

The Holt Family Newsletter-May-July 2021

Red Cliff Bible Camp



Dear Friends and Supporters,

What a whirlwind of a summer it has been! I intended to write and send out a newsletter in June, but as we wrapped up our school year and started camp, time got away from me. So, this newsletter will be a little longer than usual.

Our prayer for this summer was based on Jeremiah 33:3: “Call unto Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.” Even before the summer staff arrived at camp, we began to see God answer those prayers. In our March/April newsletter, we asked you to pray that God would bring the last couple of guy counselors that we needed for the summer. With online registration now available through Red Cliff’s website, we expected to need all 8 cabins for almost every week of camp. We did have one guy counselor apply and sign a contract in May, but we were still needing one last guy counselor. In looking back over the summer, we can see that God had already answered those prayers during the winter, but not in the way we had expected Him to do it! Truly His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are higher than ours. I’ll explain more of that later...

Our girls finished up their schooling requirements during the second week in May. While Keith was already driving up to camp every day to prepare for summer camp, the girls and I took the following two weeks to pack and prepare what we needed for the summer. We moved up to camp on May 31st, one week before summer staff training started. During that week, we all worked on cleaning the camp, organizing our own cabin, and decorating the stage in the Pavilion for Jungle Adventure 2021. That particular theme had been chosen during the winter of 2019-2020, but because of the Covid 19 restrictions, we were not able to use it last summer. It was so fun to see things we had planned almost a year and a half ago start to come together. Keith was able to use some of the knowledge and ideas that he had picked up from Tweakage (meeting of many camps) two years ago to prepare for this summer.

Monday, June 7th, our summer staff began to roll in. While we did have 5 returning staff members this year, we were excited to meet the new recruits, as well. We hired a total of 21 summer staff members this year, covering jobs from dining and kitchen and Salt supervisor, to counselors and Salts. Our Salt staff comprises the backbone of our summer staff. They are mostly high school students who learn to serve in a variety of capacities, from hospitality, buildings and grounds, and kitchen, to junior counselors. Some of them do all of that in one summer! This year we were so thankful to have 2 returning Salts who were willing and able to take on the added responsibility of serving on the program team. During the final two weeks of camp, we were short a guy counselor for one cabin each week, (here’s where I tie in the earlier comment on God’s provision of a counselor), and we had two guy Salts who each served as senior counselors for one of those weeks. It is a rare thing to find a high school guy that can be trusted with the responsibility of leading a cabin, but we were blessed with two this summer! Staff training lasted two weeks, and in that time, we squeezed in sessions on counseling, music practices, program and camp set-up, and evening services for the staff. We were able to have pastors and godly men from the Mountain West states come to speak for each evening of the training times. Even before camp started, we had two summer staff members and two staff kids accept Christ and/or get assurance of their salvation!

Our first week of camp saw our lowest camper number for the summer. We had 13 junior campers. Even for Red Cliff, that's a very small number. However, since most of our summer staff had never counseled at a camp before, it was a good way for them to ease into the responsibility of caring for their campers without being totally overwhelmed the first week. Our speaker for the week was Pastor Joe Lacy, from Twin Falls, ID. He is a talented artist, and each evening service, he used Chalk Talk to communicate God's Word to the campers, drawing pictures to illustrate the message in a way the junior campers would find easy to understand and remember.

Following Junior #1, our family camp, Camp Meeting, usually falls on the 4th of July weekend. This year, the holiday fell on Sunday, so we expected there to be fewer families who would be able to take the extra time off work to join us at Red Cliff. The resident staff was praying for 150 people to attend, and God answered that with a total of 157 at the Friday evening service. Pastor Bob Loggans from Watertown, WI, was the speaker for the weekend, and the focus of his messages was on the sufficiency of Christ, from the book of Colossians. Because we had a full summer staff this year, we were able to run both nursery and junior church and still rotate the summer staff, so that they were all able to attend some of the services.

Pastor Ron Perry, from Folsom, CA, returned this summer to speak for Teen Week #1. He challenged the teens on their personal walk with the Lord. Teen #1 was a very full week of camp, and everyone was a little overwhelmed by Monday night. However, at the Tuesday night service, Pastor Ron gave an invitation, not really expecting any teens to actually respond to the first invitation. However, at the end of the invitation time, about 2/3 of the campers and most of the counseling staff were talking and praying together! Many of our counselors and even us as resident staff counseled several teens that week with issues like abuse, self-harm, or suicidal thoughts. Some of the teens only open up when they are away from harmful influences and peers, and when they see the love of Jesus and the hope He gives. Please pray for the campers that we've had come through Red Cliff this summer. Many of them leave the camp and return to hard temptations or heartbreaking situations.

Teen Week #2 was almost as full as the first teen camp. A handful of teens from Teen Week #1 raised money over the weekend and were able to return for a second week of camp. It was so encouraging to see teens so excited about a second week of camp, not just for the games and fun, but also for the spiritual encouragement that they received. Pastor Dwayne Morris from Watertown, WI, preached through Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount. For Keith and I, this camp was a bit strange for us, since our oldest daughter, Taylee, got to attend this week as a teen camper. It's hard to believe she's a teen!

Our fullest week of the summer was Junior 2. Scott Sivinsky, from Camp Chetek in Wisconsin, came to speak this week. He challenged the campers on practical Christian life applications, like personal discipline and patience, especially with siblings! We saw many campers attend from local churches, as well as many from churches in Idaho and Nevada.

Junior #3 was the final week of camp for our summer. Sierra and Elayna got to attend this week as campers, and they even got to be in the same cabin. Pastor Jeff Chappel from Green River, WY, spoke on self-control, a fitting topic for junior campers! He used stories from the lives of heroes of the faith like Abraham and Moses, and then ended with the ultimate example of self-control: Jesus.

Although we are very aware that the specific number of decisions by campers is not how we measure success, we do want to share with you what God did this summer. We had 243 campers from rising 3rd graders to high school seniors attend camp this summer. Of that number, 11 accepted Jesus as their Savior, 7 were counseled regarding assurance of their salvation, and 22 others made decisions about following and obeying Christ. We are so thankful that God allowed us to be a small part of what He did, and that He truly did do great and mighty things!

Serving in Wyoming,
Keith, Stacy,
Taylee, Sierra, Elayna,
Savannah, and Vanessa Holt

If God is leading you to support us on a monthly basis or with a one-time gift as we minister at Red Cliff Bible Camp, you can donate directly to the camp by mailing a check to Red Cliff Bible Camp, PO Box 846, Pinedale, WY 82941. You can designate it "For Holt's Support", and the camp will make sure it gets to us. (It is tax deductible!) Our PayPal account is now set up on our Staff page at redcliffcamp.org. Please note that PayPal does take a percentage of each donation we receive as their service fee.