

Dear _____,

We are so glad you have chosen to minister this summer as part of our staff team! We trust that you will be blessed as you serve, and we invite you to give others the opportunity to partner with you by offering financial support for your ministry.

Highland provides salaried summer staff with room and board, plus a regular wage. If you work every possible day this summer, you can expect to earn about \$_____ in total from Highland. In addition to this regular compensation, salaried staff who can commit to attending pre-camp training and serving at least 4 weeks with campers are eligible to raise extra financial support through the Bless the Staff (BTS) program.

Participating in this program means asking your family, church, and friends to support your summer ministry, much like you would ask for financial support before a mission trip. Your supporters will make tax-deductible donations to Highland Retreat in your name, and 80% of the support you raise will be added to your final paycheck – up to the maximum of \$150 per week worked. The remaining 20% of each donation, plus anything you raise over your maximum, will go to help another staff member or to cover BTS program expenses.

If you do choose to raise financial support, think of it as an opportunity to exercise your faith, rather than a worrisome chore. Trust God to provide for your needs, and turn your concerns back to God through prayer. Ask for support in faith, and accept what the Lord provides with gratitude and grace!

Some suggestions for you as you raise financial support:

1. Lead with the mission. As you are communicating with people, tell them why you are choosing to serve, what your role will be, and how they can pray for you – and *then* give them a chance to support you financially. If you are sending letters or emails, this means including a personal note (see sample template) along with the general BTS donor letter (attached); you can follow a similar format if you speak to potential supporters in person or on the phone.
2. Get the word out before camp starts. The month of May can be a great time to let people know you will be serving at Highland. You probably won't have a lot of time to spare once camp gets in gear, and all financial support is due by August 1.
3. Ask for an opportunity to share with your home church. Get in front of your church family and tell them about your plans for summer ministry, then follow up by distributing support letters and putting a reminder in the church bulletin. If there are others from your congregation who will also be working at Highland, present a united front by teaming up to do this together!
4. Express your gratitude! After camp is over, report back to your church about the summer, send a follow-up email to your summer prayer warriors, and take time to send a personal thank you note to those who supported you financially (Highland will provide the necessary info). In each case, include a brief report of some of the highlights of your summer ministry. This is both nice for the present *and* helpful in paving the way for you or others to raise support again next year.

We will be praying with you and for you as you prepare for summer service, and we join you in faith that God will provide for your needs, financially and otherwise.

Sincerely,
Highland's year-round staff