Edition

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Community of christ

Greater Pacific Northwest-USA Mission Center

*Do not neglect the smallest among you, for even the least of these are treasures in God's sight. Receive the giftedness and energy of children and youth, listening to understand their questions and their wisdom. Respond to their need to be loved and nurtured as they grow.” —Doctrine & Covenants 161:4a*

Youth Camp

Staff Manual

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

GREATER PACIFIC NORTHWEST-USA MISSION CENTER

Youth Camp Staff Manual

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Community of Christ

Greater Pacific Northwest-USA Mission Center

Version 2 update 2022

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Chapter

1

INTRODUCTION

# Letter from the GPNW USA MC Camping Ministries Director

Dear Youth Camp Staff Volunteer:

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hank you so much for your willingness to take a leadership role at one of our youth camp experiences in the Greater Pacific Northwest-USA (GPNW) Mission Center. We designed this manual to give you an overview of our youth camp program. Inside, you will find chapters on planning, policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, and much more that will help as you prepare to provide youth camp ministry. This information is helpful for all of our youth camp staff, whether you are the Camp Director, Camp Pastor, Camp Cook, Cabin Counselor or Teacher.

Our camps have a rich heritage in the Northwest. The experiences that have taken place at our youth camps have transformed the lives of many campers and staff. Relationships have been formed that last a lifetime. We are very thankful for those that have come before us to help pave the way.

From the Community of Christ Website ([www.cofchrist.org](http://www.cofchrist.org)):

*The first Community of Christ youth camp was held in Nauvoo, Illinois, June 20-30, 1928. Its mission: “…to make a real contribution to the development of character and leadership; to live religion without continually emphasizing it.” Representative campers between the ages of 14 and 18 were encouraged to come from jurisdictions around the church. The cost was $14 U.S. dollars, $1 per day for room and board. The girls stayed in the Nauvoo house, and the boys camped in tents along the shores of Mississippi River. Their basic schedule was actually quite similar to camps today: meals, worship, classes, swimming, special events, and campfire. The power of camping was expressed quite well by those who worked to bring together that first youth camp in 1928.*

*In camp, as perhaps in no other place, our boys and girls may learn to give and take—in order that as a group they may successfully live together. The value of out-of-door life can hardly be overestimated. Away from the everyday life to which they are accustomed, in the new surroundings with new interests, and in different company, most boys and girls are usually sensitive to the finer things in life. Under these conditions, a leader is able to get closer to the boys and girls than at almost any other time. A summer camp brims with realities. Artificialities just seem to drop away. Social barriers dissolve. Distinctions in dress, in financial status, and in personal importance cease to exist. There are real and satisfying experiences and sensations that soothe tired nerves and awaken new and unthought-of-interests.*

As you can see, what we currently strive to offer our youth is very much in alignment with what the first Community of Christ youth camp sought to offer. What we do today is happening because of the legacy given to us by those that served and/or attended youth camps before us.

Our camping program must look towards the future, while being focused on the needs of the children and youth of today. We seek to offer sustainable youth camp experiences where we present and model the message of Jesus Christ in ways that are relevant to our children and youth. We recognize that many who are young turn away from faith because of harmful misrepresentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through our youth camps, we can provide a safe place where the youngest among us come to recognize the powerful truth that is resident in the healthy and just message of Jesus Christ. Youth can come to realize that Community of Christ is a faith community that is seeks to be a welcoming church for them and their peers.

So let us take the wisdom and experience of the youth camp tradition and couple it with a transforming vision that continues to seek new ways to bring the experience to children and youth in the 21st century. Thank you for your willingness to volunteer at our youth camps. You are a blessing, and we could not do it without YOU!

Special thanks to the 2013-2015 Youth Camping Team representatives, Camp Directors, Karen Beckman, and other Mission Center leaders for their assistance and input into the creation of this manual. It is an ongoing working document that we will continue refine and add to as we continually strive to improve our camping program in the Northwest.

Peace In!

Sean Langdon, Mission Center Camping Specialist

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# GPNW Youth Camp Overview

The Greater Pacific Northwest-USA (GPNW) Mission Center offers a rich heritage of youth camp ministry. We design our youth camps to help children and youth feel accepted and welcomed in an environment where they come to know the love of God. They are a place where young disciples are formed and prepared to be sent to serve in the world, just as Jesus Christ served. Children and youth learn more about what it means to have a healthy relationship with self, others, God, and all of creation. Moreover, we do all of this while having a lot of fun!

We offer 11 campground-based summer youth camp experiences for boys and girls who are in elementary school, junior high/middle school, and high school. We also offer two traveling youth camp experiences: Caravan–Youth Venture for Christ and Spectacular (SPEC)/International Youth Forum (IYF).

We determine camper attendance eligibility by which grade they will enter in the fall of the school year following the camp.

## Lewis River Campground

Lewis River Campground is located in Yacolt, Washington. Youth camps offered:

* **Camp Zarahemla (Camp Z)** —5 days/4 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 3-6
* **Junior High Boys Camp**—6 days/5 nights, for junior high boys entering grades 7-9; takes place at Lake Hosmer in Central Oregon
* **Junior High Girls Camp**—6 days/5 nights, for junior high girls entering grades 7-9
* **Senior High Camp**—a blended camp experience with Remote Campground youth at Remote Campground. (See below.)

## Remote Campground

Remote Campground is located in Myrtle Point, Oregon. Youth camps offered:

* **Kids Camp**—4 days/3 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 3-5
* **Junior High Camp**—6 days/5 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 6-8\*
* **Senior High Camp**—6 days/5 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 9-current year graduates

*\* Boys and girls entering ninth grade may continue to participate in Junior High Camp at Remote Campground if they are not ready to move on to Senior High Camp. If they choose to do so, they cannot also attend Senior High Camp that year.*

## Samish Island Campground

Samish Island Campground is located in Bow, Washington. Youth camps offered:

* **Camp Genesis**—3 days/2 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 3 and 4
* **Camp Mungai**—7 days/6 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 5 and 6
* **Camp Kluane**—7 days/6 nights, for junior high girls entering grades 7-9
* **Camp Chimacum**—7 days/6 nights, for junior high boys entering grades 7-9
* **Camp Kimtah**—7 days/6 nights, for boys and girls entering grades 10-current year graduates

## Caravan – Youth Venture for Christ

Caravan is a traveling youth camp ministry that focuses on forming young disciples about fulfilling the Mission of Jesus Christ. This ministry is for those currently in grades 9-12. Between the months of January and May, youth and staff gather for one weekend each month in “huddles” at various locations throughout the Mission Center. During these huddles, they practice a program based on that year’s theme, get to know each other, and check-in on requirements to complete before the trip. Every summer, Caravan embarks on a 9 day/8 night road trip, traveling to a different location each year. During the trip, they bring ministry to Community of Christ congregations through their program, build relationships, and provide mission ministry in the communities to which they travel. Every five years, Caravan plans a big trip opportunity for campers and staff.

## Spectacular (SPEC)

SPEC is an 8 day/7 night traveling youth camp experience in Community of Christ for those in Canada and the United States. SPEC is held at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa. It features opportunities in worship, leadership, music, sports and arts. Boys and girls in grades 10-12 and current year graduates are eligible to attend. Our campers and staff participate as part of the Northwest Delegation. On non-IYF years, they spend a few days in Independence, Missouri before SPEC, getting to know each other, practicing sports and quiz bowl, visiting the Community of Christ auditorium and temple, and engaging in other fun events.

## International Youth Forum (IYF)

IYF takes place every four years at Community of Christ International Headquarters in Independence, Missouri, for the 4 days/3 nights prior to SPEC. Boys and girls in grades 10-12 and current year graduates travel from around the world for this worship, small group, and fun experience. Our campers and staff participate as part of the Northwest Delegation.

# Youth Camp Descriptions and Best Practices

## Elementary Camps

Elementary camps offer campers an introductory experience to learn more about their relationship with God, Jesus, and others. We teach basic Christian values of love, respect and kindness, as well as living in community with others. Additionally, elementary camps offer an opportunity for fun through nature, crafts, games, and team building.

**Best Practices for elementary camps:**

* Model Jesus as Friend
* Remember that this is an introductory experience to the camping program, so some kids will have a harder time adjusting to being away from home
* Present basic ideas about being in relationship with God, Jesus, and others
* Teach values such as love, respect, and kindness to others
* Introduce the principles of Disciple’s Generous Response
* Demonstrate that fun can be spiritual, and spiritual can be fun
* Celebrate God’s gift of nature
* Teach them how to recognize and celebrate blessings
* Provide basic opportunities for learning how to give back
* Present an introduction to living in and exploring what it means to be a part of the community
* Provide activities that are fun and educational
* Provide worship experiences that meet the needs of this age group
* Ensure that the camp experience is consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message, Mission and Beliefs. Inclusion of the Enduring Principles and using scripture appropriately is especially important.

## Junior High Camps

Junior high camps offer a rich experience of growing in relationship with God, Jesus, and others during a very important formational period of a child’s life. At a time when kids start to question their understandings, our junior high camps provide a safe, loving place to address their questions and thoughts. We teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a way where the child learns about a loving God that does not judge, but offers grace. At junior high camps, they learn that a relationship with their Creator can fun as well as transformational.

**Best Practices for junior high camps:**

* Model Jesus as Sojourner
* Be aware that there may be value in separating boys and girls—whether it is different camps or separation for certain activities at the same camp
* Realize that this is an important formational age—you have an opportunity to help shape their values and beliefs
* Affirm and teach the principles of Disciple’s Generous Response
* Be sensitive to the fact that this age group has some deep thinkers—be aware and respectful of that
* Offer a variety of fun and educational activities to help meet the different needs of the campers
* Offer basic spiritual practices for experiencing the presence of God
* Teach and model the Gospel of Jesus Christ
* Ensure that the camp experience is consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message, Mission and Beliefs. Inclusion of the Enduring Principles and using scripture appropriately is especially important
* Create opportunities for creating, experiencing, and building a sense of community
* Help campers ask the right questions in life
* Provide opportunities to teach about Community of Christ Enduring Principles, Mission Initiatives, and Sacraments
* Model behavior that reflects the grace and love of God
* Help the kids understand the importance of self-worth, as well as recognizing the worth in others
* Provide worship experiences that meet the needs of this age group

## Senior High Camps

Senior high camps continue to further the deepening of that connection with self, others, and God. We teach them to have an awareness and appreciation of the blessings they experience. Our senior high camps provide a safe place for them to struggle with the complexities of life, while nurturing personal and communal growth. It is here where they learn to be real with themselves and others. There is a focus on Discipleship Formation by learning more fully about scripture, mission, and the nature of God.

**Best Practices for senior high camps:**

* Model Jesus as Lifelong Advocate
* Provide an opportunity to deepen connection with self, others, community and church
* Facilitate an experience that deepens their connection with God through the teaching of theology, understanding of the Sacraments, and engaging in spiritual formation practices
* Model and teach the principles of Disciple’s Generous Response
* Create opportunities for Discipleship Formation
* Teach what it means to be a Generous Disciple
* Provide leadership formation opportunities
* Provide worship experiences that meet the needs of this age group
* Prepare campers to enter adulthood with confidence, life skills, and faith that brings assurance that God is always with them
* Provide opportunities for fun
* Engage in missional outreach opportunities
* Allow the youth to experience nature in a way that creates appreciation and a sense of awe
* Help campers understand the importance of self-worth, as well as recognizing the worth in others
* Offer creative expression opportunities (e.g. crafts, activities, performing arts, etc.)
* Allow campers to be themselves and real with one another. This includes being accepting of differences. As campers tend to pull away from their masks, their differences will emerge. Campers and staff alike need to embrace acceptance.
* Ensure that the camp experience is consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message, Mission and Beliefs. Inclusion of the Enduring Principles and using scripture appropriately is especially important
* Recognize that campers are more willing to be open about what is going on in their lives in a camp setting. Be prepared to respond appropriately.

# Youth Camping Team

The GPNW Youth Camping Team oversees the youth camping program. This includes our 11 campground youth camps, as well as our two traveling camps (Caravan and SPEC/IYF). The main purpose of this team is to help the Mission Center Camping Specialist create a vision for the future and to uphold policies and procedures. The Youth Camping Team may create sub-committees at times to work on specific camping program projects. The Youth Camping Team serves under the direction of the Mission Center Camping Specialist. The Mission Center Camping Specialist selects the representatives in consultation with the Mission Center President, and the annual Mission Center Conference sustains the team. A representative serves an annual term and may be invited back to serve consecutive term(s).

**Youth Camping Team structure:**

* Mission Center Camping Specialist
* Lewis River Campground—3 representatives
* Remote Campground—3 representatives
* Samish Island Campground—3 representatives
* British Columbia—1 representative
* Ex-Officio—GPNW Mission Center President and Financial Officer

**Youth Camping Team member requirements:**

* Active in congregational life
* Community of Christ Registered Youth Worker (RYW)
* Must have been on youth camp staff for at least three years
* Must not be a current Camp Director
* Respected among camp leaders

**Youth Camping Team member job description:**

* Offers ministry of vision to help sustain and grow the future of our youth camping program
* Helps create and uphold policies for the youth camping program
* Participates in Camping Team meetings, area meetings, and Camp Directors meetings
* Assists the Mission Center Camping Specialist with recruiting Camp Directors for the area they represent
* Assists in making youth camping decisions for the campground area they represent
* Advocates Registered Youth Worker and risk management guidelines
* Assists in the planning for, and participates in, annual trainings

Chapter

2

PLANNING A YOUTH CAMP

# Camp Planning Timeline

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amp planning for the following year should begin as the camp is ending. Here is a suggested timeline to aid Camp Directors in planning your youth camp experience. Find more information on each topic following the timeline:

## Summer

* Take inventory of camp materials after camp. Create a shopping list of the essentials that you will need for next year.
* Take an initial poll of the staff you would like to invite back to see who might be interested in serving again.
* Send a card to the campers of the current year’s camp experience that includes an invitation to the camp they are eligible to attend the next year.
* Email a minimum of 10 photos from your camp experience to the Mission Center Camping Specialist. We especially need photos that represent a variety of experiences at camp, as well as a variety of people represented in them. (Please note that we may not use all pictures submitted.)

## Fall

* By October 1, confirm your primary email address (or the one you would like to use for camp related email).
* By October 1, confirm your primary phone number. (We will only publish a primary phone number, but it would be helpful if you would like to provide a secondary phone number for the Mission Center Camping Specialist.)
* Begin to lift up your camp intentionally in prayer: prayer for direction, the overall experience, staff and campers.
* Begin to develop a theme and direction for your camp. Submit camp theme to Mission Center Camping Specialist by December 31 for approval.
* Begin to recruit staff.
* Encourage current and future staff to attend workshops and training sessions provided throughout the year.

## Winter

* By December 31, submit your camp theme to the Mission Center Camping Specialist.
* By January 20, submit a brief (three sentences) description of the youth camp.
* By January 20, submit any special item(s) the camper needs to bring to camp (i.e. white t-shirt for tie-dye, etc.).
* Create the budget for your camp.
* Receive and review the Year-End Report. How will the survey results, financial report, and other information help inform your planning?
* Create and send a “Save the Date” postcard to eligible campers for your camp. High school camps should also start utilizing social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
* Continue to recruit any staff roles left to fill.
* Create the schedule for the camp. Begin to think about and plan for the special events that might happen at your camp
* Have a planning session with the Camp Pastor. If applicable, invite any other members of your camp’s leadership team as well. This helps get the leaders of your camp all on the same page as you move forward with planning.
* If desired, request a representative from Graceland University for your camp using the online request form.

## Spring

* Create and send a flyer or brochure for your camp with camp specifics and registration information, along with a letter of invitation to all eligible campers.
* Set up a meeting with your camp staff for group planning and become acquainted with the direction of the camp. Also, use this time to review Registered Youth Worker policies that are pertinent to your camp experience. Hold meetings in person, via teleconference, or by using Skype or other Web conferencing program.
* Ask and notify your staff of any specific activities you would like them to lead or assist with at camp.
* Notify the Mission Center Camping Specialist of any assistance you need in recruiting those final staff members.
* Communicate special meal requests to the Camp Cook(s). This could include meal plans for any special events happening at camp.

## One Month Prior to Camp

* Early Bird registration closes: remind any campers that plan to attend of the need to register.
* Begin to finalize plans for camp.
* Ask your staff for any dietary concerns of which the Camp Cook needs to be aware.

## Two Weeks Prior to Camp

* Registration closes: any additional campers can only register at your discretion.
* Send an email welcome letter to parent(s)/legal guardian(s). Call to share the information or mail the letter to families who do not have email.
* Check-in with staff to make sure they are prepared.
* Assign campers to cabin groups.
* Create and assign work assignments.
* Email staff a copy of the staff registration form and ask them to bring it completed to camp.
* Notify the Camp Cook of any special dietary needs or restrictions for campers and staff.
* Notify the Mission Center Camping Specialist if your camp plans to leave the grounds for an outing.
* Email a list of your staff and their email addresses to the Mission Center Camping Specialist and the Mission Center Financial Assistant.

## Before Leaving for Camp

* Make sure you have physical copies of all the registration forms for your Camp Nurse. You may want a copy for yourself as well.
* Print off copies of the schedule for your staff and to post around the campground and in the cabins.
* Contact the Mission Center Financial Assistant for any missing registration forms so she can email them to you.
* Relax, breathe, and center yourself. It is going to be a GREAT camp experience!

## Before the Campers Arrive at Camp

* Have a worship service with your staff to help center and support them before camp.
* Have a staff meeting to review the camper list and address any of their concerns so the staff is confidentially aware.
* Have the staff settle in their cabins before the campers arrive.
* Get the registration line set up.
* Prepare the campground for camp.
* Check campground for damages that occurred before camp.

## During Camp

* Collect receipts and prepare the reimbursement forms for you and your staff.
* Provide visionary leadership that embodies the worth of all campers and staff.

## After Camp

* Have a post-camp meeting on the last day of camp before the staff departs or within a month after camp. This can happen in person, teleconference, or Web conference.
* Mail or email any original registration forms collected at camp to the Mission Center Financial Assistant. (Forms from campers who did not mail their registration form prior to camp.) After this, shred your copies of camper and staff registration forms and delete the registration forms from your computer.
* Ensure that all reports are complete and forms turned in to the appropriate Mission Center leaders.
* Mail or email a copy of your camp log to the Mission Center Camping Specialist and Mission Center Financial Assistant.
* Submit photos from your camp to the Mission Center Camping Specialist. These will be used in future promotional materials. Make sure that none of the photos you include shows a child whose parent(s)/guardian(s) did not sign the “Photo Release” on the registration form.
* If you choose to do a personalized camper and/or staff survey for your camp, then please provide the Mission Center Camping Specialist with a copy of it. This helps the Mission Center receive a larger picture of your camp experience.
* Complete the online Mission Center Camp Director Survey. The Mission Center will email you a link to take the survey. Your staff and the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of the campers will receive one, as well.
* Begin to prepare for next year’s camp.

# Before Camp

## Selecting a Theme

Choose a camp theme that reflects your vision for the camp experience. The theme should also reflect Community of Christ Identity, Message, Mission, and Beliefs. The theme offers guidance for you, your staff, and the campers for the week. Choose a theme that exemplifies the focus needed by the youth for which you are planning. Try to choose a theme that is welcoming and inviting. Submit your youth camp theme to the Mission Center Camping Specialist by December 31, for review before communication to a larger audience.

Choose daily themes that help guide everyone through the camp experience during your time together at camp. The daily theme should reflect or be connected to the camp theme. Daily themes are important to help bring focus to the different components of the camp theme. It is also helpful to choose daily scriptures that reflect the theme. This helps bring focus for that day.

## Budgeting and Setting Camp Fees

For disciples, budgeting is an important part of stewardship, and therefore is integral to the planning process for camps. Create a budget for your camp based on income and expenses from the previous year, as well as any new or different expenses anticipated for the current year. Make sure to look at whether your camp’s net income was positive, negative, or broke even the previous year, so you can adjust as necessary to create a sustainable budget with positive net income. You should not create a camp budget that results in negative net income. To ensure this, you may need to consider whether the camp is overstaffed or has too many expenses planned. To assist you in the budgeting process, a budget form is available from the Mission Center Camping Specialist.

***Refer to “Budget and Financing” and “Setting Camp Fees” for further information on these topics.***

The Mission Center Camping Specialist works with the Mission Center Financial Officer to determine the camp fees. They look at trends for your camp, financial information from previous years, and whether fees have been raised at the host campground.

## Program Development

Begin early in developing your camp experience. What do you envision as the flow of the week? How will your camp events reflect the theme you chose for the experience? Do you have adequate opportunities for worship, discussion, learning, and play? What special events or activities will your camp have that make it unique and stand out?

Consider the heritage of the camp. What are the traditions? Are those traditions still relevant today? Are they something the campers will look forward to and would miss not doing? Are they appropriate for today’s culture? Do they uphold the worth of all the campers?

Plan a schedule that reflects the needs of the age group the camp serves. For example, an elementary camp would have an earlier daily start time than a high school camp because younger kids tend to get up early, while high school youth are used to sleeping in during the summer. Additionally, a younger age camp may require more activities that help them burn energy.

***Sample schedules can be found in Chapter 5.***

Be sure that your camp has a focus on living out the Message and Mission of Jesus Christ. Consider the ways that your campers and staff can have opportunities where they can engage in tangible mission-focused opportunities. It is important that our youth learn at a young age what it means to live for all in community, and not just what serves the best interest of self.

Remember that one of the things that matters most to the campers is relationships. Consider how you can plan a camp that helps foster the creating and/or sustaining of healthy relationships among them. They will be creating friendships that will last a lifetime.

As you develop your camp program, consider who should be on staff that would help live out the vision you have for that camp experience.

## Year-End Report

Every winter, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will create and email you a Year-End Report. This report will include the following information:

* Current and recent financial data for your camp
* Camp Director, staff, and parent/guardian survey results
* Goals/feedback from the Mission Center Camping Specialist for this year’s camp experience
* Mission Center-wide survey data
* Upcoming events and announcements that are pertinent to your role as Camp Director

Please review the Year-End Report. A Camp Director originally requested its creation, and it should be a helpful tool for you. Consider how the survey results, financial report, and other information will help inform your camp planning.

