



Outdoor Ministries Association
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Church of the Brethren

“Connecting, Enlivening, and Supporting the Dynamic Ministry of the CoB camps.”

April 2019

Dear Friends and Colleagues in Outdoor Ministry,

Spring is upon us! It's a season of birth and renewal and for many of us, anticipation and dreaming of what awaits us this summer at our camps. With that, I'd like to share a blessing that we've used at our morning watch here at camp:

*May you experience today
both the wideness and wildness
of God's grace –
in the sun and sky
the wind and water
animal and plant,
and in the drumming
of your own heart.*

An essential focus at our camps is to help facilitate an encounter with creation in such a way that we encounter the wideness and wildness of God's grace. The blessing for our campers and staff is that we awaken to this blessing each day at camp. And for those in outdoor ministry, our hearts' cadence begins to pick up the tempo, as our schedules are filling up with meetings, we're envisioning and developing programs, recruiting staff and volunteers, and facilities and grounds are being opened across the denomination. While some of our camps are open all year with outdoor school, retreat groups, and rental opportunities, for almost all of us, the summer remains the heart and soul of all that we do. And it's coming soon! 😊

This summer, many camps will be using the **“Peace Works” curriculum** as they explore what it means to be empowered as peacemakers so that they carry on the ministry of Jesus in today's world. The OMA is now in its **second year** of being a non-profit corporation and a 501c3 status. The OMA Board has been meeting and mapping out the landscape OMA is traversing, and we are excited about the future development, plan and vision that awaits OMA. The Board is charged with the task to carry out the important work of “connecting, enlivening, and supporting the dynamic ministry of the Church of the Brethren camps.”

This is the season to **renew or start your OMA membership**. If your camp maintains its membership from year to year, we thank you for your continued support. If your camp hasn't been a member for a while, we ask you to join us. Being a member of OMA means that you're willing to help provide a portion of the financial support that the association needs in order to “tend the fires” of your camp and other camps across the denomination. When we commit and join, we are all stronger. The Board has set a goal to have 100% membership from all the camps this year. We will need everyone to partner with us to make that happen and we hope that we can depend on your support. **Camp membership is based off**

your annual camp budget with a minimum membership fee of \$100. Remember, that each camp membership also includes a free professional membership (a \$100 value!) and that professional membership now includes a \$25 discount off the Annual Retreat. Please contact Mike Neff, a member of the Board serving as this year's Membership Coordinator, at mike@campithiel.org or (407) 293-3481 if you have any questions about membership.

You'll find a **revised Camp Information and Membership Form** enclosed with this letter. We are grateful for the information you can provide about your camp so that we can be up-to-date, as well as for your membership dues that go directly to the association's work. We have recently updated the membership structure and benefits for camps and individuals (**see chart below**). You'll see that camp membership allows your camp to apply for up to \$1000 from our Environmental Grant Fund for special projects at your camp, nominate persons from your camp for the staff and volunteer awards, and apply for leadership development and professional growth resources from the Four Horseman Fund.

Outdoor Ministry Association – 2019 Membership Levels and Benefits					
	Camp (\$100-\$700)	Congregation (\$150)	Individual/Family (\$50)	*Professional/Staff (\$100)	Lifetime (\$750)
One professional member and benefits	X				
\$25 Annual Retreat Discount (1 person)		X	X	X	1 st Year
Retreat Scholarships Available	X	X	X	X	
Staff and Volunteer Award Nominations	X				
Environmental Grants (up to \$1000; only \$500 w/o membership)	X	X			
Eligible for Four Horseman Fund Money	X	X		X	
Membership Certificate	X	X		X	X
OMA Decal	X	X	X	X	X

***Included in Professional Memberships:**

\$100 -\$399 = 1 member; \$400 - \$699 = 2 members; \$700+ = 3 members

We hope to have representation from lots of camps when we gather at **Camp Swatara (PA) from November 17-21, 2019**. Please consider encouraging other staff or volunteers within your organization to become individual or professional members of OMA. They would also receive the retreat discount and other benefits as well!

Thank You for your commitment to your camp and the wider network of outdoor ministry through OMA! And may you continue to encounter the wideness and wildness of God's grace at your camps this summer as we are empowered with the Gospel of Peace.

Respectfully,



Randall Westfall
2019 OMA Board Chair