



The Board of Directors
and staff team are committed
to seeking God's guidance and
direction as decisions are made.

November 9, 2020

A warm hello from Camp Caroline on a cold November morning!

This has been a year unlike any other and we have been in diligent prayer as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters. We believe wholeheartedly that God wrote the book on life and have been committed to seeking His guidance and direction as decisions are made.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God,
who gives generously to all without finding fault,
and it will be given to you.

- James 1:5



We are also committed to the health and safety of all our guests and staff. Please know that our team and the Board of Directors are taking this situation seriously and we are monitoring it closely.

Last month the Board approved a response and recovery plan to help us chart our course forward in faith. The plan identifies a series of guiding principles and ministry priorities. It also anticipates that we could be required to remain closed to campers and guests until spring (if not longer). Should public health measures change before spring we will evaluate the changes to determine our ability to re-open and resume operations sooner.

Until we are able to re-open and resume operations we have taken steps to properly care for the facilities. This fall our staff team has prepared the facilities to weather the winter months without campers and guests around camp. **At times it has been tremendously difficult to take these steps but we have done this with full confidence that God will see fit to open the door for us to welcome campers and guests back to camp in the near future.**

We have also begun carefully planning for the summer ministry season, praying for an opportunity to run either onsite or offsite camps in 2021. The planning for summer continues. We will make sure you know what we will be offering early in the new year. That being said, we will not launch registration in December as has been our practice in the past, instead we will hold off until we get into 2021.



Our planning for next year is taking into consideration:

- public health restrictions that may require us to adjust capacity;
- our ability to safely re-open and resume operations;
- our ability to maintain financial obligations;
- our ongoing stewardship of ministry assets;
- open communication with stakeholders; and,
- a prayerful dependence on God's provisions and direction.

Please join us in praying.

We are not panicked. We are prayerfully planning.

ADVANCING MISSION

You may recall prior to this public health emergency the Board had been prayerfully working through a long-range planning process.

Believing the ministry of Camp Caroline has been well positioned to be used by God in Central Alberta (and beyond) and that stewarding the ministry requires faithful commitment to obediently follow God's direction, the Board initiated this planning to discern God's direction for the future of the ministry. The early stages of this process included the establishing of a ministry map for the ministry; incorporating as a society; and applying for charitable status with Canada Revenue Agency. Once these items were in place the Board commissioned the Advancing Mission Working Group to engage stakeholders in a series of listening sessions.

The working group began working together in the spring of 2019. They reviewed and evaluated ministry programming using the ministry mapping, and participated in a series of listening sessions to prayerfully reflect on past ministry programming and priorities and to imagine potential ones for the future. The listening sessions were cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic but the working group was able to complete an abbreviated report with recommendations for the Board to consider.

You can download a copy of this report at campcaroline.ab.ca/advancingmission.

After reviewing the *Advancing Mission* report, the Board directed me to begin working with the staff team to implement the recommendations in the report. In the days ahead I will be working with the staff team to explore how these recommendations could help us advance the mission of the ministry.

As we consider these recommendations, I will also be looking for additional ways to hear from you. I would encourage you to take time to read this report and contact me with any comments, questions, or suggestions. While listening sessions were cut short this spring, we want to hear from you.

PRAYER UPDATE

Please join us in praying for the following as we look toward year-end and the new year:

- 1) Wisdom, discernment, and direction as we prayerfully consider how God is continuing to direct us through this season and toward the next.
- 2) Open doors to offer ministry programming in 2021.
- 3) Camp 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. Thankfully, we have been able to improve the year-end forecast. Presently, we are forecasting a deficit of less than \$175,000 by the end of December.
- 4) 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. We expect to receive a response to our grant application this month.
- 5) Continue praying that God will provide for the needs of the camp as we step into 2021. We are so **THANKFUL** for how God has been meeting the needs of the ministry this year. Thus far God has provided the necessary resources for us to manage our financial obligations and maintain cashflow without borrowing any funds. As we look to 2021 we want to manage our financial obligations, maintain cashflow, avoid borrowing funds for operations, and begin rebuilding reserve funds so we are well positioned to respond to future ministry opportunities.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

I want to assure you that we have taken steps to avoid depleting reserve funds or over-extending our ongoing financial commitments. Thus far, we have:

- Implemented an immediate spending freeze;
- Applied for the Canadian Emergency Business Account and Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy;
- Applied for a Community Initiatives Program grant;
- Laid off 23 (of 29) year-round staff;
- Not hired seasonal or summer staff;
- Implemented a hiring freeze;
- Reduced operational budgets by 51%; and,
- Used less than \$175,000 in operational reserves.

While we will need to use a significant portion of the remaining reserve funds, our response and recovery plan does not expect to deplete operational reserves.

FINANCIAL GIFTS

We believe the church should be the primary place each of us give and want to encourage you to give to your church first. If after giving to your church you have the means and desire to help camp financially, we welcome your gift as 2020 draws to a close. Financial gifts received will help us steer the ministry through this season and toward the next. Gifts can be made online at campcaroline.ab.ca/donation. At this time we are asking that gifts be directed to the *General Fund* to allow us to maintain appropriate cash flow, manage ongoing costs, and direct funds to those areas most in need as we look to the future.

Again, we are **SO THANKFUL** for **ALL THE WAYS GOD HAS BEEN PROVIDING** in the past and throughout this year. Over the years, He allowed the ministry to build up the reserve funds we now need. And, as we look ahead to the future, we have every confidence God will continue to provide what is needed for the ministry of the camp.

Those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
- Psalm 34:10b

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power that is at work within us,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations,
for ever and ever! Amen.

- Ephesians 3:20, 21

Therefore, we will look to Him as we move forward in faith. We are confident He is guiding and directing.

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



Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Trites', written over a white background.

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

Visit us online at campcaroline.ab.ca/covid-19-response for information on our COVID-19 response.