

Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp

Compass Points

Welcome to the CP Trip Planning Guide! We're so excited to work with you this summer and want your group to having a truly amazing experience on the mountain. The intent of the CP Trip Planning Guide is to assist you, as a group organizer, in making your Compass Points backpacking trip a great one. The journey for your group starts now as your group plans and prepares for the adventure and we're here to help! Below you will find information gained from the hundreds of groups that have attended Rainbow Trail in the past. We know that each group is different, however we've found that the more of these practices you include in your pre-trip journey, the more your group will gain from the experience. This guide is designed to be broken up into 7 parts, starting with this one in November, and the others being sent out once a month so you've received the full planning guide before you start driving to Rainbow Trail. Please feel free to adapt and mold it to fit your pre-trip meeting needs, and as always, if you have any questions or need anything from me don't hesitate to ask!

Start The Journey Early

On trail it is important to get moving early in the day so that you can make it to your destination and have time to enjoy all of the amazing things you encounter along the way. The same is true when planning your trip. Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Hold a trip planning meeting (if you haven't already) to share information about the trip and the activity options that the group has to choose from. An outline for this meeting is included and has lots of information and links to forms that you'll need.
- **Get individuals to make a financial commitment when they sign up for the trip.** We ask for a \$100 per person non-refundable deposit (minimum 10 people) to reserve a charter. If you collect a \$100 non-refundable deposit from each participant you will not have to pay any money for your deposit from congregational funds. Individuals will also be less likely to back out later if they have made a financial commitment early.

Take The Lead

Every trip is better with great guides. You will need to fill this role in your congregation, and we'll help you through it. Keep information in front of kids on a regular basis, remind them to turn in their registration and deposit, and find time for the group to meet together to do pre-trip training and Bible studies.

The Adventure Begins

Set An “All-Day Pace”

While we are on trail, we work to set an all-day pace. This allows us to travel as a group, enjoy the company of one another, and comfortably travel long distances. Although your Compass Points trip may seem far away, there is a whole journey of preparations before you come to Rainbow Trail and we've found that setting that “all-day pace” when planning for your trip keeps it doable, fun and stress-free!

- As I mentioned before, once your charter is organized, it is important to keep the trip in front of your group. Try to experience something new about the trip at least once a month in the beginning. Starting in April or May try to put something in front of them about every two to three weeks.
- The following ideas are ways that other congregations have used to help kids keep thinking about the trip:
 - Messages in the bulletin
 - Articles in the church newsletter
 - Notes/postcards mailed to their houses
 - Go electronic! E-mail, Facebook, or Twitter!
 - Monthly trip planning meetings
 - Organized group hikes and fun workouts to get in shape
 - Group shopping trip to buy gear
 - Everyone Wear Their Gear to Church Day
 - Setting up installment payments so the participants can make small financial steps

We will help you through the planning process and provide regular correspondence that includes bible studies, sample meeting outlines, trip information, and ways for your group to shape the experience into something that is uniquely their own. The December Trip Planning Guide will begin monthly correspondence that will continue through May. We're looking forward to having you up here!

God's Peace and Happy Planning,

Pre-trip Planning Guide #1

Take It One Step At A Time

It sounds cliché, but every mountain is climbed one step at a time. Even as the air gets thinner and the steps get smaller it's amazing how they add up. Before you know it, you are looking over hundreds of miles of amazing beauty from a mountain peak that once looked so far away. Listed below are some little steps that will help you keep moving towards that mountain peak.

- **Individual Participant Registration Forms** -- If you haven't already had your youth fill out their Individual Participant Registration Form, now is the time to hand these out. Hand them out at a meeting and set a due date for your youth to return them to you. The completed registration forms are due to Rainbow Trail with your second deposit on **March 1st**. However, the forms are designed with a space to help you track what forms and deposits you've received so we recommend that you get them back from your youth as soon as you can. We can add or subtract individuals after March 1st if needed, but having these at an early date is incredibly helpful in our planning.
- **Newsletter Article** -- Share the experience with others in your congregation through an article in your January newsletter. It is important that the rest of the congregation is aware of the trip and knows a bit about it. It's also a good idea to include information about who will be going on the Compass Points trip. If there are still openings for your trip, this article may also be a great way to reach a few more participants.
- **What to Bring** -- Start thinking about any equipment you might need. Rainbow Trail will provide most of what is required but there are a few things that people may need to get before the trip. With Christmas right around the corner it's a great time to share with your participants the packing list for their Compass Points trip. Print copies of the "What To Bring" list and distribute it to all participants. Suggest that participants consider putting some items they need on their Christmas list. After Christmas sales are also a great opportunity to pick up some great deals and spend time together if you do a group shopping trip. If you would like to e-mail the list to people, individual forms are available at <http://www.rainbowtrail.org/compass-points/forms/>

Group Meeting Outline

1. Open with prayer – we will be praying a lot on trail and hope that youth and adult members of your group will be comfortable praying for the group. Instead of asking for a volunteer to pray, we will approach people prior to the prayer and ask them individually to pray. This is a great way to help people learn to pray out loud in a group setting.
2. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. You know your group better than we do, but we never assume that everyone knows each other well, or even all the names.
 - b. Explain the purpose of the meeting:
 - i. Start getting to know the group that is going on Compass Points
 - ii. Start the planning and preparation process and set a good “All Day Pace” The “All Day Pace” is one that lets the group travel at a comfortable pace and enjoy the journey along the way. It involves lots of little steps, even the biggest mountain is climbed one step at a time.
3. Hand out the [**Participant Registration Form**](#), if you haven’t done so already, and set a date for when you would like to have them returned.
 - a. We need a Registration Forms for each person, youth and adult, going on the trip.
 - b. They need to be sent in to us by **March 1st**. They are designed to help you track collected forms and deposits, we recommend that you get them as soon as possible.
 - c. Please make a copy for your own records, or in case they are lost in the mail.
4. Remind people of the individual deposits that need to be paid. We recommend that you get a \$100 deposit from each person as they sign up for the trip.
5. Hand Out the [**Compass Points Packing List**](#)
 - a. This explains both the what and the why of the items that you will need to bring with you, as well as tips on purchasing things that you might not have.
 - b. We know that Christmas Lists are being made and that there are lots of great sales going on in the next couple of months - this can help ease any financial hardship that might exist if some gear needs to be purchased.
 - c. The list is designed to cover everything that you might need during your trip. It is divided into sections for both onsite and on-trail. Before going out on trail your guides will help the group determine what from the list will actually go with you. The rest will remain safely in your housing at RTLC.
6. Have everyone share one thing about the trip that worries them and excites them.
 - a. Make notes (mental or on paper) of common or extreme excitements or worries.
 - b. If you would like help in dealing with them prior to the trip let the RTLC staff know.
7. Close with a prayer – try asking one of the youth before the meeting if they would pray for the group at the end. Encourage them with suggestions for the prayer if they are reluctant.