



December 17, 2012

Dear Gateway Parents,

I am writing this letter to all of the parents of Gateway students who attended our ETV camp this last July. I want to thank you for your continued care and efforts with your students in helping them follow Christ and walk through difficult circumstances in life. I also want to make sure you are informed about a few decisions that our ETV team has made this fall regarding this last ETV camp as well as the years to come.

### **Camp Credit or Donation**

First of all, our team has decided to give money back to families who paid to send a student to camp. With the tragic events of camp and the week being cut short, our camp fund ended with a large surplus. Our ETV Leadership Team decided to do two things with this surplus of money: 1) Leave a reasonable reserve in our camp fund for future camp expenses, and 2) offer the rest of the money back to churches at an even per student amount of \$75. This money is being returned to churches to be used at the church leadership's discretion. Here at Gateway, we have decided to offer this back to families. As a parent, you have two options for this money:

- 1) Take it as a credit for your child for future Gateway camp events (Winter Camp, Fall Retreat, ETV 2013).
- 2) Decline to receive the money and offer it back to Gateway to be used for students who cannot pay full price for future camps.

We can only offer this money to those who paid for ETV 2102. If you paid full price, you will receive \$75. If you came on partial payment, we will give you the percentage of your payment in return (Example: If you paid ½, we will credit you \$37, etc.). We cannot make a decision about the \$75 for your family until you contact us. After considering your family's needs and convictions, please contact my assistant, Kailey Anderton ([kaileyanderton@gmail.com](mailto:kaileyanderton@gmail.com)), to let her know of your decision. A simple e-mail will suffice.

### **Continued Support For Students**

Also, I want you to be aware of a number of resources out there to continue to help you and your children grieve and walk through this difficult experience. While many of our students and staff are finding great hope and healing in Christ, we do know this continues to be difficult for many.

A few resources we continue to provide:

- 1) Gateway's Youth Staff & Youth Pastor – We are not 'experts' in walking students through grief, but we are sharing in this experience and eager to meet with any student or parent who wants to talk. Our goal is to listen, to pray for, and continue to point people toward Christ in whom there is hope and healing.
- 2) Grief Share – A class currently offered on Sunday afternoons through Gateway. It is designed to help those who are dealing with the loss of someone close. A few of our students are currently finding this experience helpful.
- 3) River Rock Counseling – River Rock Church's counseling ministry continues to offer free Christian counseling services to any students, parents, and youth workers who are affected by the events of ETV. Contact me for more information.

### **ETV 2013**

At this time our team has not officially made any decisions regarding ETV 2013. It is the consensus of our team to do another camp together in the summer of 2013. While we understand the real challenges this will be for parents, staff, and students, we see the great value in continuing to work together and provide the ETV camp environment for our students.

The real challenge for 2013 is location and date. While we love the Wasco County Fairgrounds and all the surrounding outdoor opportunities it provides, we are unsure yet if this will be the best place for our staff and students this year. We want to continue to provide the best environment possible for students to hear from and respond to Jesus. We know this will involve everything from fun, adventure, safety, and many opportunities for students and leaders to have shared experiences in God's creation and with his gospel message. We are unsure if we can provide this best through returning to the Fairgrounds or finding a new location for the coming year.

At this time, we are continuing to seek God's leading in this decision. We are also doing three things: 1) Seeking advice from many sources of wisdom, 2) Exploring some alternative options for locations, and 3) confirming if a different date is available at the Fairgrounds. We are also considering what will be the best way to communicate to parents, students, and churches our plan for safety for students and staff in our next week of camp.

Our goal is to make a final decision by early/mid January. When the decision is final, we will be eager to communicate the plans as well as the reasons behind our decision to all of our ETV family. We don't want anyone (parents, students, and leaders) to be uninformed about this. We trust that God will continue to lead us and open doors for the gospel to go out to students as he has done so faithfully in the past.

### **Safety for Gateway's Students & Staff**

It is our desire to continue to do everything we can to provide great environments for students to take their next step in following Christ. We know that students' safety is a big part of this. We have appreciated the input from parents at the two open forums we have hosted as well as the many private conversations with individuals connected to Gateway. Your great affirmation as well as your constructive input continues to be helpful. Our youth staff is seeking to plan future events with the desire to demonstrate wisdom and seek the input of others not directly involved in making the plans of camp. In all things, we want to demonstrate a great faith in God who has and always will hold our students and leaders together according to his good and perfect plan. As we make plans, we will do our best to keep parents informed so you can make great decisions about your family.

I do want to apologize for the length of this letter, but I want to do my best to make sure you hear all the information. Again, I am so grateful for the parents of our students here at Gateway and the amazing effort and commitment you have in loving your kids. May God continue to give you strength and wisdom each day as you serve and support your kids. If you have any questions or thoughts regarding any of the information in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ,  
Mathias Califf  
Pastor of Student Ministries