

SOUTH GEORGIA CHURCH OF GOD
SUMMER CAMPS UPDATE

Let me begin by saying Tara and I are praying for you! Whether your family has experienced the direct impact of the coronavirus pandemic, or is struggling through the broad impact this is having on all families, we are believing God to sustain you and your children throughout this crisis!

That impact has extended deeply into the calendar of the Youth and Discipleship ministry calendar, which is why I am writing to you today. Nothing says student ministry to me quite like summer camp. From the Spirit-filled worship filling the Tabernacle and students packing the altars, to kids cannon-balling into the pond or shooting 3s in the gym, South Georgia Church of God Camps are powerful, essential events that have shaped generations for Christ in our region!

With that, it is with great sadness to announce that, after much thought and prayerful consideration, we must cancel the Summer 2020 camp season. The sweeping ramifications of this health crisis, from the suspension of school for our students to the cancellation of public gatherings for our churches, have made it all but impossible for us to move forward as we had hoped at this time. The well-being and safety of each and every camper is of our utmost concern, and their health and protection stands at the heart of every Spirit-led decision we make. There simply isn't a healthy and responsible way to conduct camp in this current climate.

Before making this decision, I consulted with our State Youth and Discipleship Board to exhaust all possibilities and consider all ideas of how to have camp. Given the ever-shifting nature of our state and federal guidelines, and the lack of a dependable timetable for a relaxation on large public gathering limitations, the Board and myself agreed unanimously to forego the 2020 camp season in the face of such uncertainty.

We did not make this decision lightly, and feel the weight of sadness and disappointment alongside you and your students – in particular the Senior Class of 2020, which has lost so much already. We waited as long as we did to give every scenario possible a chance to succeed, but in fairness to you – and your ability to plan and fundraise for camp – we agreed the time had come to make a decision. We thank you for your understanding as we all navigate this uncharted waters together.

For those who already paid camp deposits or other funds, you will be credited back the full amount no later than May 15, 2020.

We are currently crafting plans on how to resume ministry events once the current state and federal orders are lifted. We are continuing to monitor trends and consult with medical professionals, ministry leaders and local and state leaders to determine the best and safest plan moving forward.

While we know all the options in the world cannot take the place of the South Georgia Camp Experience, we also know that nothing will stop us from coming back stronger than ever before!

Blessings,
Justin D. Sharpe
State Youth & Discipleship Director
South Georgia Church of God