most important camp event you conduct this year. All camps are expected to hold an Annual Pastors Event. You can work with other area camps to plan a combined event for stronger impact. See the *Church Ministry Program Manual* (Item 223) for more information.

Annual Membership Dinner

This is a must in the calendar of every camp. You can use a camp meeting several months before your dinner to brainstorm potential invitees and plan how to have the best Annual Member Dinner ever. You may choose to work with other area camps to host a combined dinner. See the *Gideon & Auxiliary Membership Program Manual* (Item 128) for additional information.

Camp Elections

Camp elections are to be held each year as one of your monthly meetings. The elections meeting will be lead by the area director or his designee. Elections are highly spiritual meetings as we seek to fulfill God's calling in choosing the leadership of our camps. For details on scheduling your annual camp elections, see *The Gideons International Guide Book* (Item 102).

State Leadership Visits

You can improve the overall performance of your camp through a presentation by a member of the state leadership team, such as an area director, or a regional program leader. Talk to your area director and choose a program with which your camp needs help (ex: GideonCard). Likewise, the Auxiliary may choose to invite a member of the state Auxiliary leadership team to provide specific training or encouragement to the Auxiliary.

Educational Videos

Your camp will have four videos to schedule from June 2015 through May 2016. These videos will be released quarterly, starting with *Spiritual Leadership* in May, and then additional new videos in August, November, and February. These videos are produced for download, and a limited number of DVDs will be available on *theConnection* (one DVD per video.) View each video soon after it is released.

Seasonal Fellowship

This is a great option when planning your schedule. Your camp can enjoy a more relaxed meeting through picnics or Christmas fellowships. It is also the ideal time to invite prospective members, non-active members, Friends of Gideons, and wives of Gideons who are not Auxiliary members.

Area Faith Fund Rallies

Your camp's Faith Fund efforts are vital to ensuring that the ministry can continue in International Outreach Countries. Camps often choose to attend an area Faith Fund meeting in place of a monthly camp meeting. Many are scheduled right before International Convention, and starting in April, these Faith Fund dates are posted on *theConnection*.

International and State Convention Recaps

Another popular meeting topic is sharing about the international or state convention. A recap of highlights and new developments is an excellent approach to keeping all camp members up-to-date on current topics. Every camp should have representation at the state convention (some camps do not have a meeting that month in lieu of attending the convention). Likewise, someone from your state leadership will be attending the International Convention, and your camp members should be encouraged to attend, as well. Discussion of the International Convention makes for a highly interactive meeting time.

Camp Meeting Agenda 2015–2016

The following is a flexible agenda for a typical camp meeting. Please follow the recommended time frame for each activity. **NOTE: The allotted time for each camp meeting is 2 hours or less.**

Welcome by Camp President (Starting time to be determined by camp)

Opening Prayer by camp chaplain. If the camp president is not moderating, be sure to introduce the meeting's moderator at this time. Welcome guests.

Fellowship, Meal (if included), and Sharing of Testimonies (Up to 40 minutes)

The camp meeting dinner may take up the full time allotment. However, another option is to forego the meal and simply have fellowship for up to 40 minutes, perhaps including testimonies.

Chaplain's Devotion (Up to 5 minutes)

This is the chaplain's time to encourage personal witnessing, lead the camp in Scripture reading, and promote spiritual aspects of the ministry.

News Update and Current Developments (Up to 10 minutes)

Use the Monthly Update Video (or the *Information Bulletin*) to interact with members on the latest news and materials. This time is vital to disseminating information from the International Cabinet.

Prayer and Praise — Joint or Separate (Up to 15 minutes)

The camp chaplain moderates this time. Auxiliary may prefer a separate prayer time moderated by the camp Auxiliary chaplain. Please include prayer items from the Prayer Center on *theConnection*.

Education Session (Up to 20 minutes)

This period is designed for camp training, according to the specific needs of the camp. Training can include watching quarterly videos or sessions led by a member of the state leadership. When an educational video session is scheduled, the moderator will want to leave time for interactive discussion of the video at the end of the session.

Faith Fund Offering (Up to 5 minutes)

A brief time that is ideal to report on stories from the *International Update*, as well as news on any pending international Scripture orders (posted on *theConnection* weekly). Be sure to ask for contributions to your camp Faith Fund to help meet current Scripture needs.

Camp Activities/Updates/Brainstorm — Jointly (Up to 15 minutes)

This period should be scheduled to discuss and organize important camp activities. It is also an opportunity for the camp president and camp Auxiliary president to provide information on upcoming events and share status reports. Make this time slot interactive for participation by all members.

