



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

Monday, April 27, 2020

Dear friends and colleagues,

During this year in which we are celebrating the 100th Anniversary of outdoor ministry for Lutherans in America, we've seen the pictures and heard the stories. Our ministries have changed and reinvented themselves in countless ways over the years. We have adapted to the times; we have been creative beyond measure; over and over again we have been there with another surprise just when all of our participants and stakeholders are thinking this is how we've always done it. Now, as we are wrestling with how to best navigate through this colossal crisis in which we find ourselves, we know that our outdoor ministries last year looked way different from when everything started 100 years ago; we also know they will look much different this year and may very well look much different next year and beyond.

The ability of all of you in this network to adapt and be creative is very impressive. Your willingness to help, support, encourage, and share ideas with each other is amazing!

Tomorrow, Tuesday, April 28, will be a giant day for the people of this network to be connecting with each other in these ways. The next LOM ZOOM Forum will take place at 12 EDT, 11 CDT, 10 MDT, 9 PDT. Topic: LOM ZOOM Forum - Camp Program & Activity Ideas.

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://zoom.us/j/95125620970?pwd=NGZYVXI1OHZ6ZUlud1pFNXhFRGV2QT09>

Meeting ID: 951 2562 0970 Password: LOM2020 Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/j/95125620970>

The Covid-19 public health emergency is causing all of us to get creative with summer camp programs and activities for a number of different contexts in which they might be taking place. In this Forum, please come prepared to share a two-minute-ish description of an idea you are working on for this summer - an idea of what camp will look like or where it will be taking place; an alternative plan you are working on for how camp programs will take place; an idea you are percolating about an alternative camp activity or an alternative way for a particular activity to happen. Not only will you be supporting everyone else by sharing your idea, but who knows, you might also get some help in thinking through your idea by others who are working on something similar.

CJ Clark, executive director at Living Water (MI), Amanda Rasner, camp director at Fortune Lake (MI), and Brenda Olson Bingea, executive director at Bay Lake (MN), are organizing a ZOOM on Tuesday, April 28th at 2 EDT, 1 CDT, 12 MDT, 11 PDT to do a some collective brainstorming about revenue generation in the wake of COVID-19 financial realities. ZOOM info - Topic: Revenue Brainstorm. Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91584510423> Meeting ID: 915 8451 0423 This is a discussion beyond virtual program options, PPP loans, and unemployment benefits (all of these

discussions being equally vital). Rather, this is an attempt to create space to imagine what might be, get innovative, rethink how we are approaching the work we are called to do and how we get or raise the money to do it. As they say, "We have no answers, but we're hoping to begin the journey of discovery together." All are welcome. The more minds and ideas the better!

Next week will provide opportunities for the LOM Territory ZOOM Forums:

- West-Midwest Territory, Monday, May 4, 1:00 Central Time, Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/99275903117?pwd=YkUxRDBIT1dLdGQ0VkJZCTTNOOGRNQ09> Meeting ID: 992 7590 3117 **Password: 037810** Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/axlvBFBy0>
- East-Midwest Territory, Tuesday, May 5, 11:00 AM Central Time, Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81879142966?pwd=am10ZkhqMW5qWklPNIBpNmNOUTUJQUT09> Meeting ID: 818 7914 2966 **Password: LOM2020**, Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbWdWVGjoE>
- West Territory, Wednesday, May 6, 9:00 AM Pacific, 10:00 AM Mountain, 11:00 AM Central, Join Zoom Meeting, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85266851819?pwd=Z1Bub2UwTETjQ3V0OHF4SFNxNWNKUT09> Meeting ID: 852 6685 1819 Password: **LOM2020** Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kmskYxTmj> **Camps in Texas, Kansas, Nebraska – you are invited to join in with the West Territory!**
- East Territory, Thursday, May 7, 1:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/97659542396?pwd=OC84bERPSXg0Q2NUU2VIaGk3ZjIyUT09> Meeting ID: 976 5954 2396 **Password: LOM 2020**, Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/arqc8tep8>