## Mission Center Communications

The Mission Center offers communications for our youth camps via Mission Center-wide “Save the Date” postcards, posters and camping booklets. We also communicate via the weekly email *NewsBrief* and the printed *Chinook* newsletter. Additionally, we provide a campground-specific flyer that you can use as a recruitment tool to advertise camps in the local communities near your campground.

***Refer to the handout in Chapter 5 for more information on Mission Center Communications.***

To help with accurate communications, be sure to turn in all requested information to the Mission Center Camping Specialist on time. (See the Camp Planning Timeline and emails from the Mission Center Camping Specialist for due dates.)

## Recruiting Campers

In addition to the promotions that the Mission Center provides, it is important that you work to recruit campers. This would be a good role to assign to one of your staff members if you do not have the time or passion for this aspect of camp planning.

**“Save the Date” Postcard or Letter**

The winter prior to camp, send a post card or letter with the initial “Save the Date” information. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will email you eligible camper lists. Limit information to important particulars only. If possible, include pictures from camp the previous year. Email materials to the Mission Center Camping Specialist for review before distribution. If for high school camp (maybe junior high), create an event on Facebook to help get the word out. This is an easy tool for youth to invite friends to come to camp. You might consider other social media tools as well, such as Twitter, Instagram, Vine and more.

**Communication with Potential Campers and/or Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

Send out in spring, with plenty of time for the camper to make arrangements and register, but not so early that it slips off their radar. Include the following: camp specifics; what to bring; what to expect; Eventbrite registration link; registration form (or link to find it); Camp Director contact information; and the Two-for-One discount information. Email materials to the Mission Center Camping Specialist for review before distribution.

***See Chapter***

***Chapter 5 for example letters.***

**Welcome Letter to Camper**

Email a letter to campers with last-minute reminders about what to bring, what not to bring, beginning and ending times, where the camp is located, camp policies, etc. Ask them to let you know of any important medical information left off the registration form. Mail the letter to those without a working email address. Be sure to email materials to the Mission Center Camping Specialist for review before distribution.

**Be Successful in Recruitment**

* **BE VISIBLE**—go to worship, Mission Center events, etc.
* **Designate a communications staff member**—designate one of your camp staff to handle all the communications for your camp. Select an individual based on skill, not just someone “filling” the role.
* **Get to know the potential campers and their parent(s)/guardian(s)**—go to congregational events, Mission Center events, etc.
* **Use age-appropriate words/phrasing**—use appropriate language for the campers you are targeting. Know your audience!
* **Reflect Community of Christ values and beliefs**—communications should use Community of Christ language, but not Community of Christ jargon, so all can easily understand the material.
* **Target grandparents, aunts and uncles, etc.**—go to congregational worship, Mission Center events, etc.
* **Communicate the Two-for-One Camper Discount**—promote this resource!

**And Don’t Forget…**

* **Use Community of Christ logo/branding**—you are putting on a Community of Christ camp. “Community of Christ” MUST be on your communications material.

***The church logo, stationery and more can be found at*** [***www.cofchrist.org/visual-identity***](http://www.cofchrist.org/visual-identity)***.***

* **Recruit Non-Community of Christ Campers**—consider advertising to non-Community of Christ groups and individuals. Our camps are cheaper than most organization’s camps. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appreciate being able to send their child to a Christian camp for a reasonable price.
* **Submit for review**—all flyers/brochures, letters, postcards, etc. should be reviewed for content and clarity. Email to Mission Center Camping Specialist for review before distribution.

## Recruiting Staff

You are responsible for recruiting an adequate number of responsible volunteer staff. Consider the different staff roles needed. These include Business Manager, Camp Pastor, Camp Nurse, Camp Cook, Cabin Counselors, etc.

Some guidelines for staff recruitment:

* **Staff members MUST be Registered Youth Workers.**
* **Staff members MUST be at least three years older than the oldest camper** (five years older STRONGLY preferred).
* **Registered Youth Worker applicants must be associated with Community of Christ for at least six months.**
* **Staff members should share a testimony of Jesus Christ**—we offer Christian camp experiences. Staff members need to be people who follow Jesus Christ and can share a personal testimony of that relationship with the campers.
* **Start early**—start recruiting during the previous camping season. Specifically target in late fall, when vacation dates are being set. Many people have to put in their vacation requests by the end of the calendar year.
* **Be constant and consistent/follow up**—if someone says “maybe,” then follow-up as appropriate.
* **Be creative**—who is not normally utilized at camps that would be a good fit? Think “older” generation, not just young or middle-aged adults.
* **Talk to other Camp Directors throughout the Mission Center**—who can they suggest be on staff?
* **Volunteer survey**—refer to the GPNW Volunteer Survey results for ideas.
* **DO NOT SETTLE**—Start early to ensure that you are utilizing staff that “make sense” for your camp. Do not get to a point where you have to settle for a “warm body” to make sure you have adequate staff.
* **Mentor new staff**—Assign a seasoned staff member to mentor new staff prior to and during camp.

## Requesting a Graceland Representative

If you direct a senior high camp, you can request a Graceland representative to staff your camp. Graceland University pays for their travel, but the camp’s budget would need to cover all camp fees related to them being on staff. You are also obligated to coordinate the Graceland representative’s ground transportation to and from the airport. Graceland attempts to coordinate air travel that reflects the start and end time for camp, but representatives often have to arrive a little late and/or leave early in the morning the day that camps ends. It is rare, but also possible, that a Graceland representative would need to leave camp a day early to fly to their next camp. Graceland University cannot grant all requests. Contact the Mission Center Camping Specialist to assist with this process or for more information.

***More information and the request form can be found online at*** [***www.graceland.edu/news-events/campreunion-registry.cfm***](http://www.graceland.edu/news-events/campreunion-registry.cfm)***.***

## Camper Registration

Campers register for camp online through Eventbrite or by printing a registration form from [www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/youthcamps](http://www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/youthcamps), filling it out, and mailing it in to: Attn: (name of camp), Community of Christ, 10013 NE Hazel Dell Ave. #249, Vancouver WA 98685.

The Early Bird registration deadline is four weeks prior to the first day of camp. A registration form and payment MUST be completed and turned in to the Mission Center by this date to qualify for the discount. A verbal confirmation of intention to register does not qualify for the Early Bird discount, even from parent(s)/guardian(s) who are staffing your youth camp.

The regular registration deadline is two weeks prior to the first day of camp. Campers must turn in registration forms and payments by this date to ensure attendance at camp. After the registration date has passed, a camper may only register for a camp if approved by you, the Camp Director.

Review registration forms as you get them. Look for medical needs that could affect the planned events at camp. Follow up with parent(s)/guardian(s), if needed. Also, look for food allergies of which to make the Camp Cooks aware.

Shred all camper registration forms after camp, as they contain sensitive and confidential medical information. You must also delete all electronic versions of the registration forms from your computer.

## Staff Registration

All staff members should fill out a staff registration form and turn it into the Camp Director. Find registration forms online at [www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/youthcamps](http://www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/youthcamps). Give a copy of the forms to the Camp Nurse, as they contain medical information. We recommend the Camp Director email the staff registration form to staff prior to camp so they can bring it with them completed and ready to turn in.

***See the back pocket of the manual for a copy of the registration forms.***

Shred all staff registration forms after camp, as they contain sensitive and confidential medical information. You must also delete all electronic versions of the registration forms from your computer.

## Assigning Mentors

Assign all new staff members a mentor who is a seasoned staff member. This would be someone they can reach out to before or during camp when they have questions about their role at camp. Being a first-time Cabin Counselor can be overwhelming for a new volunteer. It is important that they know they have support.

Assign all Junior Cabin Counselors (“CIT’s” – Counselors in Training) a mentor who is a seasoned Junior Cabin Counselor or Cabin Counselor.

## Planning Meeting for Staff

Have a planning meeting for staff prior to your camp experience. A planning meeting allows you to share your vision for the camp experience, review the week’s schedule, highlight specific activities or events at camp, and review Registered Youth Worker policies that would be pertinent to your youth camp experience. It also offers an opportunity for your staff to get to know each other briefly, express where they might like to be involved, and for you to suggest additional activities that meet their gifts and passions. Hold this meeting in person, via teleconference, or via Web-conference (e.g. Skype).

***You can sign up for a teleconference number at*** [***www.freeconferencecall.com***](http://www.freeconferencecall.com)***. The service is free, but callers may incur long-distance charges.***

## Cabin Assignments

Form your cabin groups once the registration deadline has passed. Consider which campers should be together and which ones should not be in the same cabin. If someone is bringing a first-time friend, make sure both are in the same cabin. If that friend has come to more than one camp, then you may consider splitting them up in cabins but keeping them together for work assignments or other group activities.

Consider which Cabin Counselors to assign to which campers. Some Cabin Counselors may work better with a certain population of the campers. It is important that our cabin groups be diverse, but that we create them in a way that meets their needs.

## Work Assignments

This is one of the last things to do before camp. Check in with the campground Caretakers and Camp Cook to see what work assignments the campers will need to complete. Create diverse working groups that have a mix of boys and girls from different cabin groups. Assign Cabin Counselors to be work group leaders. You might also assign staff members to be work leaders as well.

***Refer to the samples in Chapter 5, Additional Resources.***

## Camp Materials

Things to pack:

* Toiletries
* Feminine products
* Towels
* Sleeping bags/blankets & sheets, pillow
* Sunscreen, bug spray
* Flashlight
* Camp supplies
* GPNW Youth Camp Staff Manual

Create a camp binder with the following items:

* Hard copies of the registration forms
* Budget
* Cabin assignments
* Extra copies of forms (Reimbursement, Incident Report, and Registration)
* Work assignments
* Mission Center On-Call Support Contact Calendar
* Schedule for the week with themes and staff assignments

Be sure you and your staff label personal items that you let others borrow.

# During Camp

## Staff Preparation

The time that the staff has to be together at the campground before campers arrive is crucial to the camp experience. Some of our youth camps have a 24-hour block of time for the staff to prepare. Others youth camps only have a couple of hours together before campers arrive.

Staff members use this time to settle in their cabin, run to town to get last minute purchases completed, and bond with other staff. This is an important time to make sure the campground is adequately prepared for the arrival of campers. If you find anything that is broken or out of place upon your arrival, make sure to let the Caretakers know immediately. You might consider how you can make the cabins more welcoming for the campers. Consider decorating them or adding personal touches so that they are more inviting. Post on the cabin door a list of the campers and staff that will be staying there during the camp.

Be sure to hold a staff meeting prior to the arrival of campers. Review any last minute changes to the schedule or planned events, review the camper list, and share any concerns that a staff member may have about a camper. Additionally, share with staff any medical, behavior, or emotional concerns listed on the registration forms or that came directly from the parent(s)/guardian(s). If you did not previously review the Registered Youth Worker policies that are pertinent to the youth camp experience, do so during this time.

Equally important as the staff meeting is a time for the staff to worship together. Have the Camp Pastor, or other staff member, plan a worship that welcomes them to the camp experience. It may be appropriate for the staff to experience the Sacrament of Communion together as you begin the camp.

Stay calm and be flexible. Last minutes changes will often come up. It will be important to adapt quickly to these changes so they do not hinder the overall experience.

