

Pilgrim Pines Camp Transition Team, Report to the SCNC UCC Annual Gathering

Introductions: Jude Johnson, Phil Jenkins, Petra Malleis-Sternberg

Greetings, Annual Gathering delegates, visitors and staff!! We are very excited to bring you a report from the Transition Team for the Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center. And yes, there is a BIG transition in the works!

First, as of last December the Conference Board of Directors gave notice to UCCR, our site management company, that as of January 1, 2023, we will return to managing Pilgrim Pines Camp ourselves. Currently, the Conference Board of Directors also serves as the Pilgrim Pines Board of Directors, even though the two entities are separate legal corporations. As part of this decision, the Board established our Transition Team, and plans are underway for this change in leadership and staffing at our camp facility.

In addition, we have shared in collaborative planning with Pilgrim Pines leaders and our Conference Board of Directors, and together we have begun a longer-term plan that moves us towards a wholly new model, where Pilgrim Pines Camp will be separate from the functions of the Conference, with its own Board of Directors and staff, led by an Executive Director, and its own budget, finances, fundraising, and more. In short, Pilgrim Pines Camp would be an independent mission partner of the conference, with a firm connection continuing to the UCC and to the Southern California Nevada Conference written into the bylaws and structure of the Camp governance.

HOWEVER, the final decision about this direction, rests with you, the delegates of the Annual Meeting. Such a change will require a bylaw change specifically to change the composition of the Pilgrim Pines Board of Directors and to include language that assures that Pilgrim Pines will always remain a UCC Camp. While work will proceed in this direction, nothing will be effective unless there is a positive vote to change the Bylaws at a specially called meeting of the Conference this fall.

The core goal of our Transition Team is to move to a Ministry-centered model that allows us to live into our mission and vision for Pilgrim Pines Camp.

As we move through this time of transition, we want to share our gratitude for UCCR and their site staff who have managed Pilgrim Pines Camp for the last 10 years. Our current UCCR site staff especially was invaluable during the El Dorado fire, and the mudslides last winter, in helping to prepare the property to mitigate losses and to support the cleanup and restoration after these events. We look forward to saying an enormous thank you to the site staff at a special celebration this fall: stay tuned for

details! And, all current site staff will be eligible to apply for positions going forward, if they choose, under our new unified management model. We celebrate the many wonderful successes we have shared over the last decade!

We also want to share our gratitude for all of the Conference groups and volunteers whose work has supported the Pines in recent years, and helped us to prepare for this next time of transition. The pandemic has brought many financial challenges and changes in leadership and needs of our campers, and we are truly inspired by the commitment and passion of our campers, families, leaders, and volunteers through this time. To the current and former members of the Outdoor Ministries Team, the Pilgrim Pines Mission Keepers, the Pilgrim Pines Strategic Planning Team, the Conference Board of Directors, and all of the volunteers, staff, and leaders of our programming that has been transformed so many times during this pandemic: **THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!!** Please know that you are deeply appreciated and your work has laid a strong foundation for all that comes next – and we look forward to your participation all along the way!

So, what is next? Well, the Transition Team, along with many support and resource persons, is hard at work creating a job description for a new Executive Director of the Camp, and outlines for other positions to be hired. We have also been working on the 2023 projected budget that will integrate our program ministries with our facility management. And, we are gaining invaluable support and resources from other camps, including several camps in the United Church of Christ who have gone through this same kind of transition to an independent Board and leadership in recent years, and we are heartened to hear how they have refocused on their mission and vision in the process.

Then, as you heard previously, there will be a **special called meeting of this Conference this fall** where you as delegates will have the opportunity to vote to approve this new structure, with revised Bylaws for Pilgrim Pines Camp, and a new Pilgrim Pines Board of Directors. We will also be able to update on the search for a new Executive Director, who will begin work, we hope, in October, to overlap with the existing site staff as a part of the transition and begin hiring of other new staff.

A position announcement for a new Executive Director will be posted early this summer, and we will be encouraging each one of you and your churches to help us find outstanding candidates with experience in camp and/or non-profit management, who are deeply committed to our vision of anti-racist, inclusive leadership that changes lives through the ministry of our camp.

Pilgrim Pines Camp first held outdoor ministries events in partnership with the Conference in the summer of 1944. Decades of change and upheaval in the world around us, and countless transitions in the leadership and governance of the camp have followed. We give thanks for all the faithful ministry that has transformed lives in and through Pilgrim Pines Camp. And now, in 2022, we seek your support for the renewal of our focus on the ministry and mission of Pilgrim Pines Camp, to grow our mission: to provide an inclusive and safe environment for personal and spiritual growth, nurture community by building personal relationships, and encourage care and concern for all of God's creation. And, we look forward to transforming our world further through our vision: To be accepting of a diverse population of opinions, beliefs, ideas and backgrounds; to seek to create a peaceful and healing community in which people learn to cooperate in an inclusive and diverse setting, and to encourage a sustainable world through modeling environmentally just practices.

We encourage you to follow Pilgrim Pines Camp on Facebook and Instagram, and find updates and all registration information for events this year still on the website: pilgrimpinescamp.org

And, we want to share the email for the Transition Team: pinestransitionteam@gmail.com We encourage you to share your questions with the Transition Team, to share ideas for potential candidates to recruit for positions at Camp, and to share groups who would like to have our staff contact them about bookings for 2023! We also will be sharing ways for you to ask questions and share input on zoom meetings after the new Bylaws and proposals are presented, before the Special Called Conference meeting this fall.

For the rest of 2022, we continue to encourage all user groups to contact UCCR for bookings, and we give thanks for our continued partnership with them as we run all of our Conference events there this year. Summer Camp 2022 is going to AMAZING and a celebration of JOY!!! And as always, we encourage campers and volunteers to register, and we invite your campership donations to help change lives on the mountain this summer!!

(sharing of summer camp video from top of <https://www.pilgrimpinescamp.org/summer-camp>)