CHALLENGER WEST 2O16

Wind River Wilderness Expedition

**August 7-16, 2016**

Sponsored by: *United Church of God, an International Association*

***PROGRAM DESCRIPTION***

**What is *Challenger West*?**

*Challenger West* an outdoor and leadership program for young adults in the Church of God. This program takes a small, select group of young adults (ages 18-30+) who are serious about God’s truth and Church, and provides them with opportunities to develop qualities of godly character, leadership and service in an outdoor setting. The program involves a close mentoring dynamic and group dynamic.

**Why Have a Challenging, Adventure Program?**

A major premise of the program is that growth in any endeavor does not come unless a person explores or is “challenged” outside of his comfort zone. Leaders are needed who can not only face difficulties with perseverance and courage – but who will also challenge themselves towards growth in leadership and spiritual maturity. Succeed or fail – there is always something to be learned from challenges, tests and new experiences. Scriptures to consider: 1. Cor. 9:24-27, 2. Tim. 2:3-4,

James 1:2-4, 12, 2. Cor. 13:5, Heb. 2:10; 5:8-9.

Participants will also learn practical outdoor and adventure skills. Valuable lessons are learned by facing challenges, discomfort, and even spartan living conditions in the outdoors. But it isn’t all a sacrifice of comforts! Each *Challenger* program takes participants out of their normal, every-day lives and brings them into an *inspiring* setting, free from daily distractions, and teaches lessons drawn from the wilderness setting. Memories of a dramatic experience help cement other lessons imparted during the course of the experience.

|  |
| --- |
| ***If accepted, be sure to go to the Challenger West 2016 Facebook page for photos and to share information******with others.*** |

**Why a Backpack Expedition?**

Backpacking is an activity that encompasses a full set of disciplines useful throughout life. It’s a great way to stay fit, build close relationships with family and friends, and regain perspective in life. It is something anyone in reasonably good health can do. Backpacking gets you into God’s great creation, and gives a sense of perspective that is difficult to parallel in today’s complex world.

 **What is the Wind River Wilderness?**

The Wind River Mountain Range is in western Wyoming. It is a spectacular section of the Rockies with numerous peaks (48 of them are over 12,500 feet elevation) and more than 2,000 lakes. It is comprised of four wilderness areas totaling nearly a million acres. Our expedition is in the Fitzpatrick Wilderness, the northernmost of the four. But no roads go into the ‘Winds’; one must hikeabout a day just to begin seeing the spectacular vistas. It is truly wildernessbackcountry. Type in “Wind River Range” in Google to find websites and photos about this beautiful area.

***The Expedition includes:***  Backpacking and Camping Rock climbing

 Trout fishing Team-building

 Orienteering Daily Bible instruction

 Interactive group leadership exploration

You will walk in a majestic part of this nation that most Americans have never seen. You will be involved in the expedition process from beginning to end and will be doing everything needed in order to repeat it on your own. You will learn basic wilderness skills, including how to navigate with a map and compass. Most importantly, you will see growth in yourself through a revamped program of leadership exploration and group dynamic, which is briefly described below.

**Spiritual and Leadership Exploration**

Participants will have numerous opportunities to explore where they are in their development spiritually and from the standpoint as leaders. This will involve the following components:

* daily discussions of leadership case-studies from the Bible;
* small group discussions and leadership opportunities – each person will have one opportunity at Challenger West to lead his/her group for the day;
* exercises designed to explore who a person is, his/her values and how he/she relates to others;
* journal entries from each day about lessons learned from activities and discussions;
* group feedback sessions.

In addition to the Bible, participants will be asked to:

* read (at least some of the chapters in) the book “True North” (in advance – will be provided);
* prepare a sermonette (men) or trail-talk (ladies) discussing some principle or personal experience regarding leadership as a Christian.

**Application Requirements**

1. High school graduates through 30+, single or married. Minimum age is 18.

2. Must already be demonstrating an interest in serving others, setting a positive example in the local congregation and exploring your leadership character.

3. Participants must be in overall good health and interested in maintaining long-term fitness.

4. A commitment to consistent training before the trip is *essential*. Every team member must be prepared to endure the rigors of a strenuous trip in high-country wilderness. We *begin* around

7,500 feet elevation and go up to around 10,500 feet. Higher altitude, combined with carrying a load on your back uphill for miles, means training for strength and cardiovascular fitness long before the trip is absolutely vital. *Training guidelines are provided in a separate document*.

5. A 30-minute fitness test is required as part of the acceptance process.

**Dates & Schedule:**

Sunday, August 7 Arrival at Dubois, WY. (For those who can, driving is recommended. Those flying will arrive at Jackson Hole, WY early in the day and be taken by van to Dubois). We will spend the first two nights in tents in a campground at Dubois.

Monday, August 8 All-day training classes and preparation.

Tuesday, August 9 Hike into Wind River Wilderness.

Monday, August 15 Hike out of Wind River Wilderness. Spend the night in campground at Dubois.

Tuesday, August 16 Return travel home

**Costs:**

There is a $100 tuition. Additional costs will vary according to participant . . .

 🡪 Airfare to Jackson Hole, WY (JAC), or driving costs to Dubois, WY.

 🡪 Travel Food: These are meals / food needed before you arrive in Dubois and after you leave.

 🡪 Restaurant Meals in Dubois: plan on three (3) restaurant meals while in Dubois: Sunday

 dinner (August 7), Monday dinner (August 8) and Monday dinner (August 15).

 🡪 Backpacking Food: each participant will need to buy all of his/her own backpack food in

 advance. We will use this food beginning Tuesday noon through the following Sunday

 morning / noon. (Detailed backpack food guidelines are in a separate document.)

 🡪 Fishing license ($20-$40, depending on how many days you want to fish.)

 Remaining costs will depend upon equipment a) you already own, b) that you can borrow from family and friends, and c) what you will need to purchase. Remember that whatever you do purchase is an investment in a positive activity that hopefully you will get involved in for years to come. (A detailed packing list is provided in a separate document.)

**How to Apply**

Go to [**http://uyc.ucg.org/camp/challenger-west-2016**](http://uyc.ucg.org/camp/challenger-west-2016). Before filling out an application form, it is highly recommended that you download and read all of the forms and information. If you decide to apply, complete the Application and Health History/Insurance forms and send them to Challenger West director Matthew Fenchel at the address indicated. If you have trouble accessing the forms on-line (they can be filled out and saved on your own computer), please contact Matthew Fenchel at fenchelmc@fuse.net or 513-943-4574.

**Application Deadline—April 3, 2016**

Application deadline is April 3, 2016. However… due to the limited size (10-14 participants) of this expedition and the need for those accepted to begin preparing months in advance, it is highly suggested that you send your application in well before the deadline if possible.