



Camp Loucon

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Dear Parent/Guardian;

We are excited at the prospect of having your child at the Loucon Summer Camp!! As a parent, you may consider yourself “set apart” from your child’s camp adventure because you aren’t in attendance. The success of your child’s experience however, may very well depend upon your participation. Preparing your child to attend camp involves a lot of time and effort. May I suggest a few things you can do to enhance your child’s camping experience?

I’m sure you have already looked at our brochure together and discussed the activities that might take place. Involve your youngster in selecting clothes. Do the packing together so that the child is aware of what is in the suitcase. I suggest sending old, favorite clothes to camp; save new things for after camp. Place a plastic bag for soiled laundry in the suitcase and explain its purpose. Allow the camper to help mark the clothing with a laundry marker. You may be happily surprised to see all of it come home at the end of camp!! **Please encourage your camper to wear socks with all shoes.** Socks help reduce toe injuries. Please discourage your child from bringing valuables that may get lost or damaged, as we cannot guarantee any item finding its way home.

MAIL INFORMATION

If you want to hear from your camper, you might go shopping for postcards and stamps and address them beforehand. Write to your child!! Mail the first letter BEFORE she leaves home that will have it arrive the first day of mail call. This will make your child feel special because not everyone gets a letter that day!! Mail to the address on the top of this letter—be sure to put the name of which camp, “ADVENTURE”, “Jr. HIGH”, etc. (that makes life easier for our staff). You may e-mail your camper using Bunk1 (there is a fee for this). You can find a link to their website on our home page. Please write *upbeat* messages...”I know you are having fun...” To see what is going on at camp, check our web page: www.loucon.org. We will upload pictures during the week of each camp.

CANTEEN MONEY INFORMATION

We serve three healthy appealing meals daily. However, there will be canteen available for campers to purchase juices and healthy snacks along with sodas, candy bars, and ice cream. Most items are \$0.50 to \$1.00. If you want your child to have money for canteen, you will be able to purchase it at registration. We recommend \$2 for one night camps, \$5 for 3 night camps, and \$10-20 for 5 night camps. No money is used at camp. All canteen money information will be kept in the canteen. Leave no cash. **Any canteen money left over at the end of the week will be utilized for camper scholarships, there will be no refunds.** Normally the amount left over in a week will pay for one camper to attend camp.

All campers will be given a Loucon Tee Shirt and a group photo the day they leave. You can help us cover the costs of the photo by donating \$1 at registration. There will be items for sale at the canteen: Hats for \$10, sweatshirts \$20, drawstring bags \$6, long sleeve tees \$15, short sleeve t-shirts \$10, picture albums \$5, water bottles \$7, flashlights \$5, charms \$7, and stuffed animals \$7. We will also sell a picture CD for \$7. These prices are subject to change.

MEDICATION INFORMATION

If your child needs any **medication** while at camp, it must be in the **original container (prescriptions in the name of child)**. Loucon’s health care provider will be at the registration site to log in medication, store it, and see that your camper gets the dosages needed at correct intervals. (Over)

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Alcohol, tobacco products or other illegal drugs are not allowed or tolerated at anytime. You will be called to pick up your camper if he or she does not abide by this rule. Random searches of possessions may be done if Director and Dean feel it is needed. In national camping meetings, it has been brought to our attention that alcohol can be brought to camp in other containers (i.e. mouthwash) this is a health and safety issue for all. Please help us keep Loucon a drug free environment.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

It is very important that your child arrive and depart at the specified times. The times are included in the camper information letter that was mailed to your camper. Please remember the times stated are **Central Daylight Time**. Last year's registration went very well, and we are going to use the same system this year. Registration for all camps will take place in the dining hall.

HOMESICKNESS PREVENTION

Do not suggest to your child that he or she can call home if homesick. Do not highlight a conversation about "homesickness". If it happens, the camp staff will work with your camper, and call you when appropriate. Camp is an excellent place to establish wholesome friendships for life, to develop respect for the world God created, to help your child learn to make decisions. Loucon wants to help your child learn how to live for Christ in all situations. We prefer you to set the child up for success.

If your child is a **first time camper**, talk about being away from home. Perhaps share your good experiences of your first time away. It is always helpful to "imagine" how things will be, before a situation happens in reality. Talk with your child about what to expect in all areas, particularly the area of spiritual emphasis and development. Let your child know you are interested in what will be happening and will be anxious to know what he or she has learned.

PRAY

Last, but not least, pray with the youngster about what will happen. Pray for safety and health so he or she will not miss out on anything; for friends, who will have a positive impact on your child's life; and for the counselor and other camp staff. After your child is at camp, please continue to hold all of the Loucon staff in your prayers. We appreciate and need your prayer support.

