

Fall 2013



Mennonite Church
Manitoba



Justin Zacharias

A caterpillar must struggle in the cocoon before it emerges with colour, beauty and the wonder of flight. I was reminded of this recently by a long-time supporter and advocate of Camps with Meaning. He is inspired and moved to tears as he reflects on seeing camp counselors and leadership staff serving at camp, sacrificing

and pouring themselves out to share in the lives of campers and other staff. There are many opportunities to be challenged at camp. There are physical, emotional, social, mental, and of course spiritual challenges. Others have referred to camp as a greenhouse experience of faith... that a group of people gather in this temporary community for a shared purpose, and by living in community, many aspects of faith and church are amplified.



community While this is

true for camp staff, it is also true for many campers who are challenged at many levels. Whether you ascribe to the cocoon metaphor or that of a greenhouse, the opportunities for growth at camp are many, and this past summer of 2013 was filled with experiences that have challenged more than 1300 campers, youth, and staff to become more fully engaged in God's story. Please pray for these campers and staff as they continue to reflect on their summer experiences, and how God is inviting them to follow Jesus in all areas of their lives.

Reflections from a Servant Leader in Training (SLT)

Camp has always been a place of reflection, discovery and growth for me and my faith. And all through my years of being a camper I looked forward to going to camp and experiencing these things... Well, maybe not those things exactly, but rather the activities and experiences that had reflection, discovery and growth embedded within them. And a very crucial part of allowing the activities to reflect my faith was a loving staff dedicated to serving the campers.

As a camper I always looked up to my counselors and the care and enthusiasm that they brought

staff one day. The SLT program gave me a chance to train and become a staffer along with a group of my friends.

As a staff, my experience at camp changed from one focusing on my own fun as a camper, to making sure the campers had lots of fun.

Instead of running off to my favourite activities, I worked hard to make sure all of the campers were running off to the same activity. Guiding the camper experience was

very rewarding, from setting the tone at camp fire time with my guitar, to leading devotions in the cabin.

Working at camp as an SLT this summer has left me with a lot of memories and a lot of new friendships, but one of the most important lessons was the value of teamwork, how we need to rely on each other, and how we each contribute according to our gifts. I understood how the camping ministry is really about giving campers and staff opportunities to discover and live out their gifts in community.

I really appreciate the support I have felt from my family as I kept adding extra camp work weeks to my summer, my church for financial assistance and the Mennonite Conference for keeping the camping ministry alive. I hope that Camps with Meaning is around for many more years so that future campers and staff can continue to benefit from this amazing opportunity to serve each other.

Jonathan Froese



Jonathan Froese

to their interactions with campers and their everyday activities. It was because of the impact of former counselors that I knew that I wanted to become a camp



Douglas Mennonite Church: Investing in Camp... provides great returns.



Aaron Epp

From sending children to be campers, to sending youth to work as counselors, Douglas Mennonite Church has a long history of involvement at

Camps with Meaning. That continued this past year in a variety of ways.

Thirty youth and adults volunteered a total of 110 weeks at Camp Assiniboia, Camp Koinonia and Camp Moose Lake this past July and August, and a group of people led by Henry Neustaedter have been fundraising for, and building, a brand new cabin at Camp Assiniboia.

This past May, a group of more than 15 young adults did a week of service at Camp Assiniboia along with a handful of men from the congregation. Over the course of a few days, they painted, cleaned, and installed new bunk beds as well as 18 new windows.

“This is a good way to get a group together and do some good work together, so you get to know God, you get to know each other, and you get to see the fruits of your labour, knowing it’s going to benefit hundreds of campers for a couple of years,” said Katrina Sklepowich, one of the young adults who participated in the service week.

Martin Enns, who works as a firefighter, volunteered his time because of the positive impact Camps with Meaning has had on his family.

“It’s a worthwhile cause,” he said. “This camp’s been a great place for my kids to come, so I want to give a little bit back.”



Don Rempel Boschman, lead pastor at Douglas, hopes that ultimately, members of the church who serve at Camps with Meaning are able to grow in their relationship with God.

“My hope is that ... they would have time to reflect, they would have time to be outdoors, they would have time to sing, to listen, to think, and they would draw closer to Jesus Christ,” he said.

Aaron Epp

To watch the video of the DMC Young Adults at work, visit: www.mennochurch.mb.ca, click on Stories, and then scroll through. You'll find it.

Camper to Volunteer

Matthew called to tell me he wanted to be a volunteer at Camp. This wasn't news to me as he'd been thinking about it for years. Even over the telephone I could tell he was grinning from ear to ear and there was a sense of determination in his voice.

That day, after church, there had been a Camps With Meaning presentation. Afterwards Matthew discussed, with Kate McIntyre, the possibility of becoming a volunteer at Camp Koinonia.

For the past 12 years Matthew enjoyed being a camper during the ADV (Adults with Disabilities Venture) Week. He loved re-connecting with friends year after year and making new ones too. Matthew liked the lessons, learned new skills and came home with lots of stories about the activities he participated in at camp.



