

May 25, 2020

Dear MUP & Mid-America Camping Families & Supporters,

Last week, a somber outdoor ministries team meeting took place. Sadness was palpable upon the faces of all leaders when we agreed that we **should not and will not host any regional camps this summer**. Due to the lingering presence and spreading of Covid-19 throughout Missouri, the risks of managing socially-distant, regularly disinfected, health-monitoring camps and still provide the spiritually-enriching, life-changing experience would be difficult, if not impossible.

The directors believe that camps could have been run in accordance with safety protocols but even the slightest risk of a camper, volunteer, camp staff member or guest transmitting the virus and bringing it back to churches with many high-risk members present would be more than anyone would want to chance in good conscience. Furthermore, three of our camp locations are not allowing any camps to be held, with another likely to choose the same. Low advance registration numbers tell us too that most of our families are leery on sending youth. Those who would be at camp deserve a full program.

We held onto hope and offer apologies if our relatively late final decision created uncertainty in your family's summer plans. **We wanted from the bottom of our hearts for camps to happen!!** Still, as last season's camp lessons taught us, in Christ's love, perfect peace transcends time and space.

Those who registered will receive full refunds. Just as importantly, we want all of our campers and volunteers to know that they remain in our hearts as we look forward to the best camping year ever in 2021. For this summer, all who attended camp last year or enrolled for this year will receive a special "totally camp gift" in the mail just to remind that even though we are "Socially Separated," we remain "Soulfully Connected." Should the late summer or fall provide windows of being safe to gather again, camp directors are looking into possibilities of limited day or weekend reunion or retreat gatherings. Stay tuned!

Thank you very much for your support and trust in our fantastic MUP & Mid-America Outdoor Ministries Camps and Programs. In Christ's love,

Rev. Dr. Paul Koch, Regional Minister, Rev. Zane Whorton, Camps Coordinator,
Jason Hilkerbaumer, MUP Director of Youth & Outreach Ministry