RULES/POLICIES

We have a few rules that your camper will need to follow:

- *Treat others with respect*
- *Follow directions*
- *Ask for help with problems*
- *Take care of camp and your personal items*
- *Clean up after yourself*
- *Follow Loucon's Dress Code *(listed at the end of this letter)*
- *Respect other people's property*
- *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!*
- *Love God and your neighbor*

Camp Loucon is a community created exclusively for children and youth, where they can cultivate their **roots** and find their **wings**. This experience helps build values and skills in a supervised, positive environment with controlled boundaries. Camp is about relationships, getting along, belonging, and feeling capable and significant. Most importantly, your camper will have the opportunity to grow in his/her relationship with our Lord, Jesus Christ. We are grateful that we will get to know and work with your child and with your help, we will do all we can to make this one of the more memorable experiences of your child's life.

In Christ's Service,

Warren Hopper, Director

Theme: "Secrets of the Kingdom, the parables of Jesus"

Loucon Dress Code:

- *Shorts should extend past the camper's fingertips with arms by their side.*
- *Sleeveless shirts may be worn as long as the strap is wider than 4 of the camper's fingers and does not have large arm holes.*
- *Midriffs must be covered.*
- *Underwear should always be covered.*
- *One-piece swimsuits are required.*
- *Clothing with slogans promoting alcohol, sex, tobacco, drugs, profanity, or death themes are not permitted.*

Information for Online Registrants:

Online registrants will need to insure that they *print off and mail in* the following forms:

- Medical information and Agreement form.
- If the church is paying a portion of the camper's fees you will need to print off the church form and have it filled out and signed by a church official and mailed in to be able to have the bill sent to the church.
- If your camper is signed up for **Great outdoors** online you will need to print out, fill out, and send in the OAR Rafting form, caving form, Loucon liability form, and any other necessary forms listed online.

Information for Great Outdoors Campers:

Great Outdoors 1, 2, & 3 campers need to either mail in prior to camp or hand deliver the following forms in order to allow them the opportunity to go white-water rafting and to participate in certain activities that are a part of Great Outdoors. Online registrants may get these forms online.

- Ocoee Rafting (OAR) participant/liability/risk form.
- Caving form
- Loucon liability form

Information for Youth Choir 1, 2, Creative Music & Art, and Creative Ministries Campers:

- **Senior High Youth Choir** will end with a choir performance that begins at 10:00am on Saturday. De-Registration/Sign-out will begin at 9:30am, will stop at 10:00am, and then will begin again after the performance. All campers must be signed out before they may leave after the concert. Those coming to pick up their campers must go directly to Turner lodge where sign-out and the performance will be held and not to the area where our campers are staying for security purposes.
- **Creative Ministries** will end with a performance that begins at 10:00am on Friday. Deregistration/Sign-out will begin at 9:30am, will stop at 10:00am, and then will begin again after the performance. All campers must be signed out before they may leave after the concert. Those coming to pick up their campers must go directly to Turner lodge where sign-out and the performance will be held and not to the area where our campers are staying for security purposes.
- **Junior High Youth Choir** will end with a choir performance that begins at 10:00am on Friday. De-Registration/Sign-out will begin at 9:30am, will stop at 10:00am, and then will begin again after the performance. All campers must be signed out before they may leave after the concert. Those coming to pick up their campers must go directly to Turner lodge where sign-out and the performance will be held and not to the area where our campers are staying for security purposes.
- **Creative Music & Art** will end with a performance that begins at 10:00am on Friday. Deregistration/Sign-out will begin at 9:30am, will stop at 10:00am, and then will begin again after the performance. All campers must be signed out before they may leave after the concert. Those coming to pick up their campers must go directly to Turner lodge where sign-out and the performance will be held and not to the area where our campers are staying for security purposes.

Values of Christian Camping

1. Genuine Community is experienced

Camp contrasts with familiar life. Labels, expectations, mindless daily routines, influences of parents, teachers, peers, media, and friends are left behind in favor of a special temporary community with focused purpose: presenting Christ and nurturing those in the faith toward maturity. Campers are immersed in a loving community free to embrace the values and lifestyle of that community. Loucon can be a clear model demonstrating how Christians should live.

Separation from home removes the familiar physical and social supports that provide comfort and security. Campers are forced to transfer trust to others or depend on someone more secure and mature.

