



Encouraging, Educating, Equipping,
and Empowering Camp and Retreat Leadership

April 7, 2020

My friends and colleagues throughout the LOM community –

It's a Holy Week like none that we've ever experienced before. As we reflect on the abruptness of Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem to his betrayal and death on the cross, I pray that just as Jesus' resurrection changed the world forever, so too will the new life that springs from the ministries you suspect will not be the same will be full of new life and community that's difficult to envision today.

I give thanks for the quality of leadership that I see you providing for our outdoor ministry organizations. From our LOM ZOOM Forum last week, I reflect on the insight shared by Mary Kay Duchene on what those who rely on our leadership need from us as leaders –

- Trust the organization
- Feel compassion
- Experience stability
- Know that there is hope

Thank you for being the leaders your organizations need right now. Thank you for being the leaders our church need. Thank you for being the leaders our world needs.

Another chestnut of wisdom that Mary Kay gifted to us, as we acknowledge the fear that we all have about an uncertain future, "if we don't do anything different from the normal, the changes that are sweeping over us might leave us with nothing at all".

Our camps/retreat centers are certainly figuring out how to be proactive in dealing with the next several months for which there is so little we can be assured of forecasting with accuracy. My observation around the network is that all of our organizations are committed to doing something in acknowledgement that things will be different, rather than nothing at all. I'm finding that many of the outdoor ministry organizations of LOM are gradually moving toward one or the other of two models for navigating the next several months.

That's why on Tuesday, April 14, 12 EDT, 11 CDT, 10 MDT, 9 PDT, we are going to have a ZOOM Forum where Dave Jarvis, executive director of Rainbow Trail (CO), is going to make a presentation about the thought process that went into he and the Board arriving at the course of action they have decided to take and the strategies and contingencies that they will be having in place. We are calling this approach the "Living in the Possibilities" Model. The link for

this ZOOM: <https://zoom.us/j/270344555> Meeting ID: 270 344 555, or by phone, find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/arqc8step8>

On Wednesday, April 15, 12 EDT, 11 CDT, 10 MDT, 9 PDT, we are going to have a ZOOM Forum where a team led by one of our emeritus directors, Ralph Yernberg (of 100th Anniversary Banquet fame), and another emeritus director, Keith Johnson, Dave Holtz, executive director of Luther Crest (MN), and Joel Abenth, executive director of Voyageurs (MN) will make a presentation about the rationale and course of action for an approach, unique from the one Dave Jarvis will explain on the day before, that we are calling the "Conservancy" Model. The link for this ZOOM: <https://zoom.us/j/134994548> Meeting ID: 134 994 548, or by phone, find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/arqc8step8>

In both Forums, as has been the case in our previous LOM Forums, you will have the opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and be invited to share your own suggestions.

Our plan now is to have LOM Territory ZOOM Forums every other week – during the weeks that ZOOM forums for all of LOM are not taking place. There was a ZOOM Forum last week for the West-Midwest Territory; yesterday for the West Territory, today for the East Territory, Thursday, April 9, 11:00 AM Central for the East-Midwest Territory: <https://zoom.us/j/615893531>
Meeting ID: 615 893 531, or by phone, find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/arqc8step8>

Here's a piece of good news to share! The scholarships for the conference are a done deal - 2 full scholarships from each of the LOM member organizations and 2 airfare reimbursements of up to \$300 for each organization for those who need to fly. Cargill Foundation approved it. So please, everyone, keep November 9-13 on the calendar.

The LTE – Program Track, is also still on the calendar for November 5-9. It is being held at Luther Park in Chetek, WI, not too far from the location of the Conference.

I hope that one thing your organization is doing is applying for financial relief from the CARES Act through the Payroll Protection Program administered by the Small Business Administration, or at least looking into it. I applied yesterday for the work we all do together through LOM and it went pretty smoothly.

Just as you have been so immersed in the impact of Covid-19 on your ministry and your finances, my attention has recently been turning toward the impact it will have on our life together as LOM. We are hoping to get the LOM Board together for a ZOOM meeting next week.

In this Holy Week leading toward the Easter celebration, my prayer, shared with you – O God, you who are the light of the world, we pray that you light our minds to know you, to have the strength to serve you and all your creation, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, the one who rose from the grave. Amen

Take care, stay well.

Don Johnson, Executive Director
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries