

COMMUNITY CONTENDER

I TIMOTHY 2:15

Edition 6 August 2016

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY

Proverbs 25:25 As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

Community Baptist Church had the privilege of sending the Western Warriors Mission's Team to the Western States of Nebraska and Montana. The nineteen members of the team were privileged to host Vacation Bible Time in Alliance, NE, complete many work projects, encourage Heartland Baptist Church, and share God's Word in song, teaching, and preaching. Most of the team was able to move on to Montana and attend Castle Rock Baptist Camp to serve as staff and be campers and was impacted by the preaching of God's Word. The goals of the trip were to impact people for Christ, and to be changed in the process.

The trip verses were as follows:

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. (Romans 1:9-12)

A WORD FROM PASTOR GRUBER

Dear Pastor Smith & Community Baptist Church Family,

I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for the great sacrifice made to send the mission team out from PA to the humble little town of Alliance, NE. We rejoice to have had the privilege to host your team and to minister together with them during our great endeavor to reach out to the community in Alliance, NE.

I want to thank each one who participated here as well as those that remained behind and prayed for our week of ministry together. We are thankful for the basket of goodies that were sent along with kind cards and gift cards. This was very encouraging. It was great to hear from many dear friends in your congregation. Thank you as well for the provision of finances for the re-coating of the floor and the rebuilding of our front porch floor. Both turned out absolutely beautiful.

I believe that this was a profitable endeavor and will reap great fruits and benefits to the congregation at Heartland Baptist Church that will only be known in eternity. We now are beginning the work of follow up with the families that had children represented at our VBT. Pray that fruit will abound.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart and may Christ be glorified in all that took place.

Daily Contending for the Faith, Heartland Baptist Church

A WORD FROM RACHEL PARISE

When the prospect of the trip to Nebraska/Montana first came to light, I was very excited about the idea and the opportunity for the teens. As time went on, however, I began to have some misgivings. It was a long trip in number of days. It was also far away. The thought of sending my two girls (ages 16 and 13) on the trip without us was a bit unnerving. I began to pray about it, asking God to make it clear as to whether my daughters were meant to attend the trip. When the opportunity arose for the group that was planning to go to begin raising funds, I really began to see God's hand in the trip. Within a few minutes my girls had enough hours available to work; there appeared to be a good opportunity for them to easily raise the \$500 needed.

After the service that evening, our son Jarod asked if it was too late for him to join the missions team. I had been praying for him to have the desire to go, but I hadn't wanted to force it upon him. That was a big answer to prayer. I told him that it wouldn't hurt to call Pastor David and ask. He did, and Pastor David said it would be contingent upon certain requirements and space in the church van. Meanwhile, Jarod got a late start on raising his funds. Did God provide every bit of it? Yes!

A few days later, Pastor David approached my husband to ask if it might be possible for Abe and I to join the missions team in order to drive an additional vehicle and also to be additional chaperones to the group. Wow! I certainly was not expecting that at all. Again, I had some misgivings. Abe works an hourly paid job and to lose almost 3 weeks of pay seemed daunting. Another



question that arose was whether it would even be possible for him to get that amount of time off from work. Questions and misgivings aside, I was very excited about the idea of going. However, I didn't want to go solely based on the fact that it seemed like the trip of a lifetime. I wanted to go if God wanted me to go. Abe and I began praying that God would give us clear direction and answers as to what we should do.

Abe spoke to his boss and was granted permission to have the time off he would need for the trip. That was the first hurdle. The second hurdle was more intimidating. Money. BUT we have God who owns everything. What's a couple of paychecks?!? The Lord began providing money here and there and we built a decent cushion so we weren't stressed about the funds. Then, two weeks before the trip, we had one of our automobiles get towed to the local storage yard after a minor accident. \$350 later, we got it back. Ouch. Now what? We applied for a refund through our AAA and we also applied for our school's internet compensation that is submitted every July. The money is still there; it will arrive in God's timing. We left it at that and proceeded on the trip.

Every day, July 1-18, I saw God's guiding hand upon our mission. The home where the girls and ladies stayed in Alliance belonged to a family where the dad is still unsaved. I am thankful that we were placed there. The Lord can use anyone in any situation for his glory. The people of the Alliance sang with such fervor and volume. It was uplifting to all of us to be in that environment. Initially, we really didn't know how many children would be attending the VBT. I wondered if it would be church children or if more from the community would come. The children showed up and it was a good mix of church and community children. One boy was saved; then his sister began asking questions as well. Their mother seemed like she didn't really know what to tell the children when they came home and told her they had gotten saved. That was another door opened for Pastor Gruber to minister to that family and possibly lead them to Christ.

