

Amazing Challah Bread

Ingredients:

- 4 (.25 oz) packages quick-rise yeast
- 4 cups warm water (110 degrees F/45 degrees C)
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 cup margarine, melted
- 5 eggs
- 12 cups bread flour, or as needed
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

Sprinkle the yeast over the water in a large bowl, and stir gently to moisten the yeast. Stir in salt, sugar, margarine, and 4 eggs, and beat well. Gradually mix in the flour, 1 cup at a time, up to 12 cups, until the dough becomes slightly tacky but not wet. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface, and knead until smooth and elastic, 8 to 10 minutes.

Grease baking sheets, or line them with parchment paper and set aside.

Cut the bread dough into 4 equal-sized pieces (or 2 pieces to make 2 large loaves). Cut each piece into thirds for 3-strand braided loaves. Working on a floured surface, roll the small dough pieces into ropes about the thickness of your thumb and about 12 inches long. Ropes should be fatter in the middle and thinner at the ends. Pinch 3 ropes together at the top and braid them. Starting with the strand to the right, move it to the left over the middle strand (that strand becomes the new middle strand.) Take the strand farthest to the left, and move it over the new middle strand. Continue braiding, alternating sides each time, until the loaf is braided, and pinch the ends together and fold them underneath for a neat look. Repeat for the remaining loaves.

Place the loaves onto the prepared baking sheets, and let rise until double in size, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Whisk 1 egg with vanilla extract in a small bowl, and brush the loaves with the egg wash.

Bake in the preheated oven until the tops are shiny and golden brown, about 30 minutes. Let cool before slicing.



Presbyterian Camp and Conference Ministries of SW FL
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Summer 2016

Upcoming Events:

- **Summer Camp, weekly**
June 19-Aug. 5, 2016
- **Homecoming**
September 2—4, 2016
- **Falltastic**
October 7—8, 2016
- **Senior Adult Retreat**
October 12, 2016
- **Silent Retreat**
October 23—25, 2016
- **FUSION: Fall Youth Group Retreat**
November 11—13, 2016
- **Christmas Retreat**
December 16—18, 2016

Visit our website for more information on these and other programs that Cedarkirk offers.

Cedarkirk Staff:

Rev. John Reiter

Executive Director

Mark Orendorf

Assistant Director

Matt Shick

Program Director

Kevin Taylor

Facilities Director

Jackie Butler

Food Service Director

Karin Dale

Event Coordinator

Patricia Holloway

Office Manager

S'mores & More

The Newsletter of the Presbyterian Camp & Conference Ministries of SW FL

A Conversation with Beca Franca

As we joyfully enter a new summer of camp ministry we are blessed to welcome back an old friend to our staff. Rebeca Franca has joined us for the next few months as Director of Traveling Day Camp Programs and will oversee this brand new facet of our summer ministry.

Beca served Cedarkirk during the summers of 2008-2012 in a variety of capacities before moving on to a position as Assistant Director at Vanderkamp Center (in upstate New York), followed by two years as Director of Summer Camps at Mo Ranch Assembly (in the Texas Hill Country).

We are overjoyed to have someone as experienced and enthusiastic as Beca running our inaugural summer of Traveling Day Camps – she is a tremendous asset to our staff! We recently asked her a few questions so you can get to know her too!

Do you have a camp memory that stands out? Just one? There are so many! One of my favorite memories is of a cookout I did with my girls. We made fajitas in the rain. Our soggy fajitas weren't the best, but I will always remember dancing around the fire and the pride and accomplishment we felt by creating fire in a downpour.

What is special about Cedarkirk? I love asking other people that question! There's always such an emphasis on what the community has done for them, and almost always a beautiful and special story they share. The incredible power camp has to build community brings so many types and generations of people together. The way that Jesus talks about community in the Bible is the way I see community at Cedarkirk. Cedarkirk has also been an amazing place of personal growth for me. From doing my part in

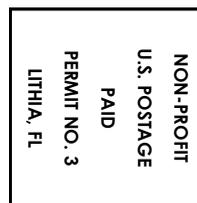
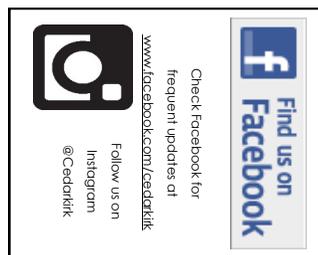
cookouts as a child to feeling comfortable leading song time, Cedarkirk has taught me much about life and about myself. It's a safe place to fail, to cry, to question, and a place that will walk with you on your journey to success, laughter, and discernment.

What motivated your decision to come back? Being able to come back in a director position, one where I am helping add to the programs at a place I love so much, is extremely special. Traveling Day Camp is such a great opportunity for connecting churches and Cedarkirk that I knew I wanted to be a part of such an awesome ministry. It's always nice to be able to come back home.

What are you looking forward to this summer? I'm really looking forward to being able to connect with some of the churches that support us, and to get to learn a little bit more about them. Engaging communities with the uniqueness of camp, and getting to show how awesome God is in a summer camp setting is very exciting.

What do you find most exciting/challenging about being a director? It's exciting to see camp from different roles. It's been a blessing to enjoy the magic of camp as a camper, help create that environment as a counselor, then help counselors create that environment as leadership, and now, lead a new program. It's also exciting to be able to give back to a place that has given so much to me. This summer, home base will be our van, so it will feel different not having the safety net of camp. The challenge will be creating that camp feeling at the churches we travel to.

You can support our ministry this summer by praying for Beca and all of our staff.



You Make a Difference!