Matthew, between directors Maria Dueck and Chris Epp-Tiessen

A Summer Full of Goodness

It was a privilege to have a front row seat to observe the way summer unfolded. When I look back on Summer 2013, these are just a few things that I am so grateful for:



Kate McIntyre

- * The energy of campers' voices singing together at evening fireside
- * An epic pool party during the last night of Staff Training Week
- * Discovering creative uses for bacon fat during the Servant Leader in Training (SLT) out-trip
- * Kitchen volunteers who went on a "secret" mission to buy special campout food
- * Honest, vulnerable, and transparent conversations with staff and leadership
- * A phone call of gratitude from a parent of a long-time integration camper
- * The fact that I could go on and on with this list

The seemingly unimportant moments tend to be the times where, when I look back, God was present. I would encourage you to take some time to reflect on where you sensed God at camp this summer. For the ways you contributed to Summer 2013 (whether with your time, entrusting your children to us, finances, or prayer), THANK YOU!



**summer
2013**
"Turn from evil and do good. Seek PEACE and pursue it." Psalm 34:14



Matthew did, however, want to do more. I asked him why he wanted to be a volunteer and he said, "Because, mom, volunteering is a good thing; there must be something I can do at camp that would be helpful."

With a little bit of work and lots of determination, dreams do come true. Matthew's application was approved and before he knew it his volunteer week had arrived.

Lizard Lounge was Matthew's home for the week. He said it was a bit lonely at first be-

cause he was used to being in a cabin with his friends but it didn't take long to adjust. Matthew took his kitchen job seriously and quickly learned his responsibilities. He felt comfortable working in the kitchen and enjoyed every minute of it.

The week was busy, filled with work, lessons and learning the farewell song that the volunteers sing to the campers. There was still time though to spend with the campers, make new friends and participate in some of the activities.

When I asked Matthew how he felt the week went, he said he did the best job he could, he felt helpful and loved being a part of the volunteer team. "Mom," he said, "I've been thinking and made a decision; next year I'm going to do it again!"

Cindy Genaille, Matthew's mom

Why I cry on the last day of camp

Camp staff sing the song “Freedom” at the end of each week of camp. It is a powerful song proclaiming the coming of God’s kingdom. Singing it on the last day of the last week of camp is always very emotional. In that moment of song our spirits meld together and we belt out the good

news that Jesus, justice, freedom is coming. Yes I know! The bonds that have formed, the shared experiences, the work we have done, the things we have witnessed and the things that we have given witness to are somehow encapsulated and shared in the singing of that song. This year it was truly



David Hogue on the right... crying just a little.

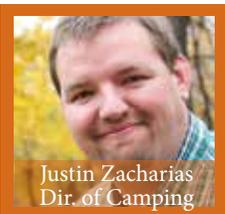
electric and those moments will not soon be forgotten. Once the song ends camp feels like it is officially over. Hugs are given and tears are shed. We have once again built and nurtured our little corner of the Kingdom and it is hard to leave. Now we have to go back to the “real” world. Now we have to pass courses, add more credits

to a degree, find a job, travel the world or get camp ready for the guest group season and another winter. We know it will never be the same as this year ever again and so we cry a little on the last day of camp. We would not have it any other way.

-David Hogue, Camp Manager at Camp Assiniboia



Hope and a Future



Justin Zacharias
Dir. of Camping

Owned and operated by Mennonite Church Manitoba for more than 60 years, Camps with Meaning employs multiple year-round staff who serve at unique camp locations in Manitoba. These are places and programs of Christ, creation and community, providing opportunities for growth and unforgettable experiences with God.

At the core of Camps with Meaning ministry are the people who shape its direction, beautiful places set apart with comfortable facilities, and a diverse set of year-round programs that share God’s love with the many people who spend time there. Camps with Meaning is

committed to vibrant ministry in the years to come, as we impact individuals, families, school groups, community groups and churches.

Our faith inspires our priorities, which include:

1. Providing loving hospitality
2. Introducing people to Jesus Christ
3. Nurturing Christ centered Anabaptist Christian faith

Would you consider partnering with us, moving this dream forward, and together providing ongoing camp experiences for generations to come? This ministry is only possible because of the sacrificial and generous giving of people like you. Thank-you for your support!

Welcome New Staff!

- ☀️ Scott and Kendra Friesen are serving as Resident Manager and Food Services Coordinator at Camp Moose Lake. They began their work there at the beginning of summer.
- ☀️ John and Connie Dyck are serving as Resident Manager and Food Services Coordinator at Camp Koinonia. They began their work there just this fall.
- ☀️ Andrea Klassen joins the staff at Camp Assiniboia as General Assistant.
- ☀️ Shawn Koop and Jonathon Loch are at Camp Assiniboia, volunteering in hosting, programming and general custodial work.



Donations

**A SMALL AMOUNT GOES A LONG WAY!
CAN YOU AFFORD TO GIVE \$10 or \$25
PER MONTH?**

Individual or automatic monthly donations can be made online at www.CampsWithMeaning.org, by phone at 204-895-2267, or sent by mail to the address below. Please make cheques payable to **MENNONITE CHURCH MANITOBA.**

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