

A DIFFICULT AND HISTORIC DECISION

Tuesday, April 28 will go down in the history books of Intermountain District Camping. That is the night that on a Zoom call, the District Camps Board assembled to make a very difficult decision. In 1930 at a District Assembly held in Emmett, Idaho, the idea of conducting a summer camp for young people was birthed. Summer camps in one form or another have been held since that time according to the history we have been able to find. The move to Trinity Pines in Cascade happened in 2000, now in 2020 an unbelievable decision was reached by the leaders serving on the Camps Board (pastors and laymen) to not hold district-sponsored camps in June and July. The calendar for this summer was full with five district-sponsored camps from June 8 - July 17. I watched as the board listened to reports from our insurance company, legal and medical advice, analyzed a survey of the camp directors and pondered federal and state guidelines. Finally, the time had arrived for a decision. While the evening was filled with, "what if" questions and speculation, rumors and shared facts from a variety of sources, the final decision was to cancel all 2020 district-sponsored camps. Prayer started and ended the meeting, but there was great anxiety and consternation on the faces of those participating. It was not a hasty decision and was not without a great deal of deliberation. April 28 will remain a pivotal point for Intermountain District Camps.

Many board members have been through prior difficult decisions, such as: purchasing a large parcel of land in Cascade (later to become home of Trinity Pines), going from a seasonal to a year-round camping facility, leaving Victory Cove (home for over 70 years), selling the Garden Valley property and other tough decisions related to personnel, finances, indebtedness and other trials. Now things as head lice, campers sick with stomach flu, trips to the medical center, bed-wetting, and homesickness all seem minor in comparison to the magnitude of cancelling camps. All of a sudden, we found summer camps in the category with yearbook signings, proms, graduation ceremonies, weddings and funerals - CANCELLED or postponed.

The environment of the board meeting changed during the meeting. These camp leaders were used to looking at positive year-end financials, hearing how many new stakes had been driven in Stake Garden, reviewing applications for employment and revising blueprints to get the very best facilities and buildings at the camp. Now, all of those decisions seemed in the distant, faded past - *they had just decided to cancel camps for the summer of 2020.*

Since that date, additional research has taken place, guidelines have been reviewed that were released by the Center for Disease Control, and some states bordering Idaho have extended their stay at home orders. The Executive Committee has been on several calls with the national organization CCCA (Christian Camp & Conference Association).

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CONCLUSION: While we are challenged, reflective, and see some obstacles, we are moving forward with deep faith and remaining nimble to adapt to the changes ahead. Our main goal is to uphold the mission: **Providing a unique retreat and camp environment that allows for the transforming of lives into the nature and character of Jesus Christ.** We reflect on how God has blessed us through the years. We will weather this storm and be ready for the path ahead. This chapter will be one for the history books. Our monthly expenses around \$40,000 remain to be a challenge with no rental income. It seems like a steep financial mountain to climb but we know the foundation of that mountain is built on the Lord's provisions in each of our lives. We greatly appreciate your faithful support and investment in Trinity Pines during this challenging time.

CAMP MONTHLY

TRINITY PINES CAMP + CONFERENCE CENTER

CASCADE, IDAHO

MAY 2020

The calls are discouraging as we hear of camps that not only closed for the summer, but appear they may close **FOREVER**. These camps are dealing with financial difficulties, pending environmental concerns with aging sewer and water systems, and lack of volunteers and support by camp partners during this crisis. Trinity Pines established the Sustainability Fund for loss of property, aging equipment that may fail like furnaces, vehicles and kitchen equipment, but never for something called the Coronavirus (pandemic) that would cause a rash of cancellations in our calendar.

Disappointment, despair, and frustration have been the theme of the past few weeks - but not lack of faith. We rely on the prayers and financial support of our camp partners. Already I am seeing a few extra dollars added to checks from our regular monthly supports and a few new names making their way into the deposit book. We are a non-profit organization and therefore we live and die by the investments from you, the partners, and our rentals. When we lose the income from rentals and reduce expenses as far as we can, we still have financial obligations that must be met. That is where our faithful and new camp partners come into the picture. Without you, we would be in a horrible, terrible situation.

Please continue to **pray**, invest, **pray**, contribute, **pray** and support Trinity Pines. We count on our camp partners to sustain us through this crisis.

May your life be blessed.

Rick Waitley
Executive Director

PROGRESS CONTINUES: Since we first arrived at Trinity Pines, over 21 years ago, we have continued to add sleeping capacity to the camp facility. This has resulted in need for additional staff members to handle programs, cleaning and food service. Housing for interns and seasonal staff has always been a challenge. We have used RV's, the old farmhouse and even above the shop to house staff. In the fall, the Camps Board made the decision to remodel the space above Mountain Lodge and create two apartments and restrooms for seasonal staff. The board studied the use of the space and determined it was underutilized and that converting the upstairs conference room space to apartments would be cost effective and more efficient. That project started during the winter months and is nearing completion.

SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN: Many of you are familiar with summer feeding programs for children that take place in a nearby park or at Boys and Girls Clubs or perhaps at schools during the off-season. Since school closed, Cascade has identified a number of families out of work and with limited food availability. Trinity Pines, recognizing that our summer looked different, has been in contact with the State to determine if we might qualify as a site to fill the need of providing a meal daily to children 5-18 years old. This program is reimbursed by USDA funds. The application is under review at this time.

PAVE THE WAY

PAVE THE WAY: We have started construction on the Pave the Way project. We were not able to get to this project earlier because of the high demand on construction workers at the time and the additional cost. The waiting process has allowed us to open up the opportunity for you to still put a paver in this project. The pavers will be located at the west entrance to the Conference Center. Enclosed is a card that provides more detail. We need to know before **June 1** if you would like to have your name placed on a paver. We look forward to hearing from you and would like to have as many Trinity Pines partners included as possible.

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SO WHEN WILL YOU OPEN THE DOORS?

That is the million-dollar question. We have a number of factors at play:

What will food service look like? We are reviewing all of the guidelines from the Health District related to post coronavirus operations. Since we have Health Inspections, we have mounds of paperwork to review and work through.

What about sanitization? Probably like many of your homes and offices - the camp has always been clean but, not necessarily, what would be deemed sanitized to a specific standard. That also is under review. We have compared our cleaners and disinfectants that are in inventory against an "approved list" from EPA to fight viruses. The majority of the products from our inventory were not on the list - I found the same situation in my office and home. However, in working with vendors that supply these types of products, we are being told that we can be placed on a wait list.

Inventory issues: Food and cleaning supplies are a challenge at this time. As restaurants begin to re-open, there appears to be a rationing of products based upon demand. We may order five cases of a product and be told by the supplier that each account is only allocated three cases. Sound familiar? It's much like many of the products you are requesting in your daily life at stores and drugstores.

Types of rentals: One of our challenges is maintaining community, meaning not being able to mix rental groups. Trinity Pines has had an exclusive use policy in place for many years with a base number to have the camp to yourself. More often than not we are mixing groups: 2-4 that are compatible in their use of the facility. That is called mixing community and for a period of time it appears this will not be allowed.

Staffing: While staff is in place for ongoing operations, most of you are aware of the addition of seasonal staff, interns and volunteers, each summer to accommodate larger groups. While the larger groups will not be coming for a while, the new challenge is all the extra cleaning and food service requirements - like not allowing you to get your own beverage but having someone at the beverage bar that "takes your order and fills your cup or glass." That is a new demand on our workforce. At the same time, because of the season, we have yards to mow, weeds to fight, brush to clean from winter, and other ongoing seasonal maintenance for the protection and upkeep of the camp.