2. Ministry to the whole person takes place

Camp powerfully communicates spiritual truths and spurs spiritual growth among campers – in the midst of God's creation, experiencing teachable moments, worship, relaxation, and reflection times.

3. Relationships are built – with God and with others

The activities of daily camp life teach social skills. Camp is foremost a highly relational experience. At camp, spiritual mentors are always present. They are visual examples of how to live when tired, how to be kind when others are unkind, how to control anger, how to discipline with love, how to ask for forgiveness, how to grow spiritually, how to deal with temptation, and how to live in community. The influence for change is great at camp, where relationships are valued. Jesus is our model for ministry.

4. Memories and major life commitments are made

Because camp is a contrast to everyday life, and because this contrast causes the camper's senses to be heightened, time takes on new meaning. Events at camp become more engaging, alive, vivid; they are filled with energy and totally absorb campers. Camp experiences provide moments that render campers ready for learning.

Struggling with new games, adventure activities, difficult peers, wetness, heat, darkness, disappointments, camp duties, and separation from home, all add to the variety and intensity of experiences. These teachable moments open doors of opportunity where spiritual truth can be presented.

5. Tomorrow's leaders are developed today

Very few opportunities exist for young people to be given significant responsibility for others, especially responsibility to minister to others. Emerging leaders need to discover three proofs - proof of self, proof of learning, and proof of God.

Parent/guardian letter to read as your camper returns home

Plan the day of your child's arrival at home. Be prepared for your child to be out-of sorts and tired. Camp days are high-level activity times. Facing home and a sudden change of pace often causes one to turn from a near-perfect angel into a grouch!!

Your child may not be as delighted to see you as you are to see the camper. Besides going home, children are saying good-bye to counselors they had as well as friends they made.

When you arrive home be sure to provide extra time for rest and sleep. It would be nice if the child can be excused from "chores" for an additional 24 hours before joining the rat race of a normal household.

Listen diligently as your youngster shares what happened. Ask questions and be interested, but don't probe. For the child who is quiet, reserved, and doesn't open up easily, allow time for him or her to do so. It's fun to share what the family did while the child was away, then to ask your child to share in return.

Your child may come home with the attitude of everything being ideal at camp. Such statements as "Our youth group's not much fun...but...at camp..." "I don't want to go to Sunday School. My teacher's not like my counselor at camp."

Patiently wait out the comments. Things will die down. Allow your youngster to write to the people he or she "fell in love with". For the younger children, it is often their counselors, for older teens, it is other campers. Eventually things will return to normal.

If you find your child mentioning one particular staff member who was an excellent role model, encourage your child to write and thank that person for what it meant. Many of our staff members have been greatly encouraged to go another week because a camper of a previous week wrote a note of thanks.

Please keep in mind that Loucon hires an amazing set of staff and counselors; however we do not supervise them outside of the camp experience. We do background checks, follow up with their references, and they undergo an interview process. They turn out to be amazing followers of Christ; however as a parent you should keep an eye on how your child interacts with their friends, online contacts, and those they met at camp including the staff and counselors. It is important to insure your child's safety by insuring that any continued relationships/conversations with camp staff after summer camp are appropriate. This is not a problem; however in today's world one cannot be too careful.

Be interested in what decisions or commitments your child may have made at camp. Allow time to share those decisions without giving your young person the third degree. Upon arrival home, he or she may be on a spiritual high. Help your camper realize whether he is up or down on the spiritual roller coaster, the commitment still stands.

We will write your church if your child indicated they made a decision. If this happens, do not attack your child because you learned about the decision through other sources.

Begin anew a prayer time with your child, and help him/her follow through on commitments. The realness of the time at camp will be much more a part of daily life six months later if God is a daily part of the process.

Warren Hopper, Director and all of the Loucon staff

Loucon needs your help to take an active role in the World Relief Efforts!

Over the past four summers Loucon campers have been involved in world relief. From 2005 to 2007 campers donated enough supplies to send over 600 Health kits to UMCOR, United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR is a major part in relief efforts all over the world including in the lives of the Tsunami and Hurricane victims. Almost 100% of money given to UMCOR gets to the victims. From 2008 - 2009 you helped raise \$1,223 for Heifer International! In 2010 money was raised for Loucon's Kittinger Cottage project. This is a cottage where pastors and their immediate family may stay to reconnect with Christ and one another. It is part of how Loucon plans to give back to those who give so much. It is a way to help feed those who often only pour out. Please help us care for the shepherds who guide our churches and help lead us to Christ!

This year Loucon would like to once again raise funds for the *Kittinger Cottage – A pastor's retreat!*

I hope you will join Loucon in our World Relief efforts to help change the world!