



TANALIAN
Bible Camp

STAND

Fall Newsletter
December 2019



His ultimate destination had changed. With his new destination firmly in view, he was confident to stand firm no matter the temporary circumstances. And STAND he did!

When The Destination Changes

The travel was unlike anything we know today. Many weeks, even months may have transpired as the band of travelers made their way across the sea, stayed in grand cities, and certainly walked dusty paths. Though the route they followed varied in forms of transportation and levels of difficulty, the destination was sure: Rome. One traveler in particular had every reason to complain and resist the situation. Maybe even just sit down and refuse to move. His name was Ignatius. His traveling companions? Roman soldiers tasked with delivering him to trial in the highest courts of the empire and most certain death by being thrown to wild beasts for the entertainment of the masses.

Amazingly, while traveling to his demise, Ignatius wrote letters to people around the region. Given

the circumstances of where he was headed, any modern-day reader might expect to read of Ignatius' fear and maybe even a bitter essay on the injustices of the Roman system and his civil rights being trampled upon without due process. However, Ignatius wrote this instead:

"Now I begin to be a disciple. I care nothing, of visible or invisible things, so that I may win Christ. Let fire and the cross, let the companies of wild beasts, let the breaking of bones and tearing of limbs, let the grinding of the whole body, and all the malice of the devil, come upon me; be it so, only may I win Christ Jesus!"

Ignatius knew that death in Rome wasn't his actual destination. He had come to understand the Good News that Jesus' death and resurrection defeated sin and death and gave certain Hope to those who believed.

This past summer one of our campers stood and shared their own story of change that started at TBC. She declared that, **"When you change your destination, you change your journey."** I found this statement profound from such a young voice. She was beginning to grasp that this world is not the final destination for those who are part of God's family. There is more! And by clinging to that truth, her journey through life is no longer defined by temporary circumstances. With eternity in view, against all that life brings, the follower of Jesus can stand firm in confident hope.

Equipping our campers and their families with an understanding of this truth is our desire in the coming year. Many struggle with crushing circumstances and spiritual battles that could keep anyone beat down. But armed with a clear understanding of the Good News and an eternal Destination, we look forward to standing firm with them as we serve the King!

Mark McGee | Executive Director

Serving Together

This past Summer, our family of 5 (Evan & Amber, with Annabelle 8, Elliott 6, Addison 3) from Wisconsin crowded onto an early flight, then after many hours debarked to 50 degree drizzle on a gravel runway. A myriad of questions, "Will the rain stop" (it did for 6 weeks straight). "Was that it?" (the drive "through town"), yup, no roads connect to this place. And "what did we just get ourselves into?" That's a longer story, one that began as our family prayed and sought answers to a yearning in our hearts to break routine, and leave comfort for something we didn't have every answer for but still felt called to do. We were greeted and brought up to speed by camp staff quickly but

course!) we looked for ways to offer our skills. Evan jumped in coaching basketball, playing bass, as well as capturing the week's moments on camera and producing video; Amber began connecting with staff in the coffee lounge during break time and making connections with campers. We even imported our own Midwest versions of all-camp games, drove boats, and found ways for the kids to get involved with maintenance projects, cleaning and mopping, kitchen duty, trash duty, cabin cleanup & more.

We had the pleasure of serving alongside some amazing, fully devoted individuals with a heart to reach the youth of Alaska with truly the only Hope that can change...everything. Many campers came with little to no



"Our hearts filled weekly... knowing that Hope they now have will shine a light through the long winter nights"

graciously. The training time spelled out in great detail information needed to traverse the camp routine and many new cultural insights, but it takes experiencing it to really get the hang of things. What is a "super mable?" (it's the highlight of the activities for most campers). Were our kid's fears of salmon and moose at every meal justified? (yes and no, the food was outstanding!) Does the Bear beat the Ninja? We had soooo much to learn. So while we learned the ropes literally and metaphorically (Amber led ropes

course!) we looked for ways to offer our skills. Evan jumped in coaching basketball, playing bass, as well as capturing the week's moments on camera and producing video; Amber began connecting with staff in the coffee lounge during break time and making connections with campers. We even imported our own Midwest versions of all-camp games, drove boats, and found ways for the kids to get involved with maintenance projects, cleaning and mopping, kitchen duty, trash duty, cabin cleanup & more. We had the pleasure of serving alongside some amazing, fully devoted individuals with a heart to reach the youth of Alaska with truly the only Hope that can change...everything. Many campers came with little to no



