



13 March 2020

Knysna Hope Public Announcement

Re: 2020 Garden Route Youth Camp and Response to COVID-19

In response to the growing COVID-19 Pandemic and uncertainties regarding its spread in South Africa, Knysna Hope staff, specifically the Garden Route Youth Camp Committee, in consultation with our internal medical staff, have made the difficult decision to move the 2020 Garden Route Youth Camp, which is currently scheduled for 24-27 March, 2020. The decision does not come lightly to us and was made after a series of meetings discussing the potential ramifications such a decision. While there are many unknowns regarding the virus and how it will impact South Africa, given the specific nature of our camp, we feel that this is the correct decision for the safety of our campers, our community, and our witness for Jesus Christ.

From medical personal across the world, it seems that the incubation period is around 14 days, and those who carry the virus, and therefore can expose others, may not even experience their own symptoms. Given the cosmopolitan nature of our region, travelers from all over the world come to this area and, additionally, our own residents are well-connected to the major cities of both South Africa and the rest of the world. We simply do not have the ability to adequately verify that our campers or staff have not been exposed to the virus. We are projecting about 50 campers this year, and the accommodation for three days is such that campers will be in very close proximity to each other. With our particular equipment and facilities, we are not able to implement adequate social distancing measures. Even with extreme handwashing protocols, with an airborne virus of this sort, the risk of contagion, given the close proximity issue, is high.

While we do not want to be reactionary or cause panic in our community, we simply do not know from one hour to the next how COVID-19 will spread. So, from an organizational standpoint, we believe the best course of action is to move the camp rather than take such a risk. This is a difficult decision, and one that we know will cause disappointment, particularly to our campers. But we are not cancelling the 2020 camp, rather simply moving it until the virus has run its course in South Africa. Any campers that have already registered will remain registered for the new dates and will not lose their spot.

We are confident that this is the best course of action, and rest with quiet confidence that God will continue to work all things, even global pandemics, for good and for the sake of His glory among all the nations of the world.

Thank you,

Caleb Mello

Chief Operations Officer, Knysna Hope

