

CAMP SUMATANGA ACTION TEAM: Assess the mission of the Camp and address pertinent governance issues, evaluate current leadership and staffing model, and examine the Camp's relationship to the North Alabama Conference and Conference Trustees with maximum authority to act in the Camp's best interest.

Members: Rev. Dr. Andy Wolfe, Convener, ex-officio; Neeysa Biddle, Sandy Wright Brown, Rev. Dr. Bill Brunson, Mike Byrne, Tiphonie Gatgens, Terry McElheny, Harlan Prater, Allan Robertson, ex-officio, Daphne Orr, Interim Executive Director and camp consultant, Rev. Mark Johnston, previously Executive Dir, Camp McDowell.



SUMATANGA ACTION TEAM COMMUNIQUE

May 11, 2020

CURRENT TIMES: There are so many memorable quotes, recommendations and inspirations circulating as we cope with our social distancing, enhanced sanitizing practices and manage our close/distant relationships. We will not attempt to recap them all but do want to send you our prayers for your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health!

As you have read in our multiple communication outlets since mid-March, all meeting and lodging areas have been closed. Fortunately, most all of the functions have been rescheduled. In April, we were forced to close the grounds in order to maintain recommended health guidelines. As you will see on the SUMATANGA CALENDAR, we are excited to reopen the grounds on Saturdays and Sundays from sunrise to sunset with proper social distancing, no bathroom facilities and no camping. Come and enjoy!

We are consistently monitoring the situation and studying guidelines from federal, state and local governments, Alabama Public Health Department, North Alabama Conference, CDC, United Methodist Camp Retreat Ministries, American Camp Association plus networking with other camps and retreat centers.

SUMATANGA SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM: It is our deep desire to offer a meaningful Summer Camp experience, but COVID-19 limits us from providing our traditional day camp and residential camp structure in 2020. However, we are already planning for **SUMMER CAMP 2021**. The current Summer Camp Leaders and the Summer Camp Ministers will return to lead the fun. Registration is now LIVE for Summer Camp 2021 on the Sumatanga website. *Campers who register before October 31 will receive an early bird rate!* Plan now to join us!

The 2020 Sumatanga Campers' Families have been notified via email to update their registration status by July 1, 2020. Families have been offered three option for the camp registration deposit: 1) register for the 2021 Summer Camp carrying-forward the fee; 2) donate the deposit to Sumatanga for current use; or 3) request a refund. We have asked each family to complete an on-line form to document their choice.

SUMATANGA CALENDAR: For the safety of all, Sumatanga's guest and ministry activities will be as follows:

May – no meetings or retreats

- outdoor areas are reopened on Saturdays and Sundays from sunrise-to-sunset with the expectation of social distancing, no bathroom facilities and no camping.

June – no meetings or retreats

- no hosted day camps, hosted residential camps and no Sumatanga day camps nor residential camps.

July and August – awaiting guidelines for group gatherings

- no Summer Camp programs

September and October – With optimism that the COVID-19 will be manageable, we are planning to host meetings and retreat groups. In addition, the Summer Camp Leadership Team and Camp Ministers have scheduled four activities for campers and their families:

- FAMILY CAMP WEEKEND September 4-6, 2020
- FAMILY CAMP WEEKEND October 16-18, 2020
- FALL FESTIVAL October 3rd, 2020
- FALL FESTIVAL October 24th, 2020

ASSET MANAGEMENT:

UPDATE ON FOREST MANAGEMENT: The Action Team has completed the bidding process for timber harvesting in selected areas and has awarded the contracts. The estimated cost of reforestation of those acres will be placed in a reserve and the remainder will be used for daily operations.

UPDATE ON DAILY EXPENSES: Our part-time staff has been reduced since mid-March. There were additional staff and wage reductions made effective May 1. We are pursuing eligible government programs available through the CARES Act.

As Daphne shared in her March 20th letter to a large Sumatanga family distribution list:

What can you do to help?

- Pray. Please continue to pray and maybe even escalate your prayers so that there is no confusion about God's intervention and role in this effort.
- Reschedule any cancelled event. God's timing is perfect.
- Give. Please consider an unrestricted financial gift to Sumatanga to help us sustain operations during this crisis. It would be devastating to lose the momentum that we have collectively gained. To make your gift online, please [click this link](#), or you can mail a check to Sumatanga Camp and Conference Center, 3616 Sumatanga Road, Gallant, AL 35972.

...We look forward to once again welcoming you and others onto these Holy Grounds. We will continue to keep you posted and, in the meantime, please know that we will hold you in our prayers. Stay safe!

Andy Wolfe, Convener

Daphne Orr, Interim Executive Director



Sumatanga Camp & Conference Center

- † **It is the Mission of Sumatanga** to provide sacred space and an environment rich with opportunity for encounters with God through nature and nurture.
- † **Our Vision** is to be *the* home for Christ-centered hospitality.
- † **We Value** the teachings of Jesus Christ and use these teachings as the very foundation of our existence. We seek to serve as he served, to love unconditionally as he loved, and to treat all those we encounter with compassion and justice.
- † **We Value** our partnership in ministry with the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church and seek to be jointly committed and accountable in ministry to them and to those God calls to us.
- † **We Value** Christ-centered hospitality and will strive to make every guest feel at home.

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- † **We Value** community and invite churches, organizations, agencies and individuals to join us and each other in Christian fellowship.
- † **We Value** wholesome recreation as a means of building both strength and character.
- † **We Value** life-long learning and the call to deepening spiritual development and strive to be a resource for those searching, growing and leading.
- † **We Value** sound stewardship. In honor of those who join us in ministry with financial gifts, we pledge to wisely deploy all proceeds to build a sustainable future for continuation of this ministry.