



# Camp Menesetung

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## CAMP MENESETUNG ANNUAL REPORT – 2020

2020 was a year dominated by the significant creative challenge to adapt, pivot, and reimagine our way towards our mission in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Little did we know in early March, with our summer registrations tracking higher than ever for the time of year, our spring & summer teams hired, and season planning well under-way; that in only a few weeks, the pandemic, and the government restrictions it brought with it, would change everything. Many board meetings later, the decision was made that for the first time in our 86-year history, the bunks of Camp Menesetung would remain empty of campers this season... and yet, we would work to bring the community of camp to our campers isolated in their homes.

*“Camp Menesetung is the people not the place”,* is the anthem we championed, *“my kids miss their social connection”,* the need we sought to fill. We began with the difficult work of cancelling all in-person programs, laying off the majority of our staff, and offering full refunds to all registered families, schools, and rental groups. Under the leadership of Executive Director Clayton Peters and Summer Director Colleen Lowrie, our small staff team, and a group of 12 dedicated volunteers working from home tackled the question: *‘how can we reimagine summer camp online?’*. In April, May, and June we ran a free online club as a pilot project and training experience for our team, which gave us the confidence to run week-long choice-based interactive programs throughout July & August under the name ‘Camp Menesetung @ Home’, in addition to running our online leadership training programs for our 15/16-year-old LITs & CITs. We could not be prouder of the high-quality creative programming that our team put forward, causing many parents to write to us with sincere thanks for giving their kids a way to connect during a difficult time, with several families signing up for additional weeks. While our enrolment was lower than we hoped, in all, we had 61 campers who had fun with us a few hours every day for their week of Camp.

What a bizarre sight it is to see a Cabin Counsellor excitedly chatting with their ‘cabin’ of campers on their laptop while sitting at a picnic table outside the dining hall! Our core team of six lived on-site as a tight-knit, ‘bubbled’, community; running our online programs, completing maintenance projects, and spending time working on program development - notably our new Canoeing Program, No-Trace Camping Programs, and upgraded Leadership Training Curriculum.

While we were able to reach our campers who needed it most this season, it has been undoubtedly one of the most challenging financially. As a charity with significant year-round expenses for property upkeep, insurance, staffing etc. with our entire annual income cancelled, we are grateful to be able to make it through to 2021 with the help of our donors, government programs, and savings that our Board had been maintaining for future capital projects. Recovering from a loss of over \$80,000 in income is one that we need help with, and will be felt in our budgets for years to come. If you have the means, please consider making a donation. One way is by joining our new Menesetung Champion Circle – a monthly-donor program administered by the United Church PAR program which provides our Menesetung Champions with exclusive perks. Learn more here: [campmenesetung.ca/donate](http://campmenesetung.ca/donate)

We look towards our 2021 season with hope and courage, with several new board members, Clayton and Colleen returning, your support, and 2020 under our belt, there is a way for summer camp to be possible this year - and we can’t wait!

To working hard for the right reasons,

Clayton Peters | Executive Director | Camp Menesetung | [www.campmenesetung.ca](http://www.campmenesetung.ca)