Testimonies (Up to 10 minutes)

Share testimonies from around the world or in your community, including recent blitzes, referencing *The Gideon* magazine, the gideons.org/blog, and the *International Update*.

Closing Prayer



Scheduling Camp Events

The *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* online tool (Item 125) contains an events section at the bottom to list all events and distributions. Choose the month of each line item, and enter the day for the event:

- **Cabinet Meetings:** Schedule your monthly cabinet meetings. Many camps simply put these at the end of their regularly scheduled prayer meetings.
- **International & State Conventions:** Input month and day of these events. The International Convention is usually the third week of July.
- **International Day of Prayer:** The second Saturday in June.
- **International Speaker Qualification Day:** The second Saturday in February.
- **Scripture Distributions per month:** Plan your numeric goal for Scripture distributions per month. The more Scripture distributions planned per month, the more engaged your camp will be.
- **Church Presentations per month:** Plan for last year's church presentations plus three (LY+3). Note that we count churches where presentations were made—so if you did two services at one church, it is counted as one church presentation.
- **Faith Fund Meeting:** Either a local or area Faith Fund meeting or rally.
- **Rescue Mission:** Schedule if applicable.
- **Jail/Prison Ministry:** Schedule if applicable.
- **Special Distribution:** Schedule if applicable.
- **Auxiliary Planning:** The *Camp Meeting & Event Planner* (Item 125) also has a section for scheduling Auxiliary cabinet meetings, prayer meetings, distributions, medical conventions, and Auxiliary Enrichment Seminars & Luncheons.

Tips for Camp Meetings and Events

"If you are active in your community, your camp meetings should be a direct reflection of that...People will want to come hear how you're doing each month." –Tommy Needham, Amarillo Camp, TX

- One way of engaging members is providing camp meeting topics in advance. Send a short email from the president, or other cabinet member, relating the upcoming topic with an invitation to participate.
- Another method some camps use is to inform members when the dinner starts and when the meeting starts. You can invite members to the dinner (say 6:30 p.m.), and also share the time the program starts (7:00 p.m.), in case some choose just to attend the program. This may increase your attendance.
- Report to your camp after events have taken place. Many camps report back from state and international conventions via the email broadcast on *theConnection*. In addition, reports on key distributions or blitzes can also show ongoing camp activity and better engage members.
- Provide monthly newsletters with dates of events in advance so the members can plan accordingly.
- Use a monthly meeting to brainstorm events, like an Annual Membership Dinner or Annual Pastors Event. Or, schedule an interactive meeting to boost a program needing help, such as Church Ministry.
- You may want to hold your camp meeting in a new location this year. Camps are moving locations to improve attendance or to find more audio/visual friendly venues.
- Make ongoing plans for Scripture distributions—for both Gideons and Auxiliary. Members joined in part to share God's Word, so provide ample opportunities. Also, make distributions more accessible to those who work by scheduling within lunch times, during late afternoons, and on weekends when possible.
- Use *theConnection*. Often, new members join a camp and get access to *theConnection* only to search and find nothing under Where We Are Going, Where We Have Been, and Where We Should Be. To engage new members, and increase the activity for current members, post camp activities on *theConnection*.

CAMP MEETING & EVENT PLANNER

CAMP NAME: _____

CAMP MEETING EDUCATIONAL SESSION VIDEOS

	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Spiritual Leadership												
Vibrant Camps												
(To Be Announced)												
(To Be Announced)												

OTHER MEETINGS

Seasonal Fellowship												
Annual Pastors Event												
Camp Elections												
Annual Membership Dinner												
Other (Specify)												
Other (Specify)												
Other (Specify)												
Other (Specify)												

EVENTS

Cabinet Meetings												
International Convention												
State Convention												
International Day of Prayer												
International Speaker Qualification Day												
# of Scripture Distributions per Month												
# of Church Presentations per Month												
Faith Fund Meeting												
Rescue Mission												
Jail/Prison Ministry												
Special Distributions												
Church Relations Day												
*Auxiliary Cabinet Meetings												
*# of Auxiliary Scripture Distributions per Month												
*Medical Conventions												
*Auxiliary Jail/Prison Ministry												
*Enrichment Seminar and Luncheon												
*Auxiliary Prayer Meetings												

* The Auxiliary cabinet schedules these meetings/events on this same *Planner*.
Send completed copies of this *Planner* to all camp members and your area director.