## Welcoming Campers/Registration Line

It is important to greet and welcome campers and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to camp. Consider strategically placing staff near the parking area or other common areas. The camper should first come through the registration line with their parent(s)/ guardian(s).

**Example registration line:**

1. Camp Director greets the family and reviews the contact information on the form.
2. Business Manager verifies that the camper paid in full or collects any outstanding balance.
3. Camp Nurse reviews medical information, collects all medications, and checks for lice. It is especially important to check for lice at kids camps.
4. Assistant Camp Director or other staff member collects anything that the campers should not have on them during the week and gives them a nametag. Seal anything taken from the campers in a zip-lock bag with their name on it and place in a secure location away from campers. Make sure the child knows that it will be secure. This person could also let them know in what cabin they are.
5. Direct the family to their cabin to drop off their belongings. Have Cabin Counselors near the cabins, ready to greet campers and show them where to go. Make sure you give instructions to the campers as to what to do next.
6. Encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to say their good-byes during this time and then depart camp. It is important that parent(s)/guardian(s) do not linger on the first day of camp. An exception to this may be for elementary camps that have kids who are experiencing leaving their parent(s)/guardian(s) for the first time. Have a discussion with those parent(s)/guardian(s) of children with anxiety or homesickness to develop a strategy for making their attendance at camp successful.

## Daily Staff Morning Devotions

It is important that there be a short devotional focused on your daily theme planned for your staff every morning. This helps the staff center themselves for the day. The Camp Pastor or other designated staff member can lead these. Some camps may choose to utilize one of their other staff members as a Camp Pastor. A Staff Pastor may also lead these devotions.

Identify a staff member who can float around where the campers are during this time. Ensure that they are never in a location where they might be in a room or building with no other staff.

## Daily Staff Meetings

It is important that your staff gather daily for a meeting. This can be in the morning just after or before the staff morning devotions or at another appropriate time during the day. Use this time to review the daily schedule, make pertinent announcements, and address any camper issues. This is also a good time for staff to share joys and concerns about the camp experience.

Identify a staff member who could float around where the campers are during this time. Ensure that they are never in a location where they might be in a room or building with no other staff. Make sure that staff has someone identified to share the information from the meeting with them.

## Discipline

We need to handle discipline at youth camps in a way that observes the worth of all. Discipline should bring unity to the body and allow safety for all campers and staff. Public shaming is not appropriate, and we do not allow corporal discipline at youth camps. See the procedures under the “Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures” for how you should handle sending a camper home, if needed.

# After Camp

## Mission Center Reporting

Within a few days of camp ending, send the following information to the Mission Center Financial Assistant vie email or mail:

1. Notification of new on-site registrations/payments
2. Registration forms received during registration at camp (remember to shred all additional copies of registration forms after camp, as they contain sensitive information)
3. Payments received during registration at camp
4. An updated copy of the spreadsheet that the Mission Center Financial Assistant emails you prior to camp, with updated/completed camper information (address, phone, email, grade, date of birth, congregation)
5. Staff information regarding how many days each staff member was at the campground

## Mission Center Surveys

Following camp, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will email a Mission Center survey to Camp Directors, all camp staff, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of campers. It is important that they complete these surveys in a timely manner so that we can capture the most accurate information. The Mission Center will use the information collected to help plan for the next camping season. It also helps the Youth Camping Team identify any long-term planning goals. Additionally, the survey results will help Camp Directors prepare for the following year’s camp. The Mission Center will communicate the survey results to Camp Directors as they plan for the next year’s camp experience.

## Staying Connected With Campers

It is encouraged that each camper receive a card or note following camp - a simple reminder of the experience they had with blessings for the upcoming school year. This can also serve as a “Save the Date” opportunity for next year’s camp. If the camper is moving on to a different camp next year, then include the name of that camp with those dates. Consider providing Cabin Counselors with labeled and stamped postcards for them to mail to their campers mid-year.

For the current year’s graduates, the note can be a blessing that God be with them as they move on to other life experiences. This is also a great opportunity to remind them that there is always a place for them within Community of Christ; you can use this as an opportunity to invite them to stay connected with Young Adult Ministries. The Camp Director, Camp Pastor, or their Cabin Counselor may send the card or note.

## Thanking Your Staff

It is important that your staff know how much you appreciate them! It is a good practice of gratitude for you to send a thank-you card to each of your staff members within a couple of weeks of camp.

## Staff Debriefing

It is good practice to have an opportunity for your camp staff to debrief from the camp experience. Gaining their insight and wisdom from the events of the week will help you plan more efficiently for the next year. There are a few suggestions for when this could happen:

***Go to*** [***www.surveymonkey.com***](http://www.surveymonkey.com) ***to set-up a free account for easy online surveys.***

* Morning staff meeting on the last day of camp
* Staff meeting immediately following camp
* In-person staff meeting within a month after camp
* Teleconference or Web meeting
* Online survey

Chapter

3

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

# Leadership Teams

C

ompassionate & caring disciples respond to the call to staff our youth camps. It is important that we choose people who reflect a variety of gifts and demographics to staff our camps.

***See “Recruiting Staff” in***

***Chapter 2.***

It is encouraged that all Camp Directors create a Leadership Team of at least three people to assist in the planning of camp. It is especially important to include the Camp Pastor on the Leadership Team. An Assistant Camp Director or Business Manager would also be appropriate. There are a few reasons for why a Leadership Team is important for a successful camp. Those reasons are:

* **Unity in Diversity:** When we closely plan these sacred camp experiences with others, it allows for a variety of perspectives to be involved. We are able to see how campers and parent(s)/guardian(s) can interpret what we plan through the lenses of our peers in youth ministry. Using a small group of committed people to help plan the camp experience can also help ensure that activities are planned which help meet a wider variety of personality types. We recognize that a wide variety of campers comes to camp, and therefore it is appropriate to plan our camp experiences with a wider variety of people.
* **Delegation:** You can delegate many tasks to others. There is so much to do that it can seem overwhelming to complete all the tasks while also trying to create a quality camp experience. Having a Leadership Team to delegate tasks to can help the Camp Director be more efficient, while also being less stressed and more focused on the preparations for the camp experience.
* **Avoid Burnout:** Being a Camp Director is a lot of work. A Leadership Team helps create a support system. It is a great joy to direct youth camps. We want to make sure our Camp Directors continue to recognize that joy.

The three primary camp staff roles are Camp Director, Camp Pastor, and Cabin Counselor. Following is a list of the qualifications and best practices for these roles.

## Camp Director

**Qualifications:**

* Be a minimum of 21 years of age
* Have previous youth camp staff experience
* Be a member of the Greater Pacific Northwest-USA or Canada West Mission Centers
* Live in the same campground area that they are serving as Camp Director in, preferred
* Be active in a Community of Christ congregation
* Have a working email address for communications with Mission Center, youth camp staff, and camper families.
* Be a Community of Christ Registered Youth Worker (or be willing to become one)
* Be familiar with Community of Christ beliefs (i.e. Enduring Principles, Scripture, etc.)
* Model behavior consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message and Mission
* Have the ability to uphold the purpose of Community of Christ youth camps
* Have the appropriate energy, flexibility, and patience needed to work in a camp setting
* Demonstrate that he/she is an appropriate role model for children and youth
* Have the ability to listen and respond to camp leaders
* Understand the need to be a team player and work well with others

**Best Practices:**

Camp Directors are the primary supervisors at Community of Christ youth camps. They oversee all aspects of the camp they are directing. Being organized is vital to being successful. There are many deadlines and lots of planning involved with putting on a camp. They start a year in advance to begin the work of recruiting an appropriate number of staff, deciding on a theme that is supportive of Community of Christ beliefs, creating a program that connects the theme with the focus of camp, and helping to recruit campers creatively to come to camp. They create goals for the camp. Camp Directors effectively communicate those goals to the staff, as well as all other expectations they have.

Camp Directors act as servant ministers at camp by responding to a variety of tasks and concerns. They also know how to delegate roles and responsibilities to others. When recruiting staff, they invite people that represent a diversity of different gifts, skills, and ages. They recruit staff to help with roles that may become too overwhelming for them to complete. This may include an Assistant Camp Director, Business Manager, or Camper Recruitment Coordinator.

Camp Directors follow all Risk Management and Youth Worker guidelines to ensure a healthy, safe camp experience for all. This includes the immediate follow-through of GPNW Community of Christ Mandatory Reporting guidelines. They also must ensure that all staff is following the appropriate rules and regulations. This includes planning for a pre-camp staff meeting to review those rules and regulations, as well as engaging the staff in the planning process so they are well prepared for the camp experience. A Camp Director must demonstrate maturity, which includes the ability to take constructive criticism and discern the appropriate response. Camp Directors must act professionally to uphold the dignity of self, as well as the camp, Mission Center, and Community of Christ.

## Assistant Camp Director

A Camp Director may choose to recruit an appropriate person to be their Assistant Camp Director. If a Camp Director chooses to find an assistant, then it is important that they consider the qualifications and best practices that the Mission Center seeks in a Camp Director.

## Business Manager

It is important that all camps have a Business Manager. More than likely, this person would also be the Assistant Camp Director or one of your Cabin Counselors. We recommend that the Camp Director not be the Business Manager, but it is okay if that is what the Camp Director prefers.

The Business Manager would be in charge of collecting registration payments made at camp, processing any reimbursement requests, etc. They may also take on other roles as agreed upon between the Camp Director and Business Manager. They would be responsible to communicate proper reporting with the Mission Center before, during, and after camp.

## Camp Pastor

**Qualifications:**

* Be a priesthood member, preferred
* Be a Community of Christ Registered Youth Worker (or be willing to become one)
* Be familiar with Community of Christ beliefs (i.e., Enduring Principles, Scripture, etc.)
* Model behavior consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message and Mission
* Have the ability to uphold the purpose of Community of Christ youth camps
* Have the appropriate energy, flexibility, and patience needed to work in a camp setting
* Demonstrate that he/she is an appropriate role model for children and youth
* Have the ability to listen and respond to camp leaders
* Understand the need to be a team player and work well with others

**Best Practices:**

The Camp Pastor’s primary role at camp is to offer a ministry of presence. They help set the tone for the camp as a spiritual experience to encounter God while in community with one another. Do not overburden Camp Pastors with too many responsibilities. They should be available to listen and talk with the campers, as well as help the Camp Director in handling difficult situations that arise at camp. They are a resource to the Camp Director for ideas, guidance, direction, and wisdom. They offer insight to the Camp Director and staff as it relates to the spiritual health of camp, before, during, and after the experience together. The Camp Pastor observes and responds to the emotional and spiritual needs of both the campers and other staff. Prior to the camp, they should intentionally uplift the camp experience in prayer. They act as a sideline coach and offer counsel to campers, when appropriate.

It is important for the Camp Pastor to be familiar with Community of Christ beliefs, scripture, etc., and incorporate that into the life of the camp. Use Community of Christ scripture appropriately as a way to reflect the nature of God and teachings of Christ, while lifting up the importance of living in community with others. The Camp Pastor may lead the theme class or other appropriate class. They also coordinate the worships and work together with staff and campers, when appropriate, to plan those experiences. They may also assist with evening devotions, assist with end of the day theme thoughts at campfire, and coordinate spiritual development opportunities.