435 Campers at TBC this summer!

102 Campers asked for staff to follow up with them!

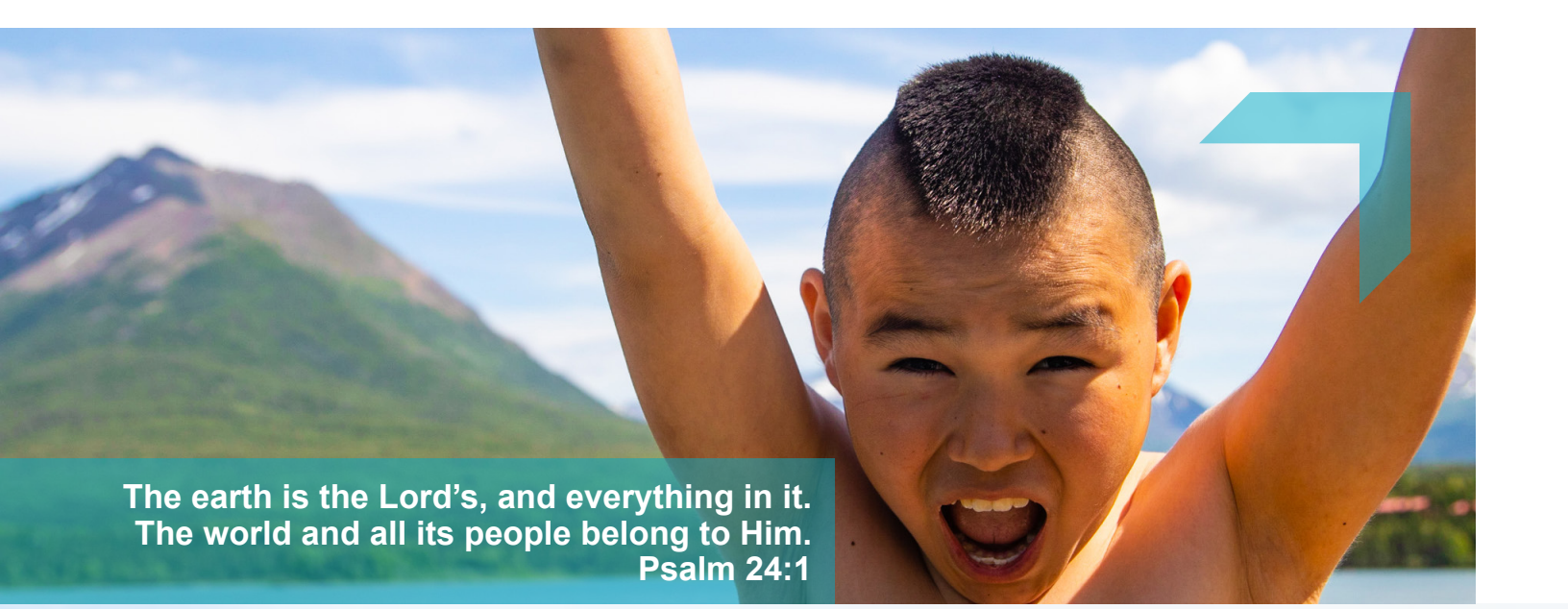
231 Volunteers helping make it happen!

49 Campers said they trusted in Jesus for the first time!

150+ people flown in and out of Port Alsworth in 1 day!

what God has done here, knowing that Hope they now have will shine a light through the long winter nights, a light we pray is contagious to burn in the hearts of others in their homes and villages. And this light lasts with us as we returned 2.5 months later to our home in Wisconsin from the Hope we experienced in the beautiful place of Tanalian Bible Camp.

Evan and Amber Stanek | Supporters of TBC who took a leap of faith and volunteered their whole summer (and family!)- working side by side with our full time staff.



The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.
The world and all its people belong to Him.
Psalm 24:1

God Provides

In the spring of 1963, families from around the Lake Iliamna area gathered at a small lodge in the village of Iliamna to worship the Lord together. The gathering was a joyous time of singing, fellowship, and teaching from the Word. Through the generosity and kindness of His people, **God provided** the material things that were necessary to house, feed, and transport each person desiring to participate in this important event in their lives.

By 1973, that small gathering had grown from the spring event to include several summer camp programs. More space was needed. Again, through His people, **God provided** with just over 100 acres of beautiful space on the shores of Lake Clark in Port Alsworth.

Over the next 30 years, faithful servants came and built small tent frames to house excited campers. Older buildings were repurposed to serve as a dining and meeting facility, craft rooms, and restrooms. Many gave of their time and resources to transport the dozens of smiling, happy campers to and from their homes to experience the love of Jesus in this special place. **God provided** volunteers to serve as counselors, dishwashers, cooks, and speakers.

