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September 15, 2020

A warm hello from Camp Caroline!

In my last letter to you I shared that we were preparing to be ready to re-open this month should the province enter Stage 3 of the Relaunch Strategy.

Anticipating we would need to have measures in place to re-open, I worked with our staff to implement protocols based on existing guidelines for those sectors most similar to our operations.

With no additional information on Stage 3 available as August was drawing to a close, I contacted Alberta Health Services to determine what we were permitted to do and what we were prohibited from doing. **After working with Alberta Health Services for the past few weeks, I received notice late last week that we were still not permitted to host overnight camps or retreats.**

This is certainly disappointing but not entirely unexpected.

Based on the current public health measures we will remain closed to overnight campers and guests for the rest of the year. Should these measures change before the end of the year we will evaluate the changes to determine our ability to resume overnight camps and retreats.

While we remain closed to overnight campers and retreaters, we are opening for day use. If your church is looking to get away for a day retreat or event we can accommodate groups of up to 50 people. You can contact Joel Runnalls, our Director of Hospitality at joel@campcaroline.ab.ca to book a retreat or event.

Until God sees fit to open the door for us to begin hosting overnight camps and retreats again, we will continue preparing to be ready to re-open at an adjusted capacity that can sustain operations during our recovery. **It is impossible to predict exactly how the ministry of the camp will be impacted following the pandemic but we are committed to continuing to steward the ministry.** There is



still a lot we do not know but with what we know right now we are expecting a significant decrease in income from bookings for at least the 2020-21 retreat and rental season. I will be working closely with the Board of Directors to draft an initial recovery plan this fall. We would like to have this plan in place as we begin 2021. In order to avoid depleting reserve funds or over-extending our ongoing financial commitments, we will need to adjust our anticipated costs for next year. While nothing has been decided to date we expect any plan for recovery will require further reductions to operational costs, including funding for our year-round staff team.

We are not panicked. We are prayerfully planning.



PRAY FOR US

I would invite you to be in prayer for us. As you pray for us, please pray for:

- 1) Wisdom, discernment, and direction as we prayerfully consider how God is directing us through this season and toward the next.
- 2) The camp's finances as we continue to cut any costs that can be avoided and to identify other potential sources of income to decrease the expected year-end deficit. We have continued working hard to decrease ongoing costs. Earlier this summer we were forecasting a deficit of \$400,000 by the end of December. At this time we have been able get that shortfall to \$250,000.

PRAISE / PRAYER ITEMS

A couple of praise/prayer items related to the camp's finances:

- 1) We are so **THANKFUL** for God's provision throughout this year. Thus far God has provided the necessary resources for us to manage our financial obligations and maintain cashflow without borrowing any funds.
- 2) You can continue praying for our grant application with the province's community initiatives program. In July we applied for a \$50,000 grant. This is a one-time grant designed to support camps that have closed due to the pandemic.

FINANCIAL GIFTS

If you or your church are able to give this fall, financial gifts received will help the ministry continue managing ongoing costs and be ready to re-open. Gifts can be made online at campcaroline.ab.ca/donation. Until we are able to reopen, we are asking that gifts be directed to the *General Fund* to allow us to maintain appropriate cash flow and manage ongoing costs.

We are committed to keeping you updated on how we are proceeding. You can stay up-to-date on our COVID-19 response by visiting us online at campcaroline.ab.ca/covid-19-response.

On behalf of our team and Board of Directors, **THANK YOU** for your support and prayer during this season.



Warmly,



Ben Trites
Executive Director, Camp Caroline
Jeremiah 17:7-8

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