# Additional Staff Roles

Many other important roles are vital to the camp experience. Some of these roles are necessary for you to have camp. Other roles are optional based on the needs of your camp experience. You will need to recruit staff that reflects what your budget can handle. It is important that you do not staff your camps with more people than what your budget justifies. Remember that all youth camp staff needs to be Registered Youth Workers with Community of Christ.

## Cabin Counselor

**Qualifications:**

* Be five years older than the oldest camper, preferred; three years older than the oldest camper, required
* Have a connection with Community of Christ (e.g., friend, seeker, member)
* Be a Community of Christ Registered Youth Worker (or be willing to become one)
* Be familiar with Community of Christ beliefs (i.e., Enduring Principles, Scripture, etc.)
* Model behavior consistent with Community of Christ Identity, Message and Mission
* Have the ability to uphold the purpose of Community of Christ youth camps
* Have the appropriate energy, flexibility, and patience needed to work in a camp setting
* Demonstrate that he/she is an appropriate role model for children and youth
* Have the ability to listen and respond to camp leaders
* Understand the need to be a team player and work well with others

**Best Practices:**

Cabin Counselors are often the primary relational contact with the campers at any given youth camp. The main purpose of a Cabin Counselor is to have a supervisory role with campers. Cabin Counselors help supervise the health, safety, and well-being of the campers, while also demonstrating a compassionate and fun demeanor. They (co-) lead cabin groups, lead work groups after meals, and ensure that the kids are where they need to be at all times. Cabin Counselors also actively participate in the life of the camp. They attend the classes with the youth and may even lead some of them. They follow and understand the Youth Worker guidelines, which may include following Mandatory Reporting procedures. Cabin Counselors are volunteers, but must act in a professional way so that the campers, parent(s)/guardian(s), and fellow staff respect them. This also means that they must be dependable and follow through with commitments. This would include setting aside connections to home life, unless necessary in order to be fully present at camp. This means refraining from the personal use of electronic communications (e.g., cell phone, computer, etc.).

Cabin Counselors are also there to provide a supportive relationship with the campers. They should have a love for working with children and youth. It is important that they use their gifts and skills to help encourage and develop the campers in their relationship with God. This may require that Cabin Counselors stretch themselves at times to be able to respond to the needs of the campers. Cabin Counselors should use humor appropriately and in a way that makes the campers feel comfortable and at ease. They join other staff in the commitment to embrace all the diversity that is present in the campers at camp.

## Camp Nurse

All campground youth camps and Caravan are required to have a Camp Nurse on staff. We also recommend SPEC Northwest Delegation have a Camp Nurse on staff. A Camp Nurse is highly recommended, but not required, for Caravan huddles or youth weekend retreats.

From the World Church Website:

*All camps and reunions, excluding retreats, must have at least one of the following on duty at all times, in order of preference:*

* *Licensed Medical Doctor (who is willing to provide his or her own insurance)*
* *Physician's Assistant*
* *Nurse Practitioner*
* *Registered Nurse (RN)*
* *Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), with first aid training*
* *Paramedic*
* *Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)*

#### ***All licenses must be current.***

*Medical staff at camps and reunions must be licensed in the state where the campground is located and in each state where activities are to take place. Medical professional requirements differ among government jurisdictions. It is the responsibility of the campground boards and Camp Directors to understand and follow all local and state requirements.*

## Lifeguards

Enough certified Lifeguards to ensure safety must guard all water-related activities. There should not be unguarded areas during water activities. A Lifeguard must show proof of certification before their first time on duty through one of the following:

* American Red Cross Lifeguard Training or Advanced Lifesaving
* YMCA Lifeguard
* Lifeguard BSA
* The National Lifeguard Service’s registered Lifeguard certificate (Canada)
* The Royal Life Saving Society’s Canada Bronze Medallion and aquatic instructor’s certificate
* Water Safety Instruction (WSI) certification
* Equivalent certification
* Lifeguards may come to camp for only the period of time that they are needed. They may also be a staff member serving in another role, such as a Cabin Counselor

Chapter

4

POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

# Camp Preparation

## Youth Camp Themes

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amp Directors choose a theme that reflects their vision for that year’s camp experience. The theme should reflect Community of Christ beliefs and values. The Camp Director should submit the youth camp theme to the Mission Center Camping Specialist by December 31. The Mission Center Camping Specialist the Mission Center Camping Specialist needs to review all youth camp themes before communication to a larger audience.

## GPNW Camp Email Addresses

All GPNW youth camps have their own forwarding email address (…@cofchrist-gpnw.org). The Mission Center will use only these email addresses as a contact option when advertising our youth camps. The Mission Center will not advertise personal email accounts. This will help us remain consistent, ensure a professional and official appearance for our youth camps, and protect your personal email addresses from spam. We encourage Camp Directors to use these emails when doing your own communications for the camp you direct.

Our youth camp email addresses are forwarding addresses. This means that they forward all emails sent to that the address to the Camp Director’s personal email account. There is no need to check for camp email separately.

## Music and Video Licensing

You may use recorded music and/or videos, printed music, or projected song lyrics at camps and other events if you obtain and display the appropriate licensing. The Mission Center has music licenses from CCLI (Christian Copyright Licensing International) and OneLicense for all Mission Center events. It is the responsibility of the Camp Director to ensure that the appropriate research is done prior to camp to determine if the songs that will be used are covered by our license and to cite them properly. That research can be done at: [www.ccli.com](http://www.ccli.com) or [www.onelicense.net](http://www.onelicense.net).

The Mission Center also has video licenses from CVLI (Christian Video License International) for the three Mission Center campgrounds and for the Portland church. If your event is at one of those locations, you will need to do the necessary research to determine if our license covers your video. That research can be done at: [www.cvli.com](http://www.cvli.com). If your event is not at one of those locations, you will need to make special arrangement for licensing.

If the licenses do not cover the songs or videos you are planning to use, you may seek permission directly from the publisher. If you do not receive permission, federal law prohibits the use of them at your event. You may not use copyrighted music or video at your event if you do not have a license. If you have questions about the licensing or research, please contact the Mission Center Music Specialist. If you are planning to use video games at your event, please contact the Mission Center Financial Officer directly and immediately.

License Numbers for the GPNW Mission Center:

**CCLI: 121579**

**CVLI: 503702598**

**OneLicense: A-718381**

Place the following information on printed/copied or projected music/lyrics:

**Title of Song**

**Words and Music by John Smith**

**© 1975 John Smith Music Co.**

**CCLI or OneLicense #**

## Off-Site Destination Travel Planning

Notify the Mission Center Camping Specialist before camp begins of any plans for travel off-site for activities. Notification must include date, location of destination, estimated departure and arrival times, a list of campers and staff departing camp, etc. The Camp Nurse would need to accompany the camp on the outing. Follow all guidelines pertaining to Youth Worker and Risk Management guidelines on the outing. All drivers must be at least 21 years old. All cars must be in good working order and have proof of insurance in them. Adhere to all local driving laws.

## Minimum Camper Policy

All youth camps are required to have a minimum of 10 campers registered for camp by two weeks before camp. If a camp does not have the minimum required by two weeks before camp, then we will cancel the camp. This policy is negotiable only for those camps that have an off-site camp experience (not at a Community of Christ campground) or share a campground with another camp.

## Canceling a Youth Camp

Mission Center leadership hopes that we never have to cancel a youth camp. There are reasons that this may happen, though. The reasons we may cancel a camp are:

* Doesn’t meet the minimum camper policy
* Was not able to recruit enough staff
* Was not able to recruit required youth camp staff roles, including a Camp Nurse, Camp Cook, etc.
* Campground has an unexpected emergency and isn’t able to host a camp for that week

We will make all efforts will to cancel the camp no later than two weeks prior to camp. We may make appropriate alternative options available. This may include the blending of two similar youth camps or having more than one camp at a time at the campground.

## Special Dietary Needs

It is important to turn in any special dietary needs for campers and staff to the Camp Cook no later than two weeks prior to camp so they can plan accordingly. All Camp Cooks should do their best within the scope of what makes sense to meet dietary restrictions that are for medical reasons.

## What Not to Bring to Camp

Campers and staff may not bring the following to camp: weapons of any kind, illegal drugs, tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, bad attitude, inappropriate reading material, foul language, large amounts of cash. If an item is brought to camp that shouldn’t be there, the Camp Director will need to confiscate it for the week. If the item is dangerous to the health and well-being of the child or those around them, the Camp Director should contact the Mission Center leadership member assigned on the Mission Center Summer On-Call Support Calendar for what actions would be most appropriate to take next.

We suggest that campers not bring the following to camp: candy and gum, all electronic items such as iPods, cell phones, laptops, handheld gaming, etc. The Camp Director may choose to confiscate these items for the duration of camp and give them back to the camper at the end of camp.

The youth camp, campground and Mission Center are not responsible for any items lost or stolen during the camp.

## Samish Youth Camps and Canada West Mission Center (CWMC)

Since many of the campers at Samish Island Campground are from Canada, we have an agreement with Canada West Mission Center leadership that by the two Mission Centers share gains/losses at youth camps at Samish Island based on the number of participants from each. Because of this, the Camp Director of each of the Samish Island youth camps will need to track the number of campers from Canada. The current version of the spreadsheet at Samish Island has provision for this information.

Members and friends of the GPNW Mission Center and the Canada West Mission Center attend and staff the youth camps at Samish Island Campground. Direct any questions regarding campers and staff from the Canada West Mission Center to the GPNW Mission Center Mission Center Camping Specialist or the British Columbia Representative on the GPNW Youth Camping Team.

All campers from Canada West Mission Center must use the GPNW youth camp registration form, found on the GPNW Mission Center Website.

# Campers

## Worth of all Persons

All are welcome at our Youth Camps. There is to be no discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliations, religious beliefs, race, national origin, disability, and gender. The teachings at our youth camps must reflect Community of Christ Identity, Mission, Message, and Beliefs, as well as Policies and Statements. Though staff members may disagree with the church on certain beliefs or statements, they must still teach the principles aligned with Community of Christ. We all must do our best to ensure that all are welcome and accepted at camp.

## Transportation of Campers To and From Camp

Transportation to and from camp is provided by the parent(s)/guardian(s). If you send a child home for behavior or health concerns, it will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to arrange transportation from the campground in a timely, efficient manner. Campers should arrive and depart camp according to published times. We typically do not allow late arrival and early departure, as they are disruptive to the camp experience. If there are circumstances that make it impossible to meet this policy, the parent(s)/guardian(s) need to seek the Camp Director's approval in advance.

## Campers Who Drive to Camp

It is common that senior high youth will drive themselves and their friends to camp. Once they arrive at camp, they must turn in their car keys to the Camp Director for the duration of camp. We do not allow the camper to drive their vehicle at all once they have arrived at the camp. When the final cabin cleanup and packing procedures of camp have begun, then the Camp Director may give the keys back to the driver. This policy is the same for any youth camp experience that happen in a congregation or other location. The Camp Director may let them into their car to retrieve an item during the camp, if they choose to, but it would be appropriate to send a staff member with them when doing so.

## Disciplining a Camper

We need to handle discipline at youth camps in a way that observes the worth of all. Discipline should bring unity to the body and allow safety for all campers and staff. Public shaming is not appropriate, including disciplining all for the actions of a few. We do not allow corporal discipline at youth camps. Disciplining of a camper should be privately and relational. Help the child to understand why their actions were inappropriate and work together to come up with solutions for how to correct their actions. Use this as an opportunity to for them to learn from the situation. Be firm, but kind. Be compassionate, yet fair.

