

CARPENTER'S CROSS MINISTRIES USA 2010

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Seattle, Washington. This morning as we drove across the city and over the Lake Washington floating bridge to Mercer Island, the clouds were clearing and the water beginning to take on life! This city is beautifully placed on Puget Sound; with a peninsula separating it from the ocean (with the Olympic mountain range running down that peninsula) while on the other side are the majestic Cascades - some still snow tipped. Yesterday we commenced a Vacation Bible School with New Hope International Church. We have built up a relationship with these kids over the years, and it is great to arrive to squeals and hugs and to see who has grown! The theme here is "Treasure Seekers" and around 60 kids started the day - this should increase throughout the week.

God has been doing some great things already this summer in US. Today was no different. *Talking to one of the adult helpers, I heard of some "small" miracles. Firstly, she was unsure whether she could get leave from work for this week, but suddenly just before the weekend was told that she could take the time off. When she arrived at VBS yesterday, she found a young girl Arlene had come with a friend. When Arlene was younger, she had spent most weekends with this worker, due to trauma in her family, and then contact was lost when the mother moved. Last week this girl was invited to attend VBS by an old friend of her mother's who 'just happened' to bump into her mother after years of separation. When she saw this helper at the church, she was very happy - ran to her and started to share one of the Bible stories she remembered from years' back - the story of Joseph. And what story are we teaching from this week? You guessed it - the life of Joseph, and how God keeps His promises even when we can't see what is happening to us ahead of time, or why. He is faithful. Our verse is Proverbs 3:5,6.*

Back Tracking:

Mountain Kids' Day Camp happens at an old campsite in Idaho City (wild western town of some 600 plus people) Many of the families here are escaping to live alternative lifestyles, and alcoholism and drug addiction are common problems. In addition, it is the kids' who suffer, and as they come into their teens, depression and suicide rates are sadly increasing. Michelle Alden has a vision to change this in her community and beyond and Isaiah's Ranch offers camps and programs for elementary (primary) school kids, along with activities for teens, and adults. Healthy Foundations, a non-profit organisation set up by Michelle, offers professional counselling and courses. You can check them out at www.isaiahsranch.org

This week presented some challenges and we had our intercessors on the job! One seven-year old girl physically attacked the director and afflicted some bruising of brow and cheek, along with a swollen and cut lip! This little girl is tiny...but when anger erupts, it takes a strong adult to hold her. Her mom is an addict and she is now living with a grandma who is at her wits end. Just before camp finished, this child's biological father (with whom she had contact) died unexpectedly. She was not told of this until after camp. The God- part is that she was one of the children accepted by our next camp (RFKC) and so had a second week in the presence of God, experiencing unconditional love and acceptance. More of this later. There were a number of highlights at this camp - the concert where one developmentally challenged little girl stood up on stage and perfectly sang, "Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing...will separate me from God's love." It was tissue time for us. Our teaching was from Moses - we talked about abandonment, foster families, anger and the results of anger, fear, running away, and that in spite of all, God was still there and had an amazing plan for Moses' life. The kids hung on every word, and we know that the seeds planted in tender hearts will be watered and WILL produce fruit.



BREAK - It was delightful to have two of our good friends visit between camps. Graeme and Angela Jones arrived en route to visit to their daughter in UK. They are two of our intercessor team. We were able to go with them to Victoria (Vancouver Island, BC) to visit the magnificent Butchart Gardens - a great treat before heading back to the mountains of Idaho for the next camp.

Royal Family Kids' Camp - Boise, Idaho

RFKC has been the model on which Southern Cross Kids' Camps is based, and we have been connected with the Boise Camp since 1995 when we first joined the dedicated team led by Tom Turco. This year was an exceptional year for an outright attack from the enemy. These camps DO bring about changes to children's hearts; they interrupt the chain of abuse, and present kids with hope and strategies for making good choices. Before the kids arrived, the fight was on. One team member became ill and had to return to Boise. Another choked during the evening meal and ended up in the hospital having surgery. As the bus arrived, one little boy staggered off with a temperature of 103 and complaining of a stiff neck - he was taken back to Boise for treatment. Prayer partners were alerted and the battle was on. Several children had severe anger problems; by the first night, one experienced adult was ready to return home, seemingly defeated by his boy. However, God was NOT defeated. As the week went on, the changes began. Before leaving campers were given the opportunity to write a note: Jesus I want YOU to know... and fill in the blanks. Here are some of the comments. Check out www.rfkcboise.org

"Jesus, I want You in my heart - I love You."

"Jesus, please get my sister unscared of the dark"

"Jesus, I want you to know that I am really scared at night without my mom..."

"Jesus, I really need you by my side."

"Jesus, I'm afraid to leave my sister....I'm afraid of losing her....suicide, people with guns, murder...."

(Some of our campers are separated from siblings due to foster place shortages)

"Jesus, I want you to know that I've had a hard time in my life...and I need your help ..."

"Jesus - find me a home" (Some of our campers had been in several failed adoptions - sent back because of their behavioural problems. Rejection after rejection leads to extreme dysfunction and inability to bond)

"Jesus, I don't want my mom drinking again..."