This is an incredibly busy and exciting time of the year for your camp and conference center! Here at Cedarkirk, our summer staff are training for a fun-filled and faith-building season of ministry. Soon, our first campers will arrive and we look forward to sharing the love of Christ throughout the summer. In early May, the Cedarkirk staff and Board welcomed many of the Friends of Cedarkirk to celebrate their support and love for this ministry. The Friends Fund for this past year totaled over \$8,000 and helped to purchase a variety of needed items like a parachute and ice cream churn for the new Traveling Day Camp, two LCD televisions for our meeting rooms, upgrades to the golf carts, a smaller chainsaw,

new handholds at the climbing wall, a basketball hoop at the pool, a shade structure for Village A, new mattresses for the rustic cabins and one wing of Cedar Lodge, rocking chairs, and an AED for the Pavilion. We truly are blessed to have such generous supporters of this place and the ministry that happens here. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, Cedarkirk is a place of welcome, growth, and transformation. Thank you for sharing with us in ministry. Your partnership is critical and helps to provide amazing experiences for God's children of all ages. Thank you for coming on retreat, for sending campers and staff, for your support and for your prayers.

Discernment Through Service—Dan Barnes

As my time in the DTS (Discernment Through Service) program comes to an end I'm filled with an incredible amount of joy as I reflect on the last year and the relationships I've built, the skills I've gained, and the memories I've made. I'd be lying, though, if I said I wasn't a little bit sad. A small part of me wants to start over, to return to the program after the summer and spend another year here, learning and growing with some of the wisest and kindest people I've met.

As tempting as that is, I'm reminded of a quote from Fahrenheit 451: "Ask for no guarantees, ask for no security, there never was such an animal.

And if there were, it would be related to the great sloth which hangs upside down in a tree all day every day, sleeping it's life away." -Ray Bradbury

It would be easy for me to hang on to what has become comfortable and safe but as the saying goes "Life begins at the end of your comfort zone". I'm ready to see what God has next, for what the summer holds, and to see where I am at this same time next year. I want to thank John, Mark, Matt, Patty, Jackie, Kevin, Cathy, Karin, and the rest of the Cedarkirk staff for providing me with and contributing to an environment where I could find enough peace, inspiration, and

Nuts and Bolts

Summer camp is almost here and we are not at a loss for improvements to make around the site. Thanks to the generosity of the Friends of Cedarkirk, we will soon be completing our final shade structure for the rustic cabin villages. This summer we will also continue to upgrade pathway lighting, help keep things running for our campers, and spruce up several outdoor areas around the camp. All this work will be undertaken by our summer maintenance staff as we continue to make Cedarkirk a special place apart. As we embark on a capital campaign to construct a new dining hall, the staff are hard at work planning and dreaming about this new addition and how it will provide a space to truly welcome all.

knowledge to begin taking the next steps in my life.

Over the past 10 months, Dan Barnes, has been a participant in our Discernment Through Service program (DTS). Through service to camp, intentional communal experiences, and directed discernment opportunities, DTS provides participants with a program that allows young adults to more fully listen to God's call. Dan has been a welcome part of the Cedarkirk staff and we are grateful for his ministry with us. To learn more about the DTS program, please visit our website.

PCCM/Cedarkirk Board Member Corner—David Landers

When Cedarkirk held its very first summer camp in 1971, I was nine years old...not quite old enough to be a camper. But my older brother was a camper that summer and when I went with my mom to pick him up I saw the tents they camped in right next to Streetman Drive, and the snakes they had caught while clearing a road through the woods. Camp looked pretty exciting; I couldn't wait till I was old enough to go! When I was able to go a couple years later, the road was open and Cedar Lodge had been built, but not much else. We swam in the river; I never tired of the rope swing, climbing up the bank and getting in line to go again, over and over. I remember a canoe trip interrupted by a thunderstorm so fierce that we pulled off the

river and huddled in the woods singing hymns until the storm passed. Downstairs Cedar was the place we square danced to the calling of founding director A. T. Brown. I returned to camp for several years as the cabins, pool and pavilion were added. In retrospect, I can see the key elements that made that experience so special and why it had such an impact on me. It was a place of excitement and fun, yet a place of peace; there was genuine caring from all of the adult leaders and counselors. Everyone, regardless of where they came from or where they were in their faith, was encouraged to get to know and grow closer to Christ. Being a Christian could be fun! It could

even be cool! So you see, Cedarkirk has grown and changed some over the years, but the summer camp experience has not changed much at all.

Fast forward to about 2008. I was invited to join the Cedarkirk Board and I gladly accepted. When I joined the Board, I learned how, in the years since I was a camper, Cedarkirk's ministry had expanded beyond summer camp and Presbyterian church retreats. I feel privileged to be a Board member and I also feel a great responsibility to continue the transformative camp ministry and to help further expand this wonderful ministry of hospitality to reach and serve more people.

New Fall Program

Silent Retreat October 23—25

"One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to meditate in His temple"

Psalms 27:4

We are in the midst of training our summer staff and excited about the care and nurture these staff will be giving our campers in the coming weeks. We are also looking forward to our fall offerings. A new addition for 2016 is a Silent Retreat on October 23—25. There will be time for worship and song, but outside of

worship the space and spiritual practices are reserved for silence.

"Be still, and know that I am God"
(Psalm 46:10)

The Silent Retreat will be the only group on site. Participants will be able to enjoy all 170 acres of tranquility that Cedarkirk has to offer.

Adam Balic, Rev. Peggy Roy and Rev. John Fullerton have graciously agreed to lead the Silent Retreat. They are already hard at work planning for this spiritual event.

We all know how hard it is to hear God in the midst of our busyness, surrounded by all the noise that is

in our lives. We hope you can join us for the Silent Retreat for God to act within your life. Please visit our website for more details.

Save the Date!

**Cedarkirk
Homecoming
Retreat**

**September 2—4, 2016
Register online TODAY!**