



An Update on Camp Widjiitiwin

Camp Widjiitiwin has a 90 year legacy as a ministry of Muskoka Bible Centre, impacting thousands of campers and staff with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Since 2009, the Widjiitiwin ministry has extended to inner-city youth in partnership with churches and agencies who work in these marginalized communities on a year-round basis. This partnership ministry, which we call IGNITE, grew to encompass 5 of the 9 weeks of the summer season.

For the last 2 summers however, Camp Widjiitiwin was unable to operate due to COVID. There is a recognition that relaunching after an extended shut-down will bring significant challenges in regaining momentum in camper numbers, recruiting staff, and addressing deferred maintenance issues at the Widjiitiwin property. The leadership and board of MBC also recognizes the need to hold our ministries with an open hand and to prayerfully evaluate and steward the resources that God entrusts to us for His glory.

To that end, a thorough assessment of the Widjiitiwin ministry is underway. The process to date has included interviews with alumni, staff, IGNITE partners, donors and other stakeholders. The MBC Board met in September for a day of prayer and discussion. After much prayer and diligent review, the Board has approved a number of initial decisions and next steps:

1. Our focus going forward will be on the IGNITE ministry to youth and families in marginalized communities. This ministry is unique, impactful, and it aligns with the overall MBC mission of helping to grow resilient, biblically rooted families.
2. Camp Widjiitiwin will not operate for the 2022 season. Our focus in 2022 will be to develop a comprehensive plan for the IGNITE ministry.
3. IGNITE ministry plans will be developed by a team comprised of representatives from each of the IGNITE inner city community partners as well as one board member.
4. All aspects of IGNITE programming must be done with excellence and be supported by adequate funding for leadership, operations and facility support.

We are thankful for the faithful leadership that Mike Greenfield (Moose) and Josh Laverty (Heyoo) have brought to Widjiitiwin in recent years, including the development and growth of the IGNITE program. Mike and Josh have left MBC as part of the transition process. Their work will form the foundation upon which an expanded IGNITE program will be built.

We are very excited as we anticipate a new level of impact that the Gospel will have on thousands more families and children living in marginalized, inner-city communities. We are asking our MBC and Widjiitiwin families to participate with us as we develop plans for the IGNITE program, through prayer, input into the process and financial support.

Please feel free to contact me if you have specific questions or if you have interest in partnering with us in this direction.

Your fellow servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Friesen'.

John Friesen