CAMP

CHALLENGE ORDINARY · ARRIVE OUTSIDE · MAKE CONNECTIONS · PLANT ROOTS

Summer 2019

MANTOWAGAN

Summer Recap ~ Rick

What an amazing team of volunteers we had this summer! Many of you prayed with us about needing bus drivers and kitchen help. It takes a lot of people to successfully run five weeks of summer camp. The Lord answered our prayers, and it was beautiful to see how He provided for each week. Our theme for the summer was KNOWN, and it was profound to see campers realize the truth that they have a Savior who fully knows them and loves them. It was also great getting to KNOW new people as they volunteered at camp.

- 548 campers attended our five weeks of camp.
- 58 accepted the truth of Christ for the first time!
- 40 more campers made the decision to follow Jesus during the four weeks of rental group camps!

On a personal note: This all made for a wonderful last full-time year of service. While I may still work full-time during our summer five weeks, I am transitioning to half-time starting in December of this year. The transition to Lee as Executive Director is a work in progress, but the process has begun. After 42 years, I'm still excited to see what God has planned for the future of Camp Mantowagan!

"Oh Lord, You have searched me and KNOWN me."
Psalm 139:1

Mark your calendar!

Annual Fundraising Dinner

Thursday, December 5th at 6:00 p.m.
in the activity center of
Grace Fellowship Church—Leamersville Campus.
(Leamersville GBC) 14 Brethren Lane, Duncansville

Dinner is for adults only, is free (paid for by business supporters), and is made by Maddie Cakes of Roaring Spring.

The Camp Mantowagan Band will be in the house!

We will be celebrating what God has done over the past year and sharing further plans for the new chapel.

Come share your evening with us! RSVP before December.

Camp Mantowagan Band—Q&A with Ryan Ritchey

This article is part two of a two-part series. In our last newsletter we introduced our band leader Ryan Ritchey and shared his answers to the questions of how the band came about and how it benefits students in the band. This time we will look at two additional questions regarding Ryan and the Camp Mantowagan Band.

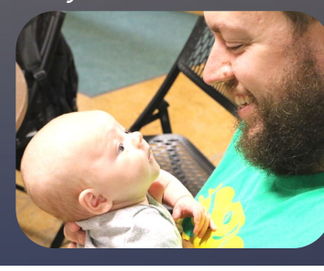
When do you lead worship at camp?

I'm very thankful for how flexible Martinsburg GBC has been with my summer schedule in allowing me to spend a large chunk of time at camp. Laura and I "move" up to camp for the first 2 weeks of the summer (Trailblazer and Pathfinder) and I lead the staff worship team the entire time. For Adventurer and Explorer, I will help to lead morning sessions and then go back to the office in the afternoon. We have talented counselors who are capable of leading the evening sessions in my absence.

How have the theme songs and CD come about?

In 2011, Pastor Brant found a song that fit our "Liv It" theme and we decided to learn it as a band to lead the kids live. I still can't completely remember what triggered me to try to write an original camp song the next year, but somehow the song Rock Solid came about. I think part of it was the fact that "rock and my salvation" and "I will not be shaken" kind of rhymed and got stuck in my head leading up to camp. I wasn't sure if the kids would enjoy an original song, but soon enough they had created their own motions to go along with the chorus and it really caught on. I never introduced it as a song I had written so the kids didn't even know it was an original song until later in the summer. I remember one camper in particular telling me, "I thought it was an actual song!" Since that went so well, I tried to keep writing songs to fit each summer theme. Our 2014 theme song "Secure" was the first one to be used for a camp video. Ryan Tabek and I started to hit it off with arranging songs at that point and the following summer we started to co-write with the song "Thirst." We really started to enjoy writing together and have since written songs for each summer theme as well as our district winter retreats at camp. (continued on back)

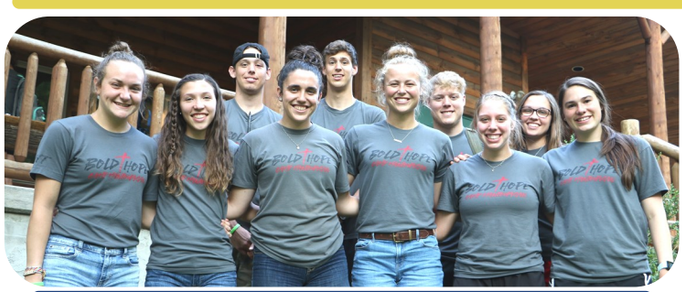
Camp Mantowagan Band (continued from front). *Students seemed to enjoy hearing some of the songs in the summer camp videos and asked where they could find the songs online. Around the same time, Lee Seese came up to me at Momentum with the idea to create a CD so the kids could take the camp songs home with them. Ryan Tabek and I had considered it before and decided to move forward with self-producing an album (something we had never done before). In 2017 we released "I Will Not Be Shaken: Songs from the Wilderness," which included all of our original songs we had written before last summer. We have continued to write a few more and are hoping to be able to record new music to share with the kids in the future.* Editors note: A second album was released in May of 2019 called "Since We Have This Hope…." Search for Camp Mantowagan Band on iTunes if you would like to sample or purchase either album. Ryan and Laura came to camp this summer with their two week old son Charlie. The next generation arrives!