As the opportunities to reach more young people and families with the Good News grew, so did the need for

modern facilities and more space. **God provided**, again, this time through Samaritan's Purse, and in 2003 a brand-new building was dedicated to serve as a multi-purpose facility for meetings, dining, and church activities. In this hub for the bustling activity of TBC, thousands of meals are served each summer, hundreds of songs of praise are sung, and God's Good News of salvation is received as new believers put their trust in Jesus.

While our facilities do not make TBC what it is, they do provide a safe, efficient space for the outpouring of love to all who come and enjoy time here. In our desire to be good stewards of what God has provided, we strive to keep our facilities in excellent condition, and provide sufficient space to meet program needs.

Today we are at the point where we are seeking **God's provision** for our next step of growth. In the fall of 2018, for the first time, the state Fire Marshal came to Port Alsworth and conducted site inspections of many businesses, including TBC. One of the aspects of that inspection was to provide building plans for fire code review. In early May we received the result of that review which revealed that our main building is required to have an automatic sprinkler system installed, along with two new exits. This is not a simple or inexpensive requirement, but we are confident that **God will provide** for this as He has faithfully done for the past 56 years.

As we examine our current facility needs, we believe that the most efficient use of land and finances would be to **expand the building, adding dining, meeting, kitchen, and office space, while also making room for necessary water storage for the sprinklers**. To that end, we are in the process of researching and designing what that expanded facility will be and determining what amount of funding is required. We do have rough estimates for the exits and sprinklers which total approximately \$200,000, but much can be saved through qualified construction volunteers and in-kind giving. The expansion will add a significant sum to this amount.

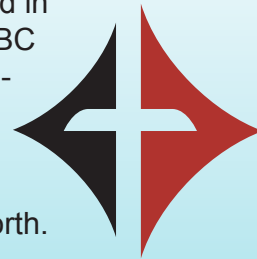
Our plan is to begin to make the need known now, and in the coming months launch a capital campaign to procure the necessary funding to begin the expansion and sprinkler installation. We hope to begin installing new exits before the summer 2020 season begins. In the meantime, we ask that you join us in praying that our timeline proposal would be acceptable to the Fire Marshal, and as the Lord leads, investing financially in the project. As we have been blessed with God's provision throughout our history, we are confident that **God will provide** again as we move forward in faith.

To God be the Glory!

Mark McGee | Executive Director



Tanalian Leadership Center is a mentorship program for 18-22 year olds in South West Alaska to be disciplined and grow in their faith. TLC was started in 2011 by TBC and continues each winter season in Port Alsworth.



What Does Success Look Like?

On a particular evening last year, one of the young women I mentored came home and quickly holed up in her room. I knew that she was covered in shame after some events that had transpired over the previous weekend. I knocked on her door and let her know I just wanted to be with her. I asked her why she wouldn't let me in, but she wouldn't reply. Eventually I asked her if she was beating herself up and she replied, "Everyday." After a couple more minutes of letting her know that I just wanted to be with her, yet no opened door, I sat down on the floor outside her room and prayed. I asked the Lord that she would be able to glimpse His love and light shining into the darkness of her shame. I kept praying and waiting, but there was still no open door, so I left to make supper. I made her a plate and set it outside her door, but she still would not show her face. As I ate by myself, my heart ached for her. I longed to just be with her—we didn't even have to talk about the mistakes she had made or the shame she felt. But she never came out. As I sat at that table alone it dawned on me that we all can identify with her part in this story. We fixate on our mistakes and revel in self

condemnation when all the while Christ longs for us to come and dine with him. He cares about what weighs down our hearts. He calls us out of our shame and into the light of His forgiveness.

That's the reality of the position I find myself in. There are days full of joy and breakthrough, some days are racked with conflict and misunderstandings, and other days shame rears its ugly head and muddies our ability to walk in the freedom of forgiveness. As a resident mentor at TLC, I'm in it for the long haul to intercede on their behalf and be faithful to whatever Christ would have me to be to them. I don't always get to see the results I want or the relationship I long for, and that is heartbreaking. In these moments of sorrow I find that God is grieving with me for people He loves deeply.

The students' response to the Gospel or to my actions is not my business; these things are in God's hands. Being faithful to love people like Jesus is in my court. Loving God and loving people—that's success.

Hope Swanson | TLC Women's Mentor

TBC's End of Year Needs:

2019 General Fund:
\$40,000

TBC Scholarships:
\$7,000

TLC Scholarships:
\$6,000

Dock Project:
\$15,000

**Main Building
Capital Campaign
Phase 1:**
\$200,000

Donate Today

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