

MDYC Family,

To say that 2020 has been full of unexpected twists and turns may be an understatement. It was truly heartbreaking to not finish the 2019-2020 season the way we had intended. We know that many of you have had to personally alter your plans and life over the past 5 months in ways that have been both difficult and disappointing. Through all of this, however, we are reminded of a few very important things: 1) God is still in control, and, 2) We only ever have the illusion that we are in control.

James, the brother of Jesus, reminds us that we should, *“Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don’t try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.”* We believe that God CAN and WILL use this time to help us become more mature and complete Christ-followers as we persevere in our faith under these challenging times.

As the Board of Directors for MDYC we love watching our students come together, build a ‘forever family,’ sing together, put on concerts, and participate in tour. But above all of those things, we recognize that we have two main responsibilities: showing Christ to those we come in contact with, and providing a safe place for our students. For us, this is paramount.

It is for this reason that, due to the current circumstances, the Board believes it best to push back the official start of our season. This means that we will not be having our auditions and parent meeting as scheduled in September. Those who have applied will be notified when a new date is determined. We want you to know that it is our intention to have an altered 2020-2021 season, and are continuing to meet and plan how best to accomplish that and should have some more specific dates and times to you within the next few weeks. We promise to keep you informed and are open to your feedback along the way.

In addition, we want to inform you that the Board is supporting our MDYC Music Director, Jason Debandt, in taking a leave of absence. Over the past 24 hours the Board was made aware of serious workplace allegations posted on social media about Jason. Jason was willing to meet and discuss those issues with the MDYC Board of Directors. While these allegations are serious in nature, it is important to note that at this time no allegations of misconduct have been received for MDYC. We, the Board of Directors for MDYC, have procedures in

place to prevent any private one-on-one contact between students and adults. In addition, we have continued to enforce the practice of students and adults gathering in groups no smaller than three. Again, one of the paramount responsibilities for us is to ensure the safety of our students.

In conclusion, we want to remind you that our trust and hope is in Christ! While we do not know what tomorrow holds, we do know that God has never forsaken us! In addition, it is our belief that challenging times can either make a person bitter or better - and the choice is ours! We can choose to look at the situations that we are faced with as defeating, or in the words of James the brother of Jesus, we can allow them to make us more mature and well-developed. We are praying for you and hope that you will allow these difficult times to deepen your faith in God and grow your spiritual walk with Him! We also want to encourage you to “not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs” and to remember to “be kind and compassionate to one another” (Ephesians 4:29,32). All around us are opportunities to hurt people with our words, tear down, gossip, slander, and build walls. We are praying that you will continue in building everyone up during a time when many feel torn down. Please join us in praying for the entire MDYC family.

We know that many of you may have questions, concerns or thoughts regarding: the 2020-2021 season, COVID precautions, Jason’s leave of absence, who might serve as an interim Director, etc. We ask that you address those concerns or suggestions with Philip Brackney (pbrackney22@gmail.com), our Board Chairman. Thank you for your patience with us as we do our best to point people to Christ while maintaining the safest and wisest situations as possible for our students.

In Christ,
MDYC Board