An Impacted Life *~ Counselor Abby Hess*

The following excerpts are from an essay Abby wrote entitled "Why I Chose Social Work."

During my senior year of high school I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I just knew one thing. I wanted to do something that would help people and make a difference in the world. One experience that helped me determine that I wanted to pursue a career that would help people was being a camp counselor. I have counseled at a camp [Mantowagan] for many years across a wide spectrum of ages, but no age impacted me like the high schoolers did. Serving as a counselor in a large cabin of girls who shared the diverse stories of their lives, enabled me to better comprehend that everyone, no matter who they are, matters. I knew after this period of counseling campers that I wanted to work with people and help them better understand their strengths while supporting them in overcoming circumstances...a career to me was never about how much money a person can make, but about having a calling you are passionate about.



Four and five week counselors on the final day of camp.

The Counseling Team *~ Connie*

I was amazed this past spring at how early all of our counselors were in place. That has never happened before and I do hope the trend continues! I only had room for most high school students to come one week during the two younger weeks. God brought us nine college-age who counseled all five weeks and another who did four weeks. It was awesome to have such a great counseling staff! They impacted many campers during summer camp 2019!

Facility and Financial Update *~ Lee*

If you ever get the opportunity to be at Camp Mantowagan for a retreat in the late summer or fall, don't pass it up! What a beautiful time to be at this sanctuary in the woods. The grounds look beautiful as I take a mental walk around the camp with you in this facility and financial update.

Early in the year, Joe and I replaced the wall board and urinals in the guy's lobby bathroom. No more blue bathroom fixtures! Joe also installed new vinyl flooring in the big kitchen pantry and painted the kitchen and pantry. We were able to install bottle filling station/water fountains in both the boy's and girl's bath houses. Much more convenient for thirsty campers at night! The big kitchen received a "hot water only" water softener. This eliminated lime build-up on the commercial dishwasher and dishes and is a huge timesaver.

This spring a crew from Liberty GBC gave us a jumpstart on two projects, which we finished up in the weeks following. The "Ninja Warrior" course on the ballfield received a metal roof to increase it's longevity, and the outside tennis/hockey and basketball courts look great with new posts, rails, and netting. That was a lot of holes to drill/dig!

During summer camp, water heaters in both the lodge and health center reached the end of their lives and were replaced. We have had to replace at least one large commercial propane water heater each year for the last several years. Maybe we'll be good for a while? We were able to buy a commercial pressure washer, outdoor power broom, and new mattresses for the health center as well. Many other smaller projects were completed, and while some of these were funded by the general budget, many were directly provided for by supporters like you. We aim to keep the project list on the camp website up to date for those who like to give directly to a project.

God is continuing to provide for Camp Mantowagan through rental income, West Penn District Churches, and through many of you who faithfully give. The fundraising campaign for a new chapel has been in progress since last November and nearly $95,000 has been given. We should have design work completed in the next few months and you will be able to see what the chapel will look like. We will also have a better estimate of construction costs once those plans are finalized. One of the risks of any fundraising campaign is that it draws funds away from general budget gifts. While we have seen that happen slightly, many supporters continue to give toward general ministry expenses as well. Thanks to all of you who faithfully pray and provide for the ministry at Camp Mantowagan. You have helped us to keep up with present needs even while planning for the future!

2019 Fall Camp Happenings

September:

6-7: Woodbury Church of the Brethren Youth

13-14: Faith Baptist (State College) Youth

20-21: Puzzletown Road Bible Church Ladies

27-28: Martinsburg GBC and District Ladies

October:

11-13: Kittanning GBC Families

18-20: District Scrapbooking Fundraiser

25-26: Martinsburg GBC and District Men

November:

1-3: Community Alliance Men

15-17: Valley View Evangelical Church Youth

December:

5: Annual Fundraising Dinner at Grace Fellowship Church—Leamersville Campus.

Please e-mail us at gocampm@comcast.net if you would prefer to receive this newsletter in electronic format or would like to be removed from our mailing list.

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