At Camp Castle Rock I was placed into a cabin with 6 girls from Montana. All of them, except one, appeared to only be there to have a good time. The first night I prayed and asked God to somehow help me to have an impact upon them. I shared a devotional with them on how God perceives beauty. After that, most of the girls warmed up to me and I believe saw me as 'their counselor'. I was forced to come out of my shell a bit! I did a lot of praying and God answered. I ask that you would pray for each of them. Their names were Katcha, Brenda and Lynda Fox; Madi and Josie Wells; and Makenzie Hanson.

The Lord began to really work in my heart on this trip about how much more freely and often I need to give out the gospel. One of sermons during camp week was "How will they hear, except they have a preacher?" Everywhere we went, our group had piles of Nebraska/Montana Western Warriors gospel tracts to pass out. I began to get really excited about handing them out. People would see our group walking about towns or at rest stops and gas stations and they knew we were different. From there it was simple to say "This is about why our group is here and what we are doing. It also tells you how you can be sure you are on your way to heaven". It was a pleasure to be serving with young people who had the spiritual mindset of why they were on the trip.

In conclusion, I will be eternally grateful to the Lord for the opportunity to attend this trip. I am thankful for all the people I met along the way, as well as people who I had not seen in many years and may not see again until heaven. It was a great encouragement to me!

A WORD FROM JIM DUNN

A Song of degrees of David. If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

(Psalms 124:1-8)

From Pennsylvania to Nebraska to Montana. What a trip and what a blessing. There are several memories from this trip that I will not soon forget.

The first is the tract distribution. We were tasked to hand out three a day. There were many accepting hands and I only witnessed one rejection. At every stop along the way the Gospel was presented. Individuals said they would pray for us and began to read as we walked away. The Jehovah Witnesses received the tract along with an overly tired Christian who immediately asked for forgiveness for her un-Christian like behavior. At one stop we were able to fill up the menu holders with several tracts and I also saw that someone from the team used the magnets that were for sale at the store to hold up several more. This team truly reached a lot of individuals with God plan of Salvation.

The second blessing I received was the heartwarming welcome from Heartland Baptist Church. The individuals there served along us each day at VBT. They didn't treat us as outsiders, but as one of their family. Two families and Pastor Gruber opened their homes to the team and there were no restrictions. There was an excitement in the church body about the week's VBT and it truly showed in their actions. I had the opportunity to counsel one young boy about Salvation and I am 100% positive that he accepted Christ as his personal Savior. The final blessing from Heartland was seeing Debbie Vassel serving the Lord faithfully



each day we were there. She always served with a smile.

The third blessing comes from Castle Rock Baptist Camp. I was a counselor in a cabin with four boys I didn't know. One of the boys wanted to leave on Tuesday and he had already called his mother to pick him up. That day the Lord gave me the words to say to him and I (with the Lords help) convinced him to stay another day. As each day came and went I prayed for wisdom and words to encourage this young man to stay. God didn't disappoint me. At the end of the week my daughter Mikayla, this young man and myself were the last ones to make it to the top of Castle Rock. To see his face as he reached the top was priceless. I am truly thankful the God was able to use me to encourage this boy.

The final blessing came from the start of the trip to the end. It was the fellowship with each team member. Everyone was a blessing and honored God with their actions. I really enjoyed getting to know Abe and Rachel, and enjoyed the van conversations with Pastor David.

I was asked if I would do it over again, my answer was a fast YES

Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised. The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. (Psalms 113:1-4)

A WORD FROM MATT MERGEN

One of the first mental responses was "Oh my, are we really gonna do this again?" Taking the trip to Chadron, NE with Pastor Gruber had its challenges. The Lord worked and taught me a lot. Through prayer and peace, we elected to serve the Lord as a family and help the team with the VBT. Mrs. Mergen's heart has a special corner devoted to serving the Lord in this capacity.

Seeing the Grubers and Vasels was a blessing. They are hard at work serving the Lord at HBC. It challenged me by their example to work harder here at our own "front line" of battle at CBC. The town of Alliance is a cold place to reach with the gospel, but there are dear servants of Christ there sharing Him with others. These folks at HBC were open to the team and gave of themselves in so many ways. They were a joy to get to know and work alongside.

We were able to hand out a tract to the pilot on our way in to Denver, with a compliment for his exceptional landing to soften him up! It was a joy to watch my girls hand out the tracts and try to disperse them all. Evie has little to no fear, Amen.

