



On the Right Team

by Don Roe

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. Psalm 119:9

I must be getting old! Twice this summer former campers brought their children to camp. I had the opportunity to catch up on these men's lives and, unlike with most parents, I also got to hear why these non-church goers were sending their kids to camp--so that they would experience Christian community here like their fathers had. We had made a difference in their lives.

What was camp like this summer? Everyone was excited that we finally could DO overnight camping again, although we did have to send 5 volunteers home throughout the summer when they tested positive for Covid. There are so many more opportunities to build relationships and minister to the kids than there were when running day camps. We did not have as many summer missionaries as we would like; sometimes it hurt to see the children not get the attention they needed, but I have to admit God was faithful in sending us enough people, often last minute, so that we could operate. It seemed like the leadership team of Jael, Tj, Julia and myself were doing 2 or 3 jobs at a time. It was exhausting but I am so thankful to be ministering with such strong and faithful people.

A highlight of my summer was when W, age 9, received his first Bible:
 9:45 am "Look, I have a Bible!"
 10:30 "I'm going to put my name in my Bible!"
 11:45 "I brought my Bible to Chapel!"
 12:05 {the speaker was prompted by God to ask for a volunteer to read Psalm 23:1 and chose W} "The Lord is my shepherd, I have all that I need!"
 12:20 {speaker asked the campers} "What has been the best part of your day?"
 "Swimming!" "Throwing mud!" "I have a Bible!"



And this was just what I heard in passing. I am sure that it went on all day. It thrills me to see such excitement over God's Word. Ministry is sometimes very tough but the joy of seeing God's work in people's lives is worth it!

This was a re-building year. It wasn't in our plans but it was good and very encouraging for the future. Thank you for your prayers and thank God for everything. He is real and alive and working His will every day.

Camp Needs

- ✦ One or two DSLR cameras
- ✦ More youth and small adult size life jackets
- ✦ Kitchen volunteers for the weekend camper retreats this winter
- ✦ Moose tickets to take campers to for follow up
- ✦ Coffee shop/restaurant gift cards for discipleship of campers/volunteers
- ✦ Electrician to install a baseboard heater for our office
- ✦ New plastic snow shovel
- ✦ Several #2 Robertson drill bits
- ✦ Approximately 2' X 3' metal box with locking door for our lifeguard stand



...because kids are worth it

The Perfect Story

by Tj and Amanda Penner

My plans aren't your plans, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my plans than your plans. Isaiah 55:8-9

I love reading and watching exciting mystery adventures! As the story progresses you start to piece together the clues left for you throughout the narrative. It's fun to piece together the story, try to figure out what's actually going on, and then hold on until the end of the tale and see if you were right! Often I wish life (and camp ministry!) was like this.

It's exciting to be a part of everything that happens at Gimli Bible Camp! It's like a mystery adventure in many ways. The only problem, and it's quite a big one... is that we do not get to see the end of the story. It is amazing how God is a masterful Story Teller. How he takes 30+ staff and weaves all of our stories together to serve his Kingdom. He takes 30+ kids a week and interweaves their stories with the staff and each other's. Talk about the ultimate multi-tasker!

So although we can get stressed out when we are within hours of cancelling a week of camp because we do not have enough staff in place... We see over and over that indeed our plans, are not always God's plans! He is working in all of us, and does an amazing job of intersecting our stories and lives together to create a powerful testimony of his Kingdom in action!

The highlight for my summer was taking 6 of our LDP campers on a 3 day canoe trip. We paddled over 40km in total going through 4 different lakes. Out of the 6 campers, 2 had been in a canoe for more than 30 minutes at a time, and 2 had slept in a tent before! We paddled to a little Island, hours away from 'civilization' to have a little adventure of our own. The key phrase of the trip was, "It build's Character!"

This is what I would always tell them when they complained they were tired, or getting hungry, or wanting to escape the mosquitoes! Although they would mumble the phrase to each other, I think they really got it! They experienced something in life that was very difficult to overcome on many levels, yet they were able to overcome it! There was one really valuable lesson we learned on the trip. None of us would have been able to do the trip alone. We needed each other. This is just like the Christian walk, we cannot do it alone. There are too many challenges and obstacles to overcome. If these LDP boys want to continue walking out their faith with God, they need to find community to do it with! —Tj—



From my perspective, having campers out to the farm was a great success!

