

Hello Camper!

Camp Pride is coming up soon! We are Quinn, KJ, and Skyler and we are the Co-Deans (program leaders) of Camp Pride! We are very excited to welcome you to the beautiful campus of Pilgrim Lodge on Lake Cobbosseecontee. We're here to work with the camp staff and counselors to make sure you enjoy your week at camp to the fullest. Before you start packing, here is some important information, as well as tips and helpful reminders to make our week together fun, safe, and full of PRIDE!

Housing. Campers will be housed in our cabins by age/grade and not by gender marker. This means you will likely be housed with people with different genders than you (or you might finally have a cabin where gender doesn't matter!). If you have any questions or concerns about this housing structure, please feel free to reach out to us about this.

Technology. We understand that cell phones help everyone stay connected to families and friends, but we also want to help everyone form a community with people physically present at camp. So, cell phones will be allowed in the morning before breakfast Tuesday to Friday, but otherwise we request you leave them to the side. Counselors will hold onto phones for safekeeping. Another wrinkle about cell phone use is that PL has a safety policy of not posting photographs of campers while they are at camp. So you can post photos of the pretty sunset, or adults who give you their consent, but please wait until you go home to show the world about your lovely time at camp. Also, there may be people who simply don't want their photo published. This gets tricky in group shots or photos with people in the background. We'll try to respect requests for privacy as best we are able under the circumstances.

Swim attire. Because some of us may be in transition, or not comfortable revealing our upper body to go swimming (as is sometimes culturally expected) we are asking everyone, regardless of gender identity, to have their chest and below the waist area covered.

Interfaith approach. We are an interfaith camp, not a secular camp. This means that multiple times a day we will have times to consider spirituality and celebrate different faiths through an LGBTQ lens. Some of these faiths include (but are not limited to): Protestant and Catholic Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Wicca, Bahai, and others. There will be no efforts towards conversion to any of these faiths, and we ask that each camper come with an open mind and questions to share. Pilgrim Lodge *is* a Christian camp, so there are Christian symbols (crosses, fish, etc) around the camp. We welcome campers who are Atheist or do not practice a given faith, but reemphasize that topics of faith and spirituality will come up on a daily basis over the course of the camp. We acknowledge that campers might come to Camp Pride having been hurt by the church, and reassure campers that the host camp affirms LGBTQ identities, and so do our Camp Pride counselors, who come from a variety of faith backgrounds.

Out as you want to be. Camp Pride is for members of the LGBTQ community and their allies. Some people will have been "out" for years, loud and proud, and others might be in that

process, and others still thinking about it. And others will be allies! Camp Pride is for everyone working on their own personal journey, whatever that means.

Pilgrim Lodge Community. This is a camp in central Maine. It is rustic with reasonable amenities (each cabin has its own bathroom, shower, bunk beds, and porch), but please be prepared to meet some woodland creatures and get close to nature. The Pilgrim Lodge community is based on a system of mutual respect, courtesy, and celebration of our differences as well as what brings us together. Additionally, we have expectations about how we treat ourselves and others while in community at Camp Pride. If you feel that you are not able to get through a week without harming yourself or someone else, this community might not be the best place for you at this time.

Arranging Travel Plans.

If you are coming to Maine by plane or bus and need to schedule pick-up or drop-off, we ask you to write to karen@pilgrimlodge.org as soon as plans are finalized, so as to facilitate communication. The ideal time for flights into Portland (PWM) airport are ones arriving before 2pm on the first day of camp, and leaving between 11am to 1pm on the last day of camp, to allow for pickup and dropoff to the airport.

A comprehensive travel document can be found at

<https://www.pilgrimlodge.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Transportation-Information-for-Parents.pdf>

Please don't hesitate to write to karen@pilgrimlodge.org if you have questions after reading that document.

What to bring. Here's a list of what to bring in addition to a week's worth of summer (daytime: 75F, nighttime: 55F) clothes:

- Warm sleeping clothes (for possible cold nights)
- Warm daytime clothes (just in case)
- A rain jacket or poncho (just in case)
- At least one pair of closed-toe shoes like sneakers, hiking boots, etc
- A Fancy and/or Fabulous (gender affirming) outfit for the Dress-Up Dinner on Thursday
- Pillow & Pillowcase
- Bedding (sleeping bag or sheets+**warm** blanket), Pillow
- Towel for swimming and showering
- Soap & Shampoo
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- A notebook & pen
- Waterbottle
- Book(s) to read
- A sacred text (whatever this means for you)
- Flashlight
- Bug Spray

- ❑ Sunscreen
- ❑ Money if you want to buy store stuff. We'll put it in an account so there is no cash at camp. You'll get what you don't spend back before you leave.
- ❑ Medications
- ❑ Supplies for your art: musical instruments, paints, etc. (We will have a coffee house for campers to share their art with one another at the end of the week.)
- ❑ Pride Swag: flags, tshirts, etc. All identity pride flags encouraged. (If you don't have any, don't worry—we'll make some).

Movie Night

At Camp Pride, we like to have a movie night to celebrate stories of LGBTQ people. Last year's selection was *Rent*. This year, we will be viewing the movie *Pride* (2014), which is the heartwarming true story of the collaboration between the miners' strike in the UK in the 1980s and a group of LGBTQ activists who raised money for them. The movie has been rated anywhere from PG to R, depending on the country (in the USA it is rated R). If you have concerns about the content of the movie due to its rating, we encourage to reach out to us and also to watch it yourself. It is available to rent on multiple online video platforms (Amazon, iTunes).

Health Forms and Meds

We *heartily* encourage guardians to submit health forms earlier than the first day of camp, so we can best serve the camp's med schedules and prepare for any extra needs.

Weekly Schedule

To help new campers and to get you excited about all the fun we'll be having, here is a list of our evening activities:

Sunday - Camp orientation and campus tour, meeting activity groups

Monday - Flower crown making

Tuesday - Movie Night

Wednesday - Cookout and field games

Thursday - Fabulous dinner and dance

Friday - Coffee House (low pressure talent show) and Slideshow

During the week, here are some of what you might do as a camper:

Sing a song at a late night ukulele jam session, learn more about different faiths from the LGBTQ perspective, paddle a canoe for the first (or fiftieth) time, ask questions, write a poem, jump into the lake, get crafty in the arts and craft cabin, walk a meditation labyrinth, learn about LGBTQ history, tie-dye a t-shirt, make friends from around the country, attend a dance, read a book on the porch of the lodge, play capture the flag, plan a sacred service, dress up in your most fabulous outfit for a fancy dinner, learn to walk in high heels/tie a tie, make friends, have time to figure stuff out about yourself, take a deeeeeep breath, and relax.

And that's it! Thanks for reading this letter. If you have any questions about anything in this letter, we encourage you to write to us (contact details below). We look forward to seeing you at camp!

Best,
KJ, Quinn, and Skyler
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