WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL CAMP MCDOWELL

WHAT IS CAMP MCDOWELL?

We are the Camp and Conference Center of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. With 1,140 acres and 834 beds, in regards to capacity, Camp McDowell is the largest Episcopal Camp and Conference Center in the U.S. Relocated in 1947, Camp McDowell borders the edge of the Bankhead National Forest in Winston County, Alabama, and consists of breathtaking canyons, waterfalls, forests, and is known as the Beautiful Queen of Clear Creek. Miles of hiking trails, glistening streams, comfortable lodging, and large meeting areas make us an ideal venue for groups both small and large.
Why come to Camp McDowell?

"At Camp McDowell we show the way the world could be through worship, learning, rest and play, in the beauty of God's backyard."

Our community retains a wonderful camp-like quality, yet has not relinquished its standing as a destination built upon simple elegance and attention to service and enjoyment. Camp McDowell is a warm and welcoming host for retreats, conference groups, family gatherings or other special events. Events at Camp McDowell are memorable, uncomplicated, and as genuine as the historic property itself.

Guests who visit Camp McDowell become part of a friendly and inclusive community that strives to live the way the world could be. The staff is servant-minded and easy-going. Guests will experience our passion for being excellent stewards of God’s creation through our use of renewable energy including solar and geothermal energy, as well as a rigorous recycling program.
Lodging
TO FIT ANY BUDGET

Stough Lodge, Miller Commons, Parsley Commons

Do you have a large conference? No problem! We have over 150 hotel-style rooms. Each room is spacious with two queen beds and a private full bath.

Scott House

Ultimate family-style living that accommodates up to 24 guests is available in Scott House. With its four bedrooms, including twin beds, and four bathrooms, this beautiful antebellum log cabin is a favorite for family reunions.

Camp Cabins

A total of 24 cabins make up our dormitory-style accommodations. The 14 cabins located on Clear Creek are heated and our 10 cabins located in Bethany Village are heated, cooled, and handicap accessible. Linens are not provided.
Conference Center

MEETING SPACES FOR ANY SIZE & NEED

Each meeting space is comfortable, versatile, and conducive for building relationships, learning and planning. Tables, chairs, projection screens, and flip charts are available upon request at no extra charge.

Small Spaces
The common area in each of our twelve lodges consists of a kitchenette and cozy fireplace with meeting space for approximately 20–30 people. These venues are perfect for break-out sessions and informal gathering. Outdoor meeting spaces are found throughout the grounds.

Mid-Size Spaces
Featuring a universally accessible stage, Hall Hall is a rustic, charming, multi-functional dance and performance hall with a piano. This space seats 250 theater-style, and 150 banquet-style.

Pradat Hall can accommodate 70 people seated and is equipped with a kitchenette, fireplace, piano, covered porch with rocking chairs, WiFi and a mounted Smart TV.

Located in the center of camp and tucked underneath the Chapel of St. Francis is Randall Commons. This spacious and private area can seat 180 people comfortably and has on-site restrooms, an attached kitchen, and a beautiful view of the outside forest.

Overlooking Sloan Lake with a sunset vantage point is Phifer Hall. This popular space boasts a catering kitchen, mounted Smart TV, large covered porch, WiFi, and can accommodate 120 banquet-style or 200 seated theater-style.

Large Spaces
Our largest meeting space and dining hall is Doug Carpenter Hall and can seat 800 people theater-style and 500 banquet-style. The space is equipped with an internal sound system including handheld, lapel, and lectern mics.

The Chapel of St. Francis can accommodate 400 people seated and is equipped with an internal sound system including handheld, lapel, and lectern mics. Chairs and altar are moveable.

Several additional meeting spaces are available.
"There's always something to do at Camp McDowell!"

Canoeing & Fishing
Canoeing and fishing enthusiasts or beginners can find solace paddling on our five acre Sloan Lake as well as beautiful Clear Creek. Clear Creek boasts year-round canoeing and fishing access, steep canyons, and pristine wildlife.

Hiking Trails
At Camp McDowell, the hiking trail options seem endless. Scattered across our 1100+ acres, you'll find hiking trails for the active and walking paths for those who need a less strenuous option. Ask for a trail map or even a guided hike when making your reservation.

Swimming
One Olympic Size Pool; One Handicap Accessible.

Pools at Camp McDowell are open from May until September. Our summer camps use the pools almost every day, but please do not hesitate to ask if there's any availability for your group to swim during the warm and beautiful summer months.