"Jesus, please help me get back home" (no matter what the home situation dad and mom are still dad and mom)

"Jesus, you need to know that (Childs own name) really wants to come back...he really, really wants to come back to this camp

(This child had been the anger-riddled camper who almost broke his adult buddy)

He certainly does need to come back to this camp - below is an excerpt from his buddy's story of camp.

My camper "A" could best be described as a 10 year old bully filled with intense anger." A" spent most of the first 4 days at camp verbally and physically abusing the other boys at camp... When corrected after bad behaviour "A" would fly into a rage, run (usually down the hill), and begin using horrible language. He threatened to kill himself, and me as he searched for rocks (or anything else to throw). He tried punching and kicking me of several occasions. When "A" would calm down he would usually come to me and apologize but his positive actions were usually short lived and I had to keep constant watch or he would soon go after other boys pretty much right away. "A" did like swimming and making crafts out of wood and when he was kept busy, he did pretty well.

The turning point came Thursday night when he was in his bunk and I asked him if there was anything we could pray about and he said we should pray for Grandpa because he had a brain tumor. So I asked God to remove the tumor from Grandpa's head and then I looked directly at "A" and prayed that just as God would remove Grandpa's tumor, he would remove all the anger from "A" and replace that anger with his love, joy, and peace. After I prayed that prayer, I looked right into "A"s eyes and for a moment, I could see a normal little boy, totally at peace.



Buddies waiting for the bus to arrive.



Face painting is very popular



Polar Bear swim - 7 a.m. in a mountain lake!

Miracle Mountain Camp - Grangeville, Idaho

Both the previous camps have guidelines as to how much we can present to the children, but Miracle Mountain is totally different. Held on a beautiful property high up in the mountains around Grangeville, the views sweep all the way to the mountains of Montana. In rustic cabins with pit toilets and generators providing power for lighting etc., the kids experience the adventure of the forest and the meetings take place in a huge blue and white revival tent. Most years we pick a theme and run with that, usually basing it around a Bible character or series of stories, but this year Sue felt to lead the children into God's presence in a unique way. Using worship, prayer, soaking in God's presence, listening to His voice, hearing Him speak in different 'languages" (through His Word, through nature, through music, through dreams and more...) the campers really did begin to enter in, not as spectators or participators, but as worshippers. We did have a western theme, and interspersed with meetings, and magnificent country-cooked meals, kids chose and decorated their own stick-horse. (We thought that the older kids might have turned up their nose at the stick horses, but as one 11 yr old boy said as he showed me his noble steed "Ya know, I'm actually kinda proud of this!" And a 10 yr old girl noted as she galloped to the tent and then hitched her horse to the outside rail "I'm really having fun!" (Sounding a little surprised). With games and crafts, Bible Quiz, fishing and more, there was much to enjoy, but it was the tent time that saw kids' responding to God in special ways. Having established God's plan for salvation and Jesus' sacrifice for us, we concentrated on the keys of power and authority He has given us, along with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Children asked and received dreams from God. Note: we distinguished between "Snack Shack dreams" and "God Dreams" after one little boy shared about being chased by hungry monkeys in a car filled with bananas! ☺ Some children really did receive dreams from God - about His love, His protection, heaven, and more. In one session, we had children listen to worship music and draw what God showed them, or draw something they heard in the worship songs. Not a sound could be heard as kids knelt and drew and adults quietly prayed. On the last night children prayed for each other, then for the adult workers. One woman who came to cook burnt her finger and blisters were forming. The children prayed and those blisters simply disappeared - no redness, no soreness. The children were so excited. Several miracles happened, each one making their faith stronger. I had several children come to pray for me - from seven year olds to 'cool" 12 year old boys who prayed so well and hugged me before moving on. Below is an email from the camp director, Tammy Sherman.

"C's (girl camper) mom called me. I tell you God is fun. At the same time, C was being prayed for on behalf of her family---- her sister - a drug addict - was supposed to be getting into a pick-up truck headed from Orofino. No one could wake her so they left her. The pick-up was in a head-on collision with a drunk driver and the back was smashed where her sister would have been sitting. C knows that while she prayed God changed the course of events for her sister. I was able to share with her mom that while two other campers, D and K, were standing in for their mom and dad to be saved their dad, who was swimming with a friend in a strong current, popped back out of the current that took his friend to an un-certain death. It's fun to stand in awe of God from calls like these just moments after getting home.

T, Q and his sister are ready for next year. J shared that her sister that was there to get Q and T today is into the Taro cards and devil worship. I just started laughing and praising God----I told her not for long! God is moving!"

When stuff like this happens, you just sit back. It's all God's doing not ours, but how neat to be a part of it!



Stick horses



Kids praying for adults



Roping time!

Well, that's the first month of ministry for us. We are now at New Hope and next week will be taking an evangelistic outreach in Eastern Washington. We want to thank you for your faithfulness in prayer - that's what we treasure and need - and also for your financial support. We are still part of an airfare short for Czech Republic (Ethiopia is covered) so would you pray particularly for this please. We would love to hear from you - our email is below.

Blessings and love - *Carolyn and Sue*

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