



Community of Christ
Canada West
Mission Centre

CWM In-Person Programs through August 2021

Canada West Mission Centre has determined that in-person events will not be planned at least through the end of August of 2021.

To be clear, this decision means that for the second year in a row there will not be a Canada West Mission Centre reunion/family camp at Samish Island, and there will be no reunion/family camp or youth camps or retreats at Hills of Peace. Official notice of this decision has been provided to both the Samish Island Campground Association Board and the Hills of Peace Campground Board.

In addition, it has been determined that Canada West will not be supporting delegations of youth attending “Graceland Spectacular” (“SPEC”) this summer. As of this date we have not received any announcement about whether SPEC 2021 will happen or not.

A number of factors were considered by the Mission Centre staff to arrive at this difficult decision:

- COVID-19 is still very active on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border (which affects our “local” members and friends, and our guest ministry who typically come from the U.S.)
- Although there are promising decreases in case levels in recent days/weeks, there is no guarantee this will continue into the summer, particularly with the addition of the new “variants” into the situation.
- We believe the main thing that will give people confidence to return to large-group activities is the wide-spread application of the COVID vaccines. Significant coverage of all age groups and high-risk populations is not expected until mid-summer and possibly into the autumn.
- Even if there were to be a remarkable up-tick in vaccination rates, we believe there will be reluctance to gather in large groups as early as this summer.
- Similarly, in our discussion about Samish events and SPEC, it is our impression that many/most people will be reluctant to cross the Canada/U.S. border even if it is open by this summer.

The decision to cancel the programs through to the end of August leaves a “faint hope” opportunity that we might still be able to hold an in-person Mission Conference on Labour Day weekend. Discussions are underway about the Hills of Peace Men’s Retreat in September that are leaning towards a “virtual” event. Watch for further information about these events over the next few months.

Plans for alternative ways to facilitate our retreats, camps, and reunions are still under discussion and we cannot make definite announcements at this time. Please watch for program announcements over the next few months in our on-line news and events columns on our webpage and in the events calendar in the “Reggie” registration system.

Thank you for your attention. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

--Steve Thompson
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