A few factors made it more challenging this year than last. Those factors are: Flooding and constant rain made the animal pens and backyard unusable; all the animals needed to be moved into the front yard on farm-visit days, and then moved back again afterward; TJ was full-time living at camp and I had a newborn, so every week I needed to recruit help to make sure everything got ready in time.

However, like many things that require a great effort, it gave a great yield! Our kids and dogs were always on high alert on Fridays, watching down the road for the camp bus to emerge from the dust! Walter the retriever stood trembling at the ready with a ball to fetch, anticipating getting all the scratches he could imagine; enthusiastic Penner kids eager to tour campers around and make friends. The campers loved the farm without exception.

Campers that fought all week and couldn't share a civil word at camp could sit together on a picnic blanket and share snuggling a litter of kittens. Kids and counsellors talked while they groomed horses or painted manes (or their own hair) with bingo dabbers. Kids had permission to chase Lemon, a rooster loose on the yard, which was always a riot! One particular teen girl didn't want to come to the farm at all and reluctantly came with the worst attitude. As it turns out, she was the only camper of the summer to actually catch the rooster! She carried him around the rest of the visit like he was the Stanley Cup!

Chickens, piglets, a bunny, kittens, dogs, horses and goats, all received their share of love and attention. Animals have a profound softening and mellowing effect on a kid's demeanor. The kids can't help but want to connect with the animals, which requires some openness. God designed this, and it's brilliant. Where people who carry hurt and trauma may not be able to let other people in, they can't help but let the animals in. The beauty of God's creation, the wide open space and fresh air are God's ministering elements.

For all the mornings I felt the quickening angst of getting the farm prepped, I was never disappointed with the outcome. God has shone his favor on us, giving us a life-giving space and crew of creatures that we are so pleased to share with our Bible camp friends, most of which live in the concrete jungles of Winnipeg. —Amanda—

...because kids are worth it!

Revived Heart

by Jael Napoleon

"He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness." -Psalms 23:3

Going into this summer I was tired. It had been two years since overnight camps, and I was worried about how it would go. I had had only one year with the camp as a fulltime missionary before covid came. Those months of covid and restrictions had really been a thief of my joy. You could almost say that I had a sense of dread going into our staff training. But as always God provided and changed my heart as I submitted to Him.

This summer was such a refreshing one for me. I'm still trying to figure out how something can be so exhausting yet so reviving at the same time. That's what this camp season was for me this year. It was exhausting because camp is tiring. It was tiring with the early mornings of getting coffee ready for people before staff meetings and prepping and praying over my morning devotion with the staff. There were late nights sitting by the outside bathrooms saying good night to cabins as they came to get ready for bed. I was also frequently jogging to get extra pillows and toothbrushes to replace ones that had accidentally been left at home. Before going to my cabin, I would go walk around the cabins to make sure everyone was settling down for bed. There were even later nights when a camper couldn't sleep or a whole cabin of little girls was homesick and crying. There were many times of patiently waiting for an upset camper to decide where they wanted to be for skill time. It was wearing to sit at the office computer and figure out how to make cabins work with the many weeks we were short-staffed. But all those times were simultaneously reviving my own heart. It was a blessing to be able to



spend time with the kids, to go into a cabin and sing them to sleep, to share my stuffed animal with a homesick child, to love on them. I prayed as I walked around the cabins or stood in the kitchen waiting for the coffee maker. I reminded myself to set my heart to wait expectantly to see how God was going to use the week with the staff we had.

This summer revived my joy and refreshed my passion. My passion to love on these kids and build relationship with them, to point them to Jesus. Some of these kids I've known for a lot of years already. I've seen them grow and change over the years and sometimes it is joyful thing and other times it's not. Sometimes its hard to watch over the years how their lives go because their own choices and the choices of others. But what a blessing it is for me to be in a position where I can invest in them and love them with a supernatural love from God alone. I can truly say I'm excited going into this fall and winter to minister and pour out. We serve a big God, I'm in awe of that thought often. I'm so glad everything rests in His Sovereign hands, including myself.