We were privileged to stay with Pastor and Melissa Gruber. I was able to help Pastor David with the repairs to the front porch of the Gruber's home and even work on a partially complete bathroom with some sheet rock while the rest of the team worked on painting the floor of the rental church.

Please know that the Grubers need our prayers for encouragement. Pray for the Vasels, for Debbie's comfort and John's strength to care for her.



It was an honor and undeserved privilege to serve the Lord where needed on this trip.

A WORD FROM ISABELLA ROSARIO

I learned a lot and made many decisions during this trip. It was exciting to see God work and answer our prayers as we were traveling and visiting churches. While in Nebraska, I had the opportunity to meet Pastor Gruber for the first time. He is such a compassionate man with a love for his church family and the town of Alliance. I enjoyed getting to know the Grubers and the entire body at Heartland Baptist Church during the VBT week. After A LOT of traveling, we made it to Castle Rock Baptist Camp. We had the privilege to hear Evangelist Dwight Smith preach to us twice a day. Each message was strong and I made many decisions while at camp. One of the many lessons that I learned was: In order for modesty to be displayed on the outside, it must first begin on the inside. I thank God for the opportunity I had to take this trip. Please pray for me and the whole team who went, that we would keep the decisions that we made.

A WORD FROM JOSHUA NARVAEZ

I would like to thank God for this opportunity and privilege to go on this trip to the western world of the U.S. I would also like to thank the church body for supporting us to go on this trip. While I was on this trip I saw God's hand in mighty ways. The trip allowed us all to grow closer together. It was great handing out tracts and fliers to very welcoming people. I met a lot of new kids at the VBT of Heartland Baptist Church. The preaching of Pastor Gruber was some the best I ever heard. While I was there, I saw what it was like to see people accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. It's an indescribable feeling that tells you, "That person has a chance at getting to heaven and living a life of peace. That person doesn't have to die and go to suffer in hell. Go and proclaim, there's more out there." God was working in my heart. At camp, the preaching was by far the best. Decisions were made by people I didn't even know. God has been, and still is, the best. I made a decision to not keep silent but to tell others of Christ and His love. As I play football this year, I hope God uses me to be a light to others. As I look back on the trip I thank God for the safety and for the testimonies of others.

May God continue to bless.

A WORD FROM ABE PARISE

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."



I first learned about this trip in a meeting with the teens of CBC, 3 of which are my own children. My initial thought was "Wow, that is quite an amazing trip." After the meeting my wife and I talked with our children to gauge their interest in the trip and to encourage them to pray about the opportunity before them. I also began praying that #1 the trip would happen, #2 safety on the trip #3 lives changed on the trip, #4 that my children would be able to go #5 that my wife and I would be able to provide financially for our children to go on the trip.

A few weeks after first learning about the trip, my wife and I were asked if we had any interest in being part of the trip. I most certainly was, but did not immediately commit. In my mind I had a few hurdles to clear: time off from work, finances and whether all my children be attending. My wife and I began to pray that God would make it clear to us that we should be part of the trip. We also asked others in the CBC body to pray on our behalf about the opportunity as well.

I approached my boss in March and told him about the trip and some of the details. He encouraged me to go and was willing to give me an unpaid leave to be able to go. One hurdle cleared!

I took on some additional hours at work and also completed a side job, which built up a little cushion of extra income. Second hurdle cleared!

My daughters participated in the "auction" at CBC and had people commit to hire them in order to provide the \$500 each teen needed to raise. Jarod had not really committed up to this point but after seeing the others get "auctioned off" he now wanted to be involved. He spoke with Pastor David regarding this and was added to list also and had a few more CBC members agree to hire him. My daughters quickly raised the money needed and worked diligently at the other requirements. Another hurdle cleared.

In June, Pastor David began pulling the group together for more frequent meetings and to begin practicing some of the songs we would be singing. As July got closer, the reality of the trip became more clear. My wife and I began nailing down some more details: who would watch the pets, take care of the chickens, collect the mail, etc. My wife primarily handled the quite difficult task of packing.

Thursday evening, June 30th I joined many of the others on the team to help pack the church trailer with everyone's clothes, sleeping bags, air mattresses, and overnight bags. We also had masonry tools, painting tools, carpentry tools and automotive repair equipment. In addition to that we had items for VBT including the scale and buckets, costumes, decorations, arts and crafts, and games. On top of all that we had food- snacks for the road, as well as breakfast items for the first leg of traveling, drinking water, and a good amount of non perishable items that we would use while in Nebraska. By God's grace we were able to pack everything in neatly, mostly organized, and balanced for weight distribution.