If that's not enough, we have been able to arrange what I think will be a very helpful meeting next week: LOM ZOOM Forum on Tuesday, May 5, 2 EDT, 1 CDT, 12MDT, 11 PDT. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81260847557?pwd=Z2pGRjVBNVRiQmIRVihWjQ3MHBEQT09> Meeting ID: 812 6084 7557 **Password: LOM2020**, Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd5b9nemTP> As you know, ACA has been a key collaborator in the development of CDC guidelines for resident camps, day camps and similar child care activities. Those guidelines are expected to be announced to the public by this weekend. This ZOOM Forum aim to provide clarification for the CDC guidelines. Henry DeHart, COO of ACA, will make a brief presentation and then we will open it up to questions and discussion related to the guidelines. This Forum will be most helpful if you can review them prior to the Forum. When I see that they are available, I'll post them on Facebook as soon as I see they are available.

For those of you who were on the LOM ZOOM Forum last week, Lyle Griner has offered a 25% discount on the material on his website: <https://peerministry.org/shop/> . Use the code CAMP when prompted. Thank you, Lyle!!!

To the primary contact persons for each of the LOM member organizations (usually the person with the title of executive director or camp director) – this reminder: Please complete this survey: <https://www.research.net/r/LOMComp2020> This is the long-awaited compensation survey for which LOM has engaged the services of Sacred Playgrounds. We are grateful to Jake Sorenson for providing this service to LOM at a much-reduced rate. Thank you, Jake.

Every member organization of LOM is feeling the extreme financial pressure that the Covid-19 crisis is imposing. If you would like to have some consultation and guidance from a retired executive director with experience at navigating through the thick and thin of good and bad financial times, you might be interested in a new initiative of LOM - the LOM Covid-19 Response Team. Please contact me, Don Johnson (director@lomnetwork.org), for more information or to set up such a consultation.

Our Presbyterian friends (PCCCA) are spearheading a project for all of the associations in the Outdoor Ministries Connection (OMC). LOM is part of the OMC, the associations that were responsible for the Great Gathering. The project is to quickly (by May 15) develop a platform for virtual camp programs in which an individual camp will be able to have its own portal. Please let me know if your camp might be interested in paying the \$200 to have its own portal in this platform. Thank you.

Because of the extreme financial challenges that every camp is experiencing as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the LOM Board of Directors has decided that **LOM will not be asking our member organizations to make a financial contribution to LOM in 2020** (LOM will, of course, accept contributions from member organizations that choose to do so and will be seeking the financial contributions of individuals).

This is what we are asking of all the member organizations of LOM - participation in a video project. We're asking every camp to send me a 10-15 second video clip of one person from their community of participants and stakeholders (camper, parent, counselor, retreat guest, pastor, Board member, etc.) saying why they love their camp so much (make sure they name the camp), or in the case of camps that have to be closed this summer, what they will miss most about camp. We are going to put it together into one video that all LOM organizations can use to uplift the importance of outdoor ministry, the importance of supporting their local outdoor ministry, and the importance of supporting the glue that keeps all our outdoor ministries connected - LOM. Please send the video clip (videos filmed on a phone are OK) to Don Johnson director@lomnetwork.org. We ask that you do this before May 15. Thank you.

Yes! There's much that's new that's emerging throughout LOM as a result of the dreadful impact of Covid-19. This is all at the same time that the one thing that remains the same in this ministry is our commitment to proclaim the Gospel of the one whose life and death and resurrection revealed change beyond all measure. Yes! We proclaim Jesus, knowing that "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Cor. 5:17 - NRSV).

And so it is, that in our sadness for what has been lost; in our exhaustion because of the energy that is required to deal with all the challenges, I pray that we never forget that it is Jesus who has promised to be with us to the end of all time.

See you around the network. Take care, stay well.

Don Johnson, Executive Director
Lutheran Outdoor Ministries