

May 18, 2020



Dear Friends of **Miracle Bible Camp**,

I want to share with you an important announcement that I thought I would never have to make. It is with a heavy heart that I must communicate that Miracle Bible Camp is cancelling our 2020 summer resident youth camps due to concerns over COVID-19. Our camp board has met several times this year (internet video conference). We have prayed, discussed, evaluated, researched, and prayed some more. Yesterday, May 17th a unanimous vote was taken to cancel all 2020 resident youth camps. At this point, we believe we cannot provide campers with the experience they have grown to love at Miracle Bible Camp and still abide by local, state and federal guidelines.

The fluid nature of COVID-19 has made long-term decision making difficult. Our governor's most recent presentation (May 13) projects that COVID-19 will peak around the end of June to early July in Minnesota. We think it is important that we obey the ruling authorities God has placed over us and intend to follow their directives to us (Romans 13:1-7, 1 Peter 2:13-17). We must obey unless we are asked to violate Scripture (e.g. Acts 5:29). Restrictions on crowd gatherings with social distancing and the realization the virus has not peaked yet means we would be greatly limited on how we could operate our camp.

Even as we announce these cancellations, we are already making plans for alternative ministries. We will be phasing in a reopening of camp based on key "Ministry after COVID" principles including protecting the most vulnerable, cleaning to meet CDC standards and cooperating with governing authorities. We are still planning August family camps (church and MBC) and fall retreats, and we hope to be able to offer some creative youth programming soon. **Watch your email, our website, Facebook and newsletters** for updates.

What about registration fees that have already been paid? If you have already paid the deposit or full camp fee for 2020, you have three options. **First**, you may receive a full refund. We understand the economy is tight right now and you may need every dollar to make ends meet. **Second**, you may roll over the funds to a future retreat or camp. **Third**, you may make your money a tax-deductible gift to camp. The lack of summer youth ministry will greatly affect the camp's financial position; your donation of the camp fee back to camp would be greatly appreciated. Please email or call MBC and communicate your desire for how your summer camp registration fees are to be used (email mbcamp@uslink.net, phone 218-682-2714).

What will the summer look like? It will be incredibly quiet without campers at MBC! We think it is prudent to put our limited energy, time and resources into completing various projects at camp this summer rather than focusing daily on monitoring the current status of COVID-19 in MN and what our governing authorities are advising or mandating. We, in essence, are observing "Jubilee" by giving the grounds a summer of rest. But in doing so we will continue to make facility improvements and maintenance improvements. We will be putting together work projects that day groups (currently 10 and under) can come and work on. There are plenty of landscaping, exterior stucco / rock work, carpentry and other jobs that we hope to get done this June and July. Please call or email your desire to work at camp and we will coordinate it.

Finally, I want you to know we will be praying for the young people who come to Miracle Bible Camp; please pray for us, for the year-round staff, and for the summer staff who are disappointed at losing this vital ministry opportunity. We already miss catching up with you and connecting as you share about your hopes, dreams, fun and how the God of the Bible is guiding your life. I want you to know that I would be glad to listen to your thoughts, concerns and questions; just email or call camp. In the meantime, we will seek ways to continue to "SHINE!" for Jesus and his Kingdom through Miracle Bible Camp (Matthew 5:16)!

In Gods service

Doug Payne, Director

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