Praise

- ✦ We had a number of campers this summer whom we had not seen for two years that came back excited for the overnight camp experience
- ✦ For the opportunity to take the campers to Tj and Amanda's farm every week to commune with the animals
- ✦ God provided us with lifeguards and health officers this summer so we could run camp
- ✦ Jael's health and endurance was better than she anticipated it being this summer
- ✦ For the cabin leaders that are wanting to continue discipling their campers this fall and winter

Prayer requests

- ✦ For Jael's health as she is looking at another surgery
- ✦ For the preparation and planning of 4 camper discipleship retreats this winter
- ✦ That God would continue to develop a heart of ministry in the lives of the cabin leaders and volunteers this summer
- ✦ For the seven former campers who were part of the Leadership Development Program this summer; to continue growing in their relationship with God
- ✦ Filling our remaining open weekends with rental groups
- ✦ For Tj and Don as they continue the transition of responsibilities

...because kids are worth it!

My Mother

by Charlotte Roe

*Even to your old age and grey hairs I am He,
I am He who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you. Isaiah 46:4*

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In January, my mother's health started to decline and she no longer could be left alone for long periods of time. So all of my siblings and I got together and set up a schedule so that there

would always be someone with her. We could do this because there were eight of us. I took the night shifts from Monday to Thursday morning. This lasted from January till August 11th, when God called her home.

Mom lived to be 92 years old and had always loved being active. Whether it was exercising in front of the TV, curling, shuffleboard, lawn bowling, dancing, baking, organizing, or lots and lots of walking, she did it. To Mom, being active wasn't a part of life, it was life, and she lived it to the fullest!

Mom always took life's difficult moments in stride, never sitting to long in her misfortunes. After her stroke 10 years ago, she rallied and exercised her way out of that walker. She also practised her language skills to try and get back her ability to speak. We sang songs and read words as if she was back in grade school. Even though she didn't get all her speech back she retained her great outlook on life by laughing at the funny things that would come out of her mouth.

Two years ago when Mom was 90, she fell and broke her hip. We all braced for the worst, because most people do not recover from a break



at that age. But as you can see from these pictures, she was at it again, exercising her way out of it. I tried to convince her that maybe she should wait a while before she jumped back on the treadmill, but I was wasting my breath. She was bound and determined to walk again! Believe me I took these pictures quick so I could be right beside her. And walk again she did!

But finally her body had enough and the last year of her life she went from her walker to her wheel chair. But even in her wheel chair, I saw her standing and sitting over and over for some exercise.

At night we talked a lot about heaven and what it would be like. She was definitely ready to go, but was scared about how it would happen. I prayed that God would give her peace about it. Later when she was in the hospital, my sister Colleen and I went to visit her. Mom was very excited to tell us something, and she wanted us to know that it wasn't a dream, it really hap-

pened. She told us that God brought her to the room He was preparing for her, and she was very happy with the way He set it up. Then Jesus came and brought her on to a boat and she felt so happy and content.

Mom spent the last day of her life vibrant and at total peace. What a beautiful gift from God! What a blessing it was to be able to be with Mom this summer, I will treasure these things in my heart always. I want to thank Cynthia for taking over the kitchen for me this summer, you were a gift!



Justy's Journal 40 years as a Missionary in Africa

Justina Stoesz recently published a memoir of her life's work as a missionary in Kenya, Africa. At the age of 92, she decided to tell her story. *Justy's Journals* is a compilation of letters written to her supporters, prayer warriors and family while serving in Kenya. Justy describes her book as, "my album summing up my life experiences, a reflection on the past in light of the serenity and wisdom that comes with maturity. My life is God's story; He knew from the beginning what He would do with me if I followed Him."

Justy's Journals is filled with memories and reflections of her time in Africa—a historical document of mission work enriched with personal moments and varied adventures. Her experiences will be a trip down memory lane for some and a fascinating revelation for others. You will enjoy reading about this inspiring and godly woman.

For information regarding a copy of *Justy's Journals*, please contact Bev Dyck at bjdyck267@outlook.com

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