## Dismissal of a Camper during Camp

It is the hope that we never have to send a camper home during a camp experience. We may send a camper home because of inappropriate behavior, use of drugs or alcohol at camp, sexual activity, disrespect shown towards staff or other campers on repeated occasions, or refusal to participate in the camp experience. The Camp Director and appropriate leaders at the camp should work with the youth in an effort to allow for transformation so they can fully participate in the experience. This might include getting the parent(s)/guardian(s) involved. If this does not happen, notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) about the situation and the decision to dismiss the child from camp.

If it is determined that a youth needs to be sent home, then it should be done in a way that is as healthy as possible, to keep communication open with the individual so further ministry can occur with them and their family. The parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for coming to the camp and picking up the child. If the camper (17 and under) drove themselves to camp, then contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) for approval before letting the camper leave. Once approval is given, then you may give the car keys to the camper. If approval is not given, then the parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to arrange for the camper to leave camp. If the camper is 18 or older, please give the parent(s)/guardian(s) a courtesy call to let them know that the child left, or will be leaving, in their own vehicle.

Please notify the Mission Center leadership member on-call right away of the decision to dismiss a camper. You may also need their assistance if the parent(s)/guardian(s) refuse to pick up the child. If abuse were involved, then the appropriate Mandatory Reporting procedures would fall into place.

## Suspension or Expulsion of a Camper from Future Participation in Youth Camps

The Mission Center Camping Specialist makes the decision to suspend or expel future participation of a child from the camp experience, in consultation with the family, Camp Director, appropriate Mission Center staff, and the Youth Camping Team representatives for that campground. The Mission Center President would need to support this decision. A Camp Director should not tell a child or their family that we would not allow them at future camps until the Mission Center Camping Specialist has communicated the decision.

## Special Needs Campers

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of special needs campers must contact the Camp Director prior to registration to discuss arrangements for a possible attendant (who must be a Registered Youth Worker). Because we have volunteer staff, the camping program is not equipped to provide trained assistants. We want to be inclusive in our camping program, and we want to provide a safe and secure environment for our campers.

# Campgrounds

## Damages

The camp budget pays for damages that take place at the campground during camp. Camp Directors need to inspect all buildings used for potential damages made prior to camp. Report any pre-camp damages to the campground Caretakers before camp begins. If damages occur during camp, immediately report them to the Camp Director and then the Caretakers.

## Emergency Services

Be sure that phone numbers for emergency services at the facility your event is using are readily available and clearly posted. If not, please be sure that happens prior to the beginning of your event (the Caretakers can provide that info). Also, make sure you know where the phones are and have access to a cell phone (if cell service is available at your location). Additionally, be sure you know the address of the facility your event is using, in case of emergency.

***Look at the specific information for each campground in Chapter 5.***

## Emergency Procedures

Please refer to the procedure documents in Chapter 5 for emergency procedures for each of our campgrounds.

# During Camp

## Baptisms at Youth Camp

The invitation to become a disciple and experience baptism can be a powerful experience at a youth camp. Please consider what time would be best to have the baptism. We recommend that this be during the final worship at the close of camp so that family and friends can witness this experience. If it takes place during a camp, then it would be appropriate for the family to attend, but please remind them that we do have a “No Visitors at Camp” policy (see “Visitors at Camp” later in this chapter), and therefore they should leave shortly after the worship.

Any youth or child 17 years of age or younger must have permission of the parent(s)/guardian(s) for a baptism to take place. Please remember that in Community of Christ, our ministers may only baptize an individual once in a lifetime. All World Church policies regarding the Sacrament of Baptism apply. Please contact the Mission Center Camping Specialist with any clarifying questions.

## Camp Director Leaving Campground during Camp

It is strongly preferred that the Camp Director not leave the campground while the camp is in progress. Please send another staff member to run any necessary errands. If it is necessary for the Camp Director to leave the campground during camp, then make sure to designate someone to be the Camp Director while you are gone and make sure all staff members know whom that person is. There needs to be a clear line of leadership in case something happens during the Camp Director’s absence.

## Campers Arriving Late or Leaving Early

Campers should arrive and depart camp according to the published times. If special circumstances prevent this from happening, then a camper may arrive up to 24 hours late or depart up to 24 hours in advance if approved by the Camp Director. A camper may leave early if requested by parent(s)/guardian(s) because of an emergency. Consider any other exceptions in consultation with the Mission Center Camping Specialist.

## Cell Phone Use during Camp

It is up to the Camp Director to decide if campers can use cell phones during camp. Please remember that many campers do use their cell phones for their alarm clock and as a camera. Consider how you can best approach a cell phone policy for your camp that balances the need for campers to have them, with the hope to disconnect them from overusing them in a way that would distract from fully engaging in the camp experience.

One possible suggestion for how to handle cell phone use at camps is to let them know they can’t be used for anything other than picture taking during a scheduled activity at camp, and that if a camper is using their cell phone at an inappropriate time, it will be taken away for the rest of the day. If they are caught using it again during an inappropriate time, it will be taken away for the rest of the camp and given back at the close of camp. You may consider advising them that if the Camp Director sees that cell phone use is becoming an issue, they might change the policy without notice.

Staff should use their cell phones sparingly while at camp. It is not appropriate for Camp Directors to ask staff to turn in their cell phones. Staff are encouraged to practice the same disconnect that we expect from our campers.

## Contacting Parent(s)/Guardian(s) during Camp

Camp Directors are in charge of all communication between the camp and parent(s)/guardian(s). No staff member should contact parent(s)/guardian(s) directly during camp without approval from the Camp Director. The Camp Director may appoint someone to handle the necessary phone call. You might need to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) during camp if there is a medical issue, behavioral issue or other pertinent issue.

## Head Lice

The Camp Nurse must do a lice check during registration for all campers of elementary-aged youth camps. It is extremely important that this is done. Cleaning up after a lice outbreak at camp can become very burdensome, stressful for staff, and frustrating for parent(s)/guardian(s). Lice checks for junior and senior high camps are up to the Camp Director’s discretion.

If you find lice on a camper during registration, the child will need to be sent home with parent(s)/guardian(s). If the camper undergoes the proper treatment procedures, they may come back after 24 hours has passed and with the permission of the Camp Director. Proper inspection of the child’s scalp will need to happen before admittance back into the camp.

If you find lice on a camper during camp, it is important to ensure that staff and other campers treat the camper well and they camper does not experience shame. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will need to be contacted and notified of the situation and that the child will need to be sent home for a minimum of 24 hours to ensure that treatment has taken place and been effective. Proper inspection of the child’s scalp will need to happen before admittance back into the camp. Treatment should not happen at the camp. The camp should also not pay for expensive treatment shampoos.

The Camp Director and/or Camp Nurse should work with the campground Caretaker to ensure that campground-specific procedures involving lice are satisfied. Staff should seek guidance from the Camp Director and Camp Nurse in how to respond appropriately to the situation. No one should contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the other campers about the lice without approval from the Camp Director. This can cause unnecessary stress and frustration for staff and parent(s)/guardian(s). Send a letter about the incident home with the campers.

***Please refer to a sample letter to parent(s)/guardian(s) about lice in Chapter 5.***

Additionally, notify the Mission Center staff member that is on-call during your camp to let them know about the situation. Keep them updated, as necessary.

**What to Look For**

Use a comb or hands (with medical gloves on) to inspect the scalp of the child’s head. Make sure that you are in a place with good lighting. Look for what appears to be very small bugs on the scalp (ranging from the size of a poppy seed to a sesame seed).

**Signs and Symptoms of Head Lice**

* Camper is scratching their head more than usual.
* Camper has a tickling feeling of something moving in the hair.
* Camper has difficulty sleeping because of irritability on the scalp. (Head lice are most active in the dark.)
* Head lice are visible to the eye.

**What to Do if You Find Head Lice**

Wash all of the camper’s dirty clothes, towels, and bedding in hot water (130 degrees) and then dry using the hot setting for at least 30 minutes.

* Things that cannot be washed should be sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks to allow the head lice to die. This includes coats, hats, scarves, stuffed animals, pillows, and comforters. Wash brushes, combs, barrettes and other hair holders thoroughly with hot (130-degree) soapy water.
* Disinfect the mattresses in the cabin and wipe around the beds. This is a good time to clean the cabin thoroughly.
* Given the likelihood of campers sharing belongings in the cabin or getting on each other’s bunks, follow the same procedures for the belongings of all campers in the cabin.
* Conduct a lice check for the other campers and staff.

For more information about how to respond to head lice for your campground area, refer to the following resources:

* **Samish Island Campground:** [www.skagitcounty.net/HealthFamily/Documents/Lice\_photocopy\_ready.pdf](http://www.skagitcounty.net/HealthFamily/Documents/Lice_photocopy_ready.pdf) (Skagit Valley Health Department)
* **Lewis River Campground:**

[www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/diseases/other.html#lice](http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/diseases/other.html#lice) (Clark County Health Department)

* **Remote Campground:** [www.co.coos.or.us/Portals/0/Public%20Health/PSA/Head%20lice%201%2022%2015.docx](http://www.co.coos.or.us/Portals/0/Public%20Health/PSA/Head%20lice%201%2022%2015.docx) (Coos County Health Department)

## Medications at Camp

During youth camps at our campgrounds and the Caravan trip, all camper medications MUST stay with the Camp Nurse in a secure location. The Camp Nurse will dispense medication to the campers at their scheduled times, as prescribed. Ensure that all necessary medication information is complete on the registration form prior to camp. Prescribed medications should be in the container dispensed by the pharmacy with the pharmacy instructions intact.

For SPEC, prescribed medications stay with the camper, but the leader(s) and/or Camp Nurse must be aware of the medications a camper is taken. This is a World Church-sponsored camp, and the SPEC leaders determine the medical policies.

Staff should keep their prescribed medication(s) in a secure location while camp is in session. It may be appropriate to keep them with the Camp Nurse to prevent the medication getting in to the hands of a camper or other staff member. Only the intended individual should take prescribed medication. Another staff or camper should never share or be given prescribed medication.

The Camp Nurse should be aware of any over-the-counter medication taken by campers during the duration of camp. If parent(s)/guardian(s) send over-the-counter medication with the camper, they should list it on the registration form and bring it in the original manufacturer’s container, labeled with the camper’s name and specific instructions from parent(s)/guardian(s) for its use. The Camp Nurse should have basic over-the-counter medications available to use when necessary.

EXCEPTION: Medications may stay with the camper during retreats and Caravan huddles. This is up to the discretion of the Camp Director and Camp Nurse. The Camp Nurse must still be aware of all medications.

## Personal Items

The campground and Mission Center are not responsible for any lost or stolen items at camp. Youth are encouraged to leave personal electronics, money, etc. at home. The Camp Director may choose to take these items away at the beginning of the week and not return them until the end of camp. Staff should also secure their belongings during camp.

## Pranks

Pranks are discouraged from happening at our youth camps. Often times they do not uphold the worth of all persons. We want our youth camps to be a safe place for all staff and campers.

