



April 22, 2020

Dear Friends of Camp Whitman,

It has been just over a month since we last wrote to you regarding COVID-19 and its impact on Camp Whitman's programs and our community. We hope that your family remains healthy and is finding ways to stay connected and active during this time.

**While we wait, we remain hopeful.**

During these last weeks we have been monitoring the spread of the disease, reaching out and connecting with our local health departments as well as experts throughout the camping industry. The safety and health of our campers, guests and staff remains our highest priority at Camp Whitman. We are currently awaiting draft guidance from the CDC (expected soon) regarding safe operation of summer camp programs for this coming summer. The American Camping Association has assigned a panel of experts who will be working to operationalize these guidelines for camps. Once this guidance is provided, our staff and committee will be thoroughly reviewing this information to determine if we feel as though opening Camp Whitman this summer (and how and when) is in the best interest of the safety and care of all of our staff and campers. For now, we continue to wait, pray and trust that our path will be clear when it is time to make this decision.

**Camp is needed more than ever.**

Waiting is the most difficult part of all of this. The uncertainty, that what-ifs, that what-if nots are really, really hard. So is the aching for community, connection and being amongst one another. These are pillars of the camp experience, and we hope that we can provide this for our campers and staff this summer. We know that it will be needed more than ever.

Camp will mostly likely be different than ever before. This will be an adjustment for all of us, but we are working hard at Camp Whitman to be prepared to best serve our campers in whichever form camp takes this summer. We are preparing our grounds, our procedures and our staff training programs to serve campers on site, if possible. And we are designing alternative plans for camp this summer, if that is needed. Some possibilities include: family programs at camp, travelling day camps brought to your community, virtual camp experiences, programs that can be mailed to your homes, and more. As we know more about what experiences are possible we will share all of these options with you. We will continue to review and revise our plan in cooperation with the New York State Department of Health, and monitor

guidance from the Centers for Disease Control as additional COVID-19 guidance is provided. **We aim to make a decision about camp on or around May 15.**

**You don't need to worry about your camp deposits or payments.**

There are many things to worry about right now, your camp deposit doesn't need to be one of them.

- If Camp Whitman runs this summer but you need to cancel your registration due to illness or concerns related to COVID-19, you will receive a full refund (including deposit).
- If Camp Whitman makes the decision to cancel a program, you will receive a full refund (including deposit) or you may choose to have us hold your deposit for the 2021 camping season or make the deposit a tax-deductible contribution to Camp Whitman. Your choice.

**What can you do to help?**

**Pray**

Hold the Camp Whitman staff and committee members in prayer. Pray for those who have been affected by the virus, particularly those who are sick. Pray for those who are financially affected, as well as those who are socially and emotionally isolated during this time.

**Give**

If you are certain enough in your personal financial situation and can [make a gift](#) to Camp Whitman at this time, please do, bringing people together to build community is important now, and will be even more important as we look beyond this crisis.

**Follow us on social media**

If others ask you about Camp Whitman or how they can help, please share this update with them. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Thank you for being part of our camp family. We will continue to keep you updated as new information becomes available. If you have any questions or concerns, you are welcome to contact me at (315) 201-0193 or [director@CampWhitman.org](mailto:director@CampWhitman.org).



Lea Kone, Camp Director  
Camp Whitman on Seneca Lake