

Hello, Friends.

For many weeks, many of you have been waiting for more information regarding ASP this summer. Thank you for your patience. Over the last few months the NPCASP Leadership Committee has been meeting regularly to go over new Covid-19 information, ASP updates and church meeting restrictions and guidelines for gatherings. Last Sunday, we met again on Zoom to discuss the possibility of an upcoming ASP trip. Here is what was we decided:

While we have remained enthusiastic about hosting a trip in the Summer of 2021, it became increasingly clear that we could not be prepared to take a large group to Appalachia by the week of June 20th, the dates we had reserved. **We have asked ASP to unregister us for the week of June 20**, and they have agreed to do so. Several considerations went into our decision, here are some of them:

While there has been a presidentially stated goal of having vaccinations available for all adults by end of May it is not certain that all of our adult volunteers would be fully vaccinated by June 20th with the vaccinations having reached full efficacy after 2nd doses.

It is not clear when vaccinations for our youth volunteers will become available, but that would likely be later in the summer or early fall.

As we have been unable to meet in person, and will not be able to for some weeks, we do not have the time to prepare our group with team building and fund raisers helping us to select work teams and county assignments.

There are concerns that even in the best case of full vaccinations, on-going recommended social distancing protocols will be nearly impossible given our travel in vans and working and sleeping near to each other. As well as the unknowns of working with the families at the worksites.

To be clear, ASP had given us an extra month, April 1st, as the deadline to finalize our registration. Understandably, they wanted us to delay any final decision as long as possible, hoping for progress with decreasing Covid infection rates and increases with vaccinations. We did not feel that extra month changed things enough for us. And so, after much discussion, we felt the time had come for us to face the situation and to cancel for this year and let all of you know, now. Many of us have plans to make regarding summer school, vacations, sports programs, internships, summer jobs, work schedules, etc.

After the disappointment of the cancellation last summer, we had hoped that there would be much more progress with Covid-19 by now and we were looking forward to making homes warmer, safer and drier again this June. But, as the months went on it started to become clear that because of the pandemic we could not be ready for a June

trip, even with the best of circumstances. ASP understands our situation and looks forward to our working together again, hopefully soon.

There may be other opportunities to serve closer to home, and there is the possibility of putting together a smaller ASP trip later in the summer, or early fall. We will be looking into those possibilities and updating you when we have more information.

We are sure this is not the news many of you were looking forward to. Thank you all for your patience, support and understanding. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email Al Williams.

Al Williams and the entire NPCASP Leadership Team.