## River Swimming

Anyone who swims in a river or “moving water” as part of a camp activity MUST wear a PFD (Personal Flotation Device). If the river or “moving water” is on the campground property, anyone who enters the water must wear a PFD. All other applicable swimming policies apply.

## Visitors at Camp

We offer a “closed camp” experience. There are to be no visitors between the beginning and end of camp. This includes travel to off-site destinations. Visitors (e.g., family, friends, church members, etc.) cause disruption to the camp experience and create potential safety concerns. This includes youth who cannot attend the whole week but may want to drop in for part of the day. (Note: This does not include guest staff.)

## Worships at Camp

Since we offer a Christian camp experience, it is important that each camp have daily worship experiences. These worship help bring an intentional opportunity for campers and staff to draw near to each other and God in a holy experience.

# Financial

## Budgeting and Finances

Each Camp Director will create a sustainable budget that will break even. We recognize that there are occasionally circumstances beyond our control that adversely affect an event’s finances, but we hope that the planning by the Camp Director will be sufficient to compensate for those factors.

***For sample copies of youth camp budgets, please see Chapter 5, “Additional Resources.”***

We will provide each Camp Director with financial data for the previous year’s event. Since the Camp Director is responsible for the financial well-being of their event, it is important for the Camp Director or their designated Business Manager to deal with the process from the beginning. In some cases, there have been significant financial shortfalls that have occurred with camps, and the budgeting process can help in taking corrective actions to minimize those shortfalls in subsequent years. The budgeting process also helps in setting the fees for the coming season.

Once the Camp Director creates a budget, they should notify their appropriate staff members of their individual budgets pertaining to the activities they are leading at camp.

## Setting Camp Fees

Youth camp fees for campgrounds are set by the Mission Center Camping Specialist and Mission Center Financial Officer. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will notify the Camp Director of their fee by January 31 for the upcoming season. Camp Directors can provide feedback to the Mission Center Camping Specialist if they disagree with the amount that has been set.

Camp fees for SPEC Northwest Delegation and Caravan are set by the event Directors but should be made in consultation with the Mission Center Camping Specialist and Mission Center Financial Officer.

## Camp Reimbursements

The most straightforward way to handle a reimbursement is as follows:

1. Pay for the item (craft, recreation, worship, etc.) out of pocket.
2. Submit the receipt to the Camp Director or Business Manager.
3. The Camp Director or Business Manager should complete an Expense Reimbursement Request-Event form, staple the receipt to the form, and submit it to the Mission Center Financial Assistant or the Mission Center Financial Officer for reimbursement.

***The Expense Reimbursement Request-Event Form can be found on the GPNW Website.***

If someone other than the Camp Director or Business Manager completes the form, they need to make sure the entire form has been completed, and the Camp Director or Business Manager will need to sign the forms to ensure that they are aware of what is being expended from their camp.

Camp Directors should keep a copy of the completed Reimbursement Forms for future reference. It is also encouraged that they keep copies of the receipts.

## Reimbursement Deadlines

Submit reimbursement forms to the Mission Center Financial Assistant during the week of camp. In no case should you submit them later than **two weeks** following the end of the event. For events not held at our campgrounds or not held during the regular camping season at Remote Campground, submit all income and expense reimbursement requests to the Mission Center Financial Officer. The final deadline for all event-related expense reimbursement requests is **two weeks** following the end of the event. Make any requests beyond that date directly to the Mission Center Financial Officer and will be considered on an individual basis.

Please purchase all reimbursable items by the end of camp.

## Advances

If a Camp Director or another staff member is not able to cover the cost of the items out of pocket until they can be reimbursed, please notify the Mission Center Financial Officer for an Advance Reconciliation Form. Return the completed form with the receipts for all purchases made to the Mission Center Financial Officer at least three weeks in advance of the date you need the funds.

## Paying for a Specialized Staff Role or Activity

Please contact the Mission Center Camping Specialist and Mission Center Financial Officer if you want to pay for a specialized staff person to come to your camp. They will help assist you in determining if it is feasible within your camp’s budget and guide you through the appropriate protocols of doing so. This might include a Camp Cook, Camp Nurse, Lifeguard or guest Teacher/Instructor. This is also true if you plan to make a rental transaction through a different organization for an activity. The fees associated with payments for a specialized staff member or special activity would need to come out of your sustainable camp budget.

## Two-for-One Camper Discount

We offer a Two-for-One discount for all youth camps when a camper brings a friend who is new to our GPNW Community of Christ camping program. The registration form should have the friend's name clearly marked in the space provided, and the friend should submit a registration form. The Early Bird discount (see below) can apply if submitted by the Early Bird deadline.

If a Two-for-One friend never comes to camp, then parent(s)/guardian(s) of the camper that was going to bring the friend must pay the camp fee balance during registration at camp.

## Early Bird Discount

Each youth camp offers an "Early Bird" discounted registration fee when the camper registers and pays before the Early Bird deadline. The discount varies by length of camp. Please note that we will NOT give the reduced rate after the Early Bird deadline. The registration form and payment must be postmarked by the Early Bird deadline date.

If a camper is bringing a Two-for-One friend that does not register before the Early Bird deadline, then we will charge the friend half of the camp fee increase. This reflects the Two-for-One discount.

## Financial Assistance

We want to make sure every child and youth who wants to attend a youth camp has the chance to participate. Limited financial aid is available from the Mission Center. The Mission Center must be approve and confirm financial assistance before the Early Bird deadline to qualify for the reduced rate.

Camp Directors asked by a participant or parent(s)/guardian(s) for financial assistance should do the following in this order:

1. Encourage the participant to register early if the Early Bird discount is available.
2. Direct the participant/ parent(s)/guardian(s) to the participant’s congregation, to determine if activity assistance funds are available locally.
3. Encourage the participant to invite a friend to camp to share the cost (only available for youth camps and youth retreats). You may need to help them with some of these steps.
4. Refer the participants to the financial aid form found in the Mission Center camping brochure or on the Mission Center Website if there is still a need for assistance and if the Camp Director has exhausted the above forms of assistance. There may be funds available from the Mission Center to offset the cost of camps and retreats directly. SPEC and Caravan have separate funds for addressing this issue. Please remember that these funds are very limited, so use them sparingly.

## Camper Cancellations and Refunds

All campers need to notify the Camp Director of their need to cancel as soon as possible. The Mission Center will refund all but $25 of paid registration fees if cancellation is at least FIVE days prior to the start of camp. The Mission Center will make no cancellations after that. This includes those who leave camp early because of behavior, medical, or personal reasons.

We do not offer any pro-rated camp fees for campers who cannot attend the entire week. This includes campers who may go home due to health, behavior issues, personal issues, family emergencies, etc. There are no exceptions to this policy. Camp Directors should never promise a reduced or pro-rated camp fee.

## In-Kind Donations

Occasionally youth camp staff will choose not to ask for reimbursement for items they purchased for the camp. No staff member should ever feel pressured to do this. We encourage all staff to receive their appropriate reimbursement. If a staff member does choose not to ask for reimbursement, it is still important for the Mission Center to keep track of these expenses, particularly for future budgeting. Please make sure the Camp Director knows the value of all items donated to the camp. The Camp Director will need to report those numbers to the Mission Center Financial Assistant.

# Mandatory Reporting

As a Registered Youth Worker, all camp staff members are Mandatory Reporters. This means all staff members are required to report the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult to the Camp Director. The Camp Director then reports through the church, which reports to the local authorities as necessary.

## Mission Center Summer On-Call Support Calendar

We provide this calendar every summer so you know whom to call in case a situation arises at camp. You would want to utilize this if:

* A Mandatory Reporting circumstance comes up. This could be something that happened at the camp or because of something shared at camp.
* A medical emergency comes up with a camper or staff member. The Mission Center leadership should be immediately aware of this in case parent(s)/guardian(s) contact them. Additionally, it helps them prepare in case any issues related to insurance, etc. come up.
* You send a camper or staff member home. Additionally, if you need guidance on whether to send a camper or staff member home or if parent(s)/guardian(s) refuse to pick up their child.
* The need for clarification of a Risk Management concern arises during the week.
* You have any other issues with which you need assistance. Remember, we are here to support you in your role as Camp Director.

Throughout summer, the Mission Center President, Financial Officer and Mission Center Camping Specialist are assigned to be on call for concerns that come up at our youth camps and reunions. We list up to all three names on any given day. Sometimes we do not list all because of vacations and other commitments where one might be out of cell phone range. We list the names in order of whom you should call first. The first name listed for any given day is whom you need to call first. That is your primary contact for that day. If you cannot reach that person, you call the second. If you cannot reach the second person, you call the third, if there is one. We list cell phone numbers at the top of the calendar. If they are at a campground for the week, we list the number for the campground next to their name on the calendar.

There is one exception to this calendar usage. If the Mission Center President, Financial Officer or Mission Center Camping Specialist attends your camp, they automatically become your primary contact/support person. This is whether they are there to staff the event or to attend.

## If An Accusation of Abuse Occurs At Camp

Though it is rare, it is possible that the accusation of abuse can come from within a camp. The accused could be a fellow camper or a staff member. In that case, it is especially important to contact Mission Center leadership immediately to help offer support through this process. In most cases, the accused adult will need to leave camp immediately while the investigation occurs. Keeping the adult at the campground to wait for authorities can be disruptive for the child who has shared the allegation of abuse.

If a child accuses another child of abuse, remove the accused child from the activity until Mission Center leadership gives direction. Make sure the accused child is not alone with one staff member during this time. When it comes to a child/youth abusing another child/youth, we are not talking about two children/youth getting into a fight—we are talking about a situation where one child has extreme dominance over the other and is using that to meet their personal needs. More than likely, the main issue would be connected to an allegation of sexual abuse.

## Reporting Walk-Through

1. A child/youth shares with a staff member at camp an incident of abuse. The categories of abuse are Psychological/Emotional, Neglect, Physical, and Sexual.

***Please see Chapter 5, Additional Resources, for the GPNW Mandatory Reporting Flow Chart***

1. The staff member makes sure the child/youth knows that they are Mandatory Reporters and are required to share it with authorities who can help the situation. The staff member makes sure the child/youth receives the comfort required after sharing a story of abuse. They may be upset. Receiving the news that the information must be shared with authorities may also be upsetting to them. Be prepared for this.
2. The staff member then shares the incident with the Camp Director and fills out the Mandatory Reporting Incident Form. This form will help ensure communication of accurate information to those in leadership who will be acting upon the matter.
3. Once the form is completed, the Camp Director, or someone they designate, calls the Mission Center Camping Specialist, Mission Center President or Mission Center Financial Officer to make the report, using the On-Call Support Calendar provided to them. If the first person that the Camp Director calls does not answer, then they call the next person on the calendar for that day. If none of them answers, then they call World Church Legal directly using the number on the flow chart and calendar.
4. Mission Center leadership contacts World Church Legal to assist in making the report.
5. World Church Legal makes the report to the local authorities. This allows the Camp Director, as well as the camp staff, to remain anonymous during the process and enables the Camp Director to bring adequate ministry to the child.
6. Once the report is made, Mission Center leadership confidentially notifies the Camp Pastor of the home congregation of the child so they are aware of what is going on and can bring adequate ministry to the child and family once returning home from camp. Additionally, Mission Center leadership confidentially contacts the Pastor of the congregation where the accused attends, if applicable.

