



Summertime Events Canceled

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Sandy, JoAnn and I convey our heartfelt best wishes to you as we continue our sojourn distanced from one another

I am writing you regarding our summer camping program events. Sunday May 3, we convened an Advisory Council meeting with the entire council in attendance by Zoom. We held a lively discussion concerning the camping program for 2020 and after some further thought and conversation by myself with others not on the council the decision is that we will cancel all camping for 2020; all youth camps, reunions and retreats.

This is our thinking:

- Unwillingness of parents to send campers due to the risk of infection. This is not universal, but is significant enough to reduce projected camp participation
- Directors who are unwilling to direct because of high vulnerability and risk of infection
- Gathering youth and families from various areas that have been experiencing different distancing protocols raises risk
- No way to monitor health adequately during camps
- Sanitization of camp facilities with limited volunteer help
- Continued sanitation during events
- Economic impact on church membership and friends who will not be able to afford camps, again not universal but significant enough to reduce participation.
- High risk to vulnerable campers and staff
- Moral implications should just one become sick and die because of our gathering

For these reasons we are canceling ALL camping program for 2020, this includes **all youth camps, reunions and retreats.**

There has been some discussion concerning some online gatherings for campers, which is being explored. If you have ideas and would like to be involved in online camp gatherings please contact the mission center.

Our next in person mission center gathering will be Mission Center Conference in Salt Lake City September 25-26, 2020.

It is not a sign of weakness or fear to wish to avoid unnecessary risk, especially when the stakes are so high. As a church we value all life and understand that in the sight of God, and therefore in our sight, each person is of inestimable worth. Our actions have taken many factors into consideration we have not taken these decisions lightly, while politics and rhetoric surround us constantly and some might think we are bowing to fear mongering and mass hysteria I feel that this decision is justified and the right one. History will bare the truth.

John G VanDerWalker II
Inland West Mission Center President