

# LifeWay agrees on terms of sale for Ridgecrest

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NASHVILLE (BP)—LifeWay Christian Resources has reached an agreement to sell Ridgecrest Conference Center and Summer Camps to the Ridgecrest Foundation.

The two groups plan to complete the transfer of the North Carolina property and ministries by the end of 2020. Terms of the agreement were not announced.



Ben Mandrell

“God has answered our prayers by providing a potential owner who loves the ministries of Ridgecrest and wants to see the legacy of those ministries continue,” said LifeWay President and CEO Ben Mandrell. “From the beginning of this process, our intention was to find a buyer that would continue to offer a Christian conference center environment and the operations of the boys and girls camps.

“We’re thankful God has brought us the right steward for Ridgecrest’s future. I love this group’s heart for ministry and their desire to provide a place for spiritual transformation and discipleship.”

The newly formed Ridgecrest Foundation is an independent, nonprofit

ministry created by individuals “who are passionate about the mission of the conference center and camps and are committed to supporting the ongoing ministries of Ridgecrest,” Mandrell said.

## **Next chapter for conference center**

Representatives of the foundation expressed their appreciation for LifeWay and their excitement about the next chapter of Ridgecrest.

“We are incredibly grateful for LifeWay’s faithful stewardship of Ridgecrest Conference Center and Summer Camps over the past 100-plus years, and we have tremendous respect for LifeWay leadership’s integrity and approach during this process,” said Steve Little, a representative of the Ridgecrest Foundation, who lives in N.C.

“We feel honored and blessed to continue Ridgecrest’s God-glorifying legacy from LifeWay and to be faithful stewards of the impactful ministries of Ridgecrest Conference Center, Camp Crestridge for Girls, and Camp Ridgecrest for Boys into the future,” said Robin Thompson Parish, also of N.C.

“God began laying the foundation for this transition more than 40 years ago, connecting people who are passionate about the ministries of our summer camps and conference center,” said Art Snead, executive director of Ridgecrest.

“Both LifeWay and the Ridgecrest Foundation have approached this process in a God-honoring way, fully recognizing that Ridgecrest ultimately belongs to the Lord.”

Snead will stay on as president and CEO.

Ridgecrest Conference Center hosts guests throughout the year for various events involving churches, Christian associations, other ministries, families,

and individuals. In addition, Camp Ridgecrest for Boys and Camp Crestridge for Girls offer two-week sessions full of adventure and discipleship for 1st through 10th graders during the summer months.

Working with the Ridgecrest Foundation, LifeWay plans to continue using Ridgecrest Conference Center for future events including student camps, CentriKid and the Black Church Leadership and Family Conference.

“God has used Ridgecrest to impact countless lives for more than a century,” Snead said. “I’m thankful we will continue to provide purposeful hospitality at our conference center and amazing summer programs at our camps for years to come.”

## **Sale allows LifeWay to focus on ‘core ministry’**

LifeWay announced in April the intention to sell Ridgecrest citing changes in organizational strategy, rising costs and uncertainty due to COVID-19 as reasons for the transfer of the ministries and property.

During an April 23 board meeting, LifeWay trustees authorized a recommendation for the organization’s executive team to pursue viable options for the sale of the property and operations of its camps and conference center.

“The decision to sell Ridgecrest will ensure its future and allow LifeWay to focus on our core ministry,” Mandrell said. “Ridgecrest is well-positioned for future success under new stewardship, and we are working together with the Ridgecrest Foundation toward a strong ministry future—both in the short term and in the long term.”

Snead agreed.

“With the guidance and support of the Ridgecrest Foundation,” he said, “I believe our conference center and summer camps will impact many more lives for God’s glory in the future as we continue our current operations and explore new ministry opportunities.”