SAMISH ISLAND CAMPS: If the child/youth who shares the incident is from Canada, still follow the procedures on the Flow Chart. The GPNW Mission Center leadership will connect with Canada West leadership.

## Reminders

1. This is a confidential process. Please make sure the incidents are NOT shared with others. Gossip can spread like wildfire in the church.
2. Follow the Flow Chart and act upon immediately. There is no time limit to complete the process. The time limit is ASAP! Mandatory Reporting is urgent; act on in a timely manner. A reasonable exception to this would be if something that needs to be reported were shared at a late night evening worship or in a cabin at night. Then report it first thing in the morning.
3. If you are a Mandatory Reporter for your profession and you feel confident in making the report yourself, you may choose to contact local authorities directly, though you must immediately also follow the Flow Chart procedures and contact Mission Center leadership.
4. Camp staff should respect the Camp Director’s role in making the report. The Camp Director can designate someone else to make the report if responsibilities prevent him or her from making the report in a timely manner. The staff member who was told, the Assistant Camp Director or the Camp Pastor are logical choices. Just remember that the Camp Director is the one designated by the Mission Center to make sure the report happens.
5. The Flow Chart helps to assist all of us in making reports. Most Registered Youth Workers will never have to make a report. It can be an uneasy process to follow on our own with little to no experience in doing so. Even the most experienced are not always comfortable in handling allegations of abuse. Support is there to help ensure you are at peace through the process, but most important to uphold the needs and rights of the child/youth.
6. Never offer confidentiality to a child/youth when matters of abuse are involved.
7. Follow the same process when abuse of a vulnerable adult is shared.
8. Be calm and compassionate when handling Mandatory Reporting incidents at camp. Failure to do so can elevate the anxiety of all and cause the child to shut down. It can be especially alarming when the accusation comes from or towards a church member, especially one we know and care for. Be aware of your reaction. Please do not over-react. Stay calm. This is extremely important.
9. Mission Center leaders are here to support you! Please never forget that!

# Registration

## Centralized Registration

The registration process for GPNW youth camps is centralized. Send all registration forms and financial assistance forms for youth camps to the following mailing address:

**Attn: (name of camp/retreat)**

**Community of Christ**

**10013 NE Hazel Dell Ave, #249**

**Vancouver WA 98685-5203**

The Mission Center will send images of the registration forms and the updated camper data spreadsheet to each Camp Director on a regular basis prior to the start of their camp.

## Eventbrite

We use [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com) for the processing of online youth camp registrations. This online resource also allows us to accept payment for youth camps. We will email the most recent spreadsheet of registrations received via Eventbrite to each Camp Director. This report will include all of the information normally contained on the paper registration form and should be treated as confidentially as is the paper registration form. Each camp email address has access to that camp on Eventbrite, so you can access your camp’s data at your convenience.

## Camper Registration Forms

Following camp, please make sure that you mail, scan and email, or fax any registration forms turned in during registration at camp to the Mission Center Financial Assistant. Shred all registration forms after turning them in, as they contain sensitive and confidential information about the campers and staff.

## Staff Registration Forms

All staff members should fill in the pertinent information on the registration form and turn it in at the beginning of camp. It is important that the Nurse receive the medical information listed on the form. You do not need to turn these forms in to the Mission Center; be sure to shred them following camp.

# Camp Staff

## Selecting a Camp Director

The Mission Center Camping Specialist is in charge of selecting Camp Directors. They will work with the current Camp Director to identify the name of a possible successor. That name will go before the Youth Camping Team for the campground area they will be serving, as well as the Mission Center President. Once the Youth Camping Team has provided feedback and the Mission Center President has supported the decision, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with the outgoing Camp Director to invite the successor into this role. In cases where there is no likely successor, the Youth Camping Team and Mission Center staff will provide feedback on likely candidates.

For Caravan, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with the current Camp Director to identify a likely successor. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will then discuss that successor with the Mission Center President for support. With that support, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with the outgoing Camp Director to invite the successor into this role.

For SPEC/IYF, the Northwest Delegation Leadership Team will work with the Mission Center Camping Specialist to identify a new representative for the team. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will then discuss that successor with the Mission Center President for support. With that support, the Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with the Northwest Delegation Leadership Team to invite the new representative into this role.

## Mentoring a New Camp Director

All new Camp Directors will be partnered with a mentor their first year of directing. The mentor will serve as a sounding board for the new Camp Director and provide feedback during the planning process. They will assist the new Camp Director in overcoming any obstacles that come up their first year. Most importantly, the mentor is there to provide intentional, compassionate support to the new Camp Director. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with the incoming Camp Director to identify the appropriate mentor. Usually this person would be the outgoing Camp Director, a former Camp Director, or a member of the Youth Camping Team.

## Directing is a Privilege

It is easy to get passionate about directing a youth camp! Directing camps can be very fun and rewarding work. We put a lot of time and energy into making sure we plan camps that are relevant and welcoming. It is also easy to feel a sense of ownership with the camp(s) we direct. This especially becomes true if we direct the same camp for many consecutive years. It can become a part of who we are. It is import to remember that all of our Camp Directors operate Community of Christ camps sponsored by the GPNW Mission Center. Camp Directors are acting in their role on behalf of the Mission Center and Community of Christ. It is appropriate to feel a sense of ownership over the experience, but remember not to get possessive of the youth camp you direct. Directing a youth camp is a privilege.

## Relationship between Camp Director and Staff

It is important that all staff show respect for the Camp Director while at camp. If a staff member disagrees with a decision, it would be appropriate to talk respectfully with the Camp Director about the situation privately. In the end, though, the staff member must uphold the Camp Director’s decision. If a staff member is concerned about decisions made by a Camp Director, they may contact the Mission Center Camping Specialist following camp.

Staff should refrain from offering too many suggestions as alternatives to what the Camp Director has planned. The Camp Director or their planning team has spent many hours in planning, preparing the camp experience. It is acceptable to offer feedback, but only when appropriate, and not excessively.

It is equally important that Camp Directors treat their staff with dignity and respect. If they need to address issues with a staff member, it should be done privately and not in front of other staff or campers.

## Camp Staff as Registered Youth Workers

All camp staff members are required to be Registered Youth Workers. To register to be a Community of Christ Youth Worker, the applicant must complete a 90-120 minute basic training, complete an application with referrals, and be interviewed. If approved, they may volunteer for a youth camp.

Registered Youth Workers must be 21 years of age and older. Those who are 15-20 years of age are Registered Youth Worker Assistants and may only work under the leadership of a Registered Youth Worker. When a Registered Youth Worker Assistant turns 21, they automatically become a Registered Youth Worker. Contact the Mission Center Camping Specialist to arrange training, or contact the Mission Center Financial Assistant with application questions.

## Number of Staff

It is important that Camp Directors and/or Leadership Teams only recruit the number of staff that is required to meet the number of campers. This will help to manage a sustainable budget and prevent issues that can arise from having too many staff members. If the Camp Director recruits more staff than is needed, the Camp Director should release unneeded staff. Consider how you can do this in a way that provides you with the staffing you need while not hurting anyone’s feelings. Feel free to reach out to the Mission Center Camping Specialist to assist with this, if needed.

## Required Age for Staffing Youth Camps

All camp staff must be at least 15 years of age to staff a youth camp in the GPNW Mission Center. They also must be a minimum of three years older than the oldest camper, though five years older is preferred. Some of our elementary camps choose to use junior high/middle school aged youth as “gofers” at camp. If you choose for your elementary camp to do this, discuss it first with the Mission Center Camping Specialist. These young teens might help with work assignments and additional non-substantial tasks. They should never have them authority over, or be responsible for, the campers.

## Recruiting Staff from Outside GPNW or Canada West Mission Centers

Camp Directors are encouraged to recruit staff from within the GPNW Mission Center (as well as the Canada West Mission Center for Samish Island youth camps). If the Camp Director would like to invite someone that is a member of another Mission Center, the Camp Director would need to contact the GPNW Mission Center Mission Center Camping Specialist. The Mission Center Camping Specialist will work with both the GPNW Mission Center President, as well as the Mission Center President from the other Mission Center, to seek approval. Once approval is given, the GPNW Mission Center Camping Specialist will notify the Camp Director that they may make the invitation.

## Privacy Code of Conduct for Staff

It is not appropriate for camp staff to share their intimate personal life experiences with youth at camp. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the children are entitled to know the nature of any such conversation. This is not meant to limit the sharing of testimonies of transformation. Please use good judgment when deciding what personal information should be shared. (Note: This is not intended to limit the sharing of your testimony with the campers, but it is important that we exercise good judgment when doing so.)

## Dismissal of a Staff Member during Camp

It is the hope that we never have to send a staff member home during a camp experience. Some reasons to do so might be inappropriate behavior, abuse towards a minor, abuse towards another staff member, or refusal to participate in the camp experience. If you are ever feeling like a staff member should be sent home, please discuss it with your Camp Pastor and other appropriate camp leaders first. Then call the Mission Center leadership member who is on-call for that day to seek guidance and assistance.

If it is determined that a staff member needs to be sent home, then it should be done in a way that is as healthy as possible, to keep communication open with the individual so further ministry can occur. You may need to re-organize your staffing to make up for the loss of a dismissed staff member. It would be very likely that an emergency staff member would need to step in. If needed, work with the Mission Center leadership member who is on call to help arrange this. If abuse was involved, then the appropriate Mandatory Reporting procedures would fall into place.

## Specialized Staff Certifications

All specialized staff members (i.e. Lifeguard, Camp Cook, Camp Nurse, etc.) must bring proof of their certification or license to camp with them. The Camp Director should verify that the certifications are equivalent to our requirements and are up to date.

## Camp Nurse Requirements

All campground youth camps and Caravan are required to have a Camp Nurse on staff. It is recommended for SPEC Northwest Delegation to have a Camp Nurse on staff. A Camp Nurse is highly recommended, but not required, for Caravan huddles or youth weekend retreats.

From the World Church Website:

*All camps and reunions, excluding retreats, must have at least one of the following on duty at all times, in order of preference:*

* *Licensed Medical Doctor (who is willing to provide his or her own insurance)*
* *Physician's Assistant*
* *Nurse Practitioner*
* *Registered Nurse (RN)*
* *Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), with first aid training*
* *Paramedic*
* *Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)*

#### ***All licenses must be current.***

*Medical staff at camps and reunions must be licensed in the state where the campground is located and in each state where activities are to take place. Medical professional requirements differ among government jurisdictions. It is the responsibility of the campground boards and Camp Directors to understand and follow all local and state requirements.*

Chapter

5

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

• 2015 GPNW Mission Center Staff Contact Information

• 2015 GPNW Youth Camp Team Contact Information

• 2015 GPNW Youth Camp Directors Contact Information

• GPNW Mission Center Mandatory Reporting Flow Chart

• Samish Island Campground Emergency Information

• Samish Island Campground Emergency Plan and Procedures

• Lewis River Campground Emergency and Safety Procedures

• Remote Campground Emergency Procedures

• 2015 GPNW Mission Center Camping Promotions

• 2015 Camp Registration Procedures

• Community of Christ Privacy Code of Conduct

• Christian Education Resources and Tips

• Administration, Blessing & Giving

• Baptism, Confirmation & Communion

• Sample Lice Letter to Parents

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