Additional Activities & Amenities
• Working farm tour/Meet the animals
• Three recreational fields
• Grills
• Playgrounds
• Meditation labyrinth
• Team building/ Challenge courses
• Live animal program

Dining
Camp McDowell has three dining halls with a 200 - 500 serving capacity. Meals are prepared fresh daily with some ingredients being provided by our own farm, depending on the season.
Our Programs

Summer Camps & Retreats

Summer Camps were organized beginning in the 1920’s - well before camp moved to Winston County. We have sessions that accommodate rising 1st - 12th graders - both with or without special needs or abilities. No child is kept from attending due to financial restraints. Staffing opportunities are available for 10th grade and up, providing excellent opportunities to learn and develop leadership skills. In addition to our Summer Camps, we have several retreats throughout the year for kids and adults, including: Family Farm to Table, Mother/Daughter Retreat, Father/Son Retreat, Diocesan Homecoming, Women’s Retreat, Our Time Grief Support Retreat, Fall Fling, Winter Weekend, Awakenings and more.

Conference & Retreat Center

We can accommodate one to 800 individuals to fit a wide variety of tastes and budgets. There are 300 hotel-style beds in our lodges, 24 cabins with dormitory-style accommodations, & Scott House, which sleeps 24 guests and offers family-style living in a log cabin. Meals are made fresh daily with some farm to table meals. Recreation opportunities include canoeing, rec fields, hiking, swimming, working farms, meditation labyrinth and more. We have meeting spaces for any need - small & intimate to large, theater-style, including inside and outside venues.

McDowell Environmental Center

MEC is a residential educational program established in 1994, hosting students, teachers and parent chaperones during the academic school year for sessions typically lasting 3 days and 2 nights. The MEC mission is to connect people to the environment, teach respect for the earth and its beings, and to promote a commitment to lifelong learning. Students and teachers are taught by seeing nature up close, in the streams, forests, and canyons of Camp McDowell. Annually, we have over 5,000 students come through the MEC from over 100 schools in the southeastern states. MEC has provided more than 20,000 hours of CEC for teacher professional development. The programs offered by MEC follow the Alabama educational curriculum.
Our Programs

Alabama Folk School

Established in 2007, AFS offers workshops of varying lengths, from 2 to 4 days with sessions ranging from 12 hours for a weekend workshop to 15 hours for a 3-day workshop and 21 hours for a 4-day workshop. Our small class size allows students to fully engage with their instructor in a meaningful way. The AFS mission is to provide an opportunity to be inspired and renewed in a supportive community while learning from and experiencing master artists, artisans, and musicians. Sessions have included a wide variety of subjects: Banjo, fiddle, guitar, harmonica, basket weaving, fly-fishing, farm-to-table prep, cast-iron cooking, soap making, painting, Gee's Bend quilting, blacksmithing, weaving, working with glass, pottery, harmony singing, chili cooking, and many more.

McDowell Farm School

The MFS is a residential educational program established in 2014 hosting students, teachers and parent chaperones during the academic school year for sessions typically lasting 3 days and 2 nights. The MFS mission is to inspire curiosity, teach problem solving, and empower community connections through sustainable agriculture. Students and teachers are taught by seeing nature up close, in the streams, forests, and canyons of Camp McDowell. Students develop their knowledge for where their food comes from and the meaning and importance of sustainable agriculture through a hands-on approach by knowledgeable and experienced farmers and educators on a working farm. Programs offered by MFS follow the Alabama educational curriculum.

Magnolia Nature School

The Magnolia Nature School was established in 2016 as the first nature preschool in Alabama. Its mission is to provide a kindergarten readiness program by exploring the natural world thereby creating good stewards of God’s earth. The preschool program, which is partnered with Head Start, is for children ages 3 to 5 years old. The school added a Kindergarten class in 2018. Preschools are realizing the importance of allowing inquiry based learning to start at an early age. This is a child centered, yet adult guided, exciting style of learning. The goal of Magnolia Nature School is to have the majority of the day spent outside playing in sandboxes, exploring trails, visiting the Farm School animals, and wading in shallow streams and making mud pies! Magnolia Nature Preschool follows the guidelines set out by the state of Alabama to promote kindergarten readiness. The school follows the same school calendar as the Winston County School System.
All are welcome at the McDowell Camp & Conference Center.

We invite you to contact us to set up a tour, make reservations, or chat with us about how we can serve you.

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The McDowell Camp and Conference Center is a ministry of the Episcopal churches in the Diocese of Alabama.