



Love Letters to Camp, 2020



For many camp is a place we call “home.” We know that every region and area is having to respond in different ways to keep those who love camp safe this summer. The Young Adult Commission invites those who are graduating, leaders, campers, and staff to take some time and write your “love letter to camp.” This letter signifies that we continue to walk with our graduates throughout their lives. If you are able to include a short message on your shoes, along with your letters, we hope that our graduates will be able to see, express, cry, smile, and celebrate all that has brought them closer to God through knowing great people, and finding sacred and holy spaces.

These letters will be saved and shared as part of the 2020 Light a Candle WITH our Graduates daily devotion and blog post.

Examples:

Hello, My name is Alissa Tribble and I have been attending camp at The Retreat since going into 4th grade (I am now finishing 11th grade).

I am a member of First Christian Church of Disciples in Jacksonville/Mandarin, of where I first became aware of The Retreat. I don't remember much from my first years at camp besides my counselor Lexi, Sydney Hoopaugh as my cabin mate, my fear of the monkeys, and the creation of my belief in the blue fire. I have always wanted to be able to immortalize each and every memory created at camp, but I have found I am only able to do so with the pictures we are given at closing worship and the ones we are solely left to remember.

Every summer, I am able to come to a place where I have fallen drastically in-love with and spend a week with beautiful people I have yet to know and others I'll never forget. This year, I would be attending CYF Conference for my Junior year (3rd year). Overall, my time at The Retreat has been unforgettable, but my last two years at CYF has been at an all-time high. I have learned so much more about our Father, in heaven and how to maintain my hope and faith within him.

Now, everything is growing complicated and is leaving me and many people in my life unsure about what's to come, regarding COVID-19. Recently, I have been immensely struggling with my faith and my overall well-being. Many people in my family have fallen sick and a few that I have held closely to my heart have recently died (none of which impacted by from COVID).



Normally, at the end of every school year when we come to camp and begin the week, I and along with everybody else am able to bring ourselves back together and prepare for the rest of our year, and everything to come afterwards; knowing the following year, we can spend another wonderful week at camp. I know you all may not have much control over if camp can still physically go on, but if it is at all possible, we are all desperately pulling for this summer.

Almost everybody from this previous summer at CYF has stayed in contact in an ongoing group chat and we talk weekly, if not every day. We have been nonstop talking about all of our memories and our favorite times at camp. For a few people in the group, it is supposed to be their last year at camp as they have graduated high school, others have already had their last. Me and about seven people from said group chat got together last September in Orlando and reminisced as it would more than likely be our last time seeing one another.

For me, this camp is a place where i feel secure and safer than i have felt anywhere else. In more ways than one, I have fallen in-love with The Retreat and I'll continue to pray my heart out that it can and will still go on in July. I know you all will have your decision made in a week from today, but I pray if all circumstances fall in place, we can still commemorate this year and come together for a week of worship and gratitude with amazing, beautiful people. I love all of you for creating and maintaining such a magical and peaceful sanctuary for all of us to come to and share.

We are all a family. Thank you all for what you do.

Sincerely, Alissa Tribble, fellow loving camper:)





4/25/19

Dear WKDH Senior,

There are no words to describe, what you have been through your senior year. This should be a time for your many "lasts" of your high school chapter. Instead you are going through a major first - The Coronavirus Pandemic. ☹️


♥️ I want you to know that you are loved. Even when times are hard, you are loved. When you feel cheated, you are loved. When you want to scream and cry - you are loved. We love you. You always have your WKDH family who will stand with you and love you.

Through this crazy time, we walk with you. We will be here for you and we will support you. When you feel lost, we will help and guide you the best we can. We are in this together and we will get through this because we are WKDH strong. 😊

Agape,
Christina Wilson





<  Jacqueline Curtice



Dear Camp,
Oh how I miss you so!! You have been a safe space for me for as long as I can remember. You are the place where I learned to be a Christian. You are the place where I fell in love with nature. You are the place that has wrecked me in all of the best and most needed ways and the place that brought me some of the very best and long lasting relationships that have helped me grow into the woman I am. You are the place that gave me the opportunity to be a camper, a counselor, a keynote speaker, a director, and for the last 4 years (that's right 4!) the mom of a camper. You are the place that I have not only been able to share with my family but the place where I have become part of a whole new family. Here are a few of my favorite camp moments and memories.

P.s. thank you to [Mary Beth Harper](#) and all of the wonderful people Landen and I have met from camp. Without you it wouldn't even camp.

P.s.s. What's your camp love letter?

