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For a city kid a summer at camp can be a life-changing experience. Camp means the freedom of wide open spaces, the thrill of discovery, and the opportunity to stretch their limbs and grow in body, mind, and spirit.

The United Church has been involved with camping for more than 100 years and it has long been one of our church's important ministries. In south central Ontario five United Church Camps host 2,300 children and youth each year.

This year, **Camp Big Canoe** (www.campbigcanoe.ca) celebrates 85 years of camping and 50 years at its site on Hart Lake in Muskoka (and operating as Camp Big Canoe).

Sparrow Lake Camp (www.sparrowlakecamp.com) celebrates 105 years this year, and is facing the need to refurbish buildings, some of which have been on site since before the camp was founded.

Camp Simpresca, on Georgian Bay, is entering its 68th year of providing wilderness adventures for the children of south central Ontario. Their programs go far beyond the hikes and swimming on which they were founded. See pictures of their high ropes course on line at www.simpresca.com

Lake Scugog Camp (<http://campscugog.org>) provides a fresh air camping experience for more than 300 children each year, as it has for more than 90 years. All of its campers are sponsored children. The camp's program embraces "all comers", knowing that the magic of camping fun can change a life forever.

Ryde Lake Camp (www.rydelakecamp.com) is an all-girls camping alternative. Its history of 65 years of catering to the needs of young women makes it unique in our United Church camping circle.



At the heart of the programming of each of these volunteer-led camps is a simple truth: children learn, believe and live what they experience. At camp they

experience the warm love of Christian community and the confidence-building development of their own physical and interpersonal skills.

Ensuring that the camps continue to operate and that they are financially accessible for all children has become an important component of Toronto United Church Council's work. Every year 600 of the children who attend the five camps are fully or partially subsidized by Toronto United Church Council's Camping Opportunities Fund. And no stigma is attached to those in need of help – at camp every child is accepted for who they are - a child of God.

[Read more about the Camping Opportunities Fund here.](#)

[Make a donation to the fund on Canada Helps.](#)

The Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon



The camps require ongoing professional maintenance and construction services in addition to the countless hours put in by volunteers.

Part of the financing for that work is provided by runners and walkers who participate in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon's annual charity

challenge. Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of donors more than \$150,000 has been raised for this work over the past nine years.

2017 will be the tenth year that Council and the camps have participated in the marathon and it should be a great one. We've set a target of **20 walkers**, and a goal to raise **\$20,000** for camp building renewal.

Would you like to be your congregation's representative in the walk on October 22?

It's simple! You can [register online here](#) or contact Ali Hayes at (905) 771-5124 for more information. When registering, don't forget to use one of our charity pin codes to receive a discounted registration rate.

Charity registration rates are:

\$40 for the 5k if you use the code **17TUCC5K**

\$50 for the 5k with a stroller if you use the code **17TUCC5ST**

\$80 for the marathon or half-marathon if you use the code **17TUCC42K**

Anyone who raises over \$200 will have their entry fee reimbursed after October 22.

Once you've signed up for the race event of your choice you'll be prompted to set up an online fundraising page. You can then send the link to that page to family and friends.

[Click here for full instructions on the registration process.](#)

Support YOUR Camp

Do you have a special relationship with one of the United Church camps in Toronto Conference? Camp Big Canoe, Camp Simpresca, Lake Scugog Camp,

Sparrow Lake Camp and Ryde Lake Camp will each have a team of walkers and runners participating in the Charity Challenge. If you're interested in fundraising for one of the camps in particular contact Ali Hayes for instructions on how to join a camp team - (905) 771-5124.

Can't Make it on October 22nd but still want to show your support?

If your schedule won't allow you to participate in this event please consider making a contribution to Council's Pass It On! Marathon team.

[Click here to visit our team page!](#)

All gifts are much appreciated and any gift over \$10 will receive a charitable tax receipt.



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Our mailing address is:

Toronto United Church Council
24-30 Wertheim Court
Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 1B9
Canada

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