The next morning, July 1st we departed early from CBC after packing in a few more last minute items. We heard a challenge from Pastor Smith, prayed, and had some breakfast and then we were off. A great memory was Jim Dunn in the van in front of us; not even 30 seconds into the vehicles moving he took off his hat and waved it out the window to say goodbye to those in the parking lot, sending his sunglasses flying. We were able to retrieve them!

While we were in Alliance, Nebraska I enjoyed reuniting with Pastor Gruber and his family and also the Vasels. Some new friends I made there include the Goodwins, Dan Huss, The Crosswells, Sally Shilsaek (A real life cowgirl), and Richard McCollum (the song director) and his family. It was encouraging for me to see the people were excited about us being there and were ready and willing to join in alongside us to serve the Lord together. Many of the people from Heartland rearranged their normal schedule for the week to not only help with VBT but also some of the work projects in the afternoon. The Crosswells opened up their home for the ladies and their kitchen and garage for everybody, while the Powers opened their home to the guys after we began painting the church floor. At the end of the week it was difficult to say our goodbyes. For me, out of the three churches we visited on our journey, I felt most at home at Heartland.

At the start of the trip each team member was given a packet of 40 tracts. These were specifically designed for our trip. We were challenged to give out the entire packet and if we needed more there would be some additional ones available. This worked out to 3 a day with the admonition that we probably would not be able to hand out many during our week at camp. The Lord provided many opportunities for us to hand these out. While at Mount Rushmore I handed out quite a few and noticed a man in a bright red shirt with white lettering. The back of his shirt read "There is a book....", the front had a logo for the Creation Museum. The Lord gave me boldness, and I struck up a conversation with the man. He and his family were from Washington State, had visited the creation museum and ark encounter earlier that week, and were now at Mount Rushmore. I asked him if he was saved, he smiled and said yes. He then asked me the same thing and I said yes and was able to hand him one of our special tracts. I explained briefly about our group and the trip and he said he would be praying for us.

After a brief stopover at First Baptist Church of Laurel, MT and a even briefer tour of Yellowstone, we arrived at Castle Rock Baptist Camp. We were one of the last groups to come in and had missed a few "ice breaker" style events and a staff meeting. We began unpacking the trailer and placing items in our cabins.

I prayed for boldness from the Lord to meet new people. I made a point to sit with other people at meals and get to know them a little bit. I am a bit reserved so this was not natural for me at first, but the Lord made a way before me. I had opportunity to get to know Rick and Melanie Musson, Ben and Maria Hanson, Pastor Barrick and his wife, the Magnus Family, The Poole siblings, Ben Schoome, John Watts, and Daniel and Hannah Iwanowycz. There were also two missionary families at camp: Mike Miller and his family from Bolivia and Robbie Leonard and his family, raising support to go to Fiji. I met many other throughout the week, but the ones named above got to know on a more personal level. I also was able to have a few good conversations with Dwight Smith.

I also prayed for the Lord to use me how he saw fit. If it was up to me to decide, I would have placed myself in the kitchen to help with the cooking or even dish-washing! The Lord had other plans for me. I was in a cabin with our CBC boys and also a counselor from Pensacola. We were responsible for them to get up in the morning, get ready, be on time to the flag pole for morning exercises and devotions, personal devotions, cabin inspection, and night time routine- get ready for bed, cabin devotions, and then lights out. From the time we got up until the time we went to bed we were kept very busy with a full schedule. The Pensacola team left on Thursday morning, so from that time on the counselor position was handed off to me. For the most part the boys were self motivated, with the exception of waking up in the morning!

In conclusion, it was an honor and a privilege to be part of this trip. I enjoyed being involved in the VBT in Nebraska and serving alongside the members of Heartland Baptist was a special and memorable experience. The work projects were a learning experience for me as well, I enjoyed giving the teens direction and pointers and then stepping back to let them go at it. I was part of the team that patched the church floor, thoroughly cleaned and dried the floor, and then applied multiple coats of paint over the entire floor. The sense of accomplishment the team had when it was completed was encouraging. The time at camp was life changing. At times I felt like a camper, jumping in with some of the games and activities. At the same time I had the responsibility of our cabin of boys as well as being a counselor at the end of the evening chapel when an invitation was made. I got to counsel a young man struggling with sin and the Lord gave me many verses to show him and also had the privilege of praying with him several times. Another spiritual highlight from camp was being asked to pray with some other men the entire time the evening preaching occurred on Tuesday night. Dwight asked me and 2 others to go out and pray for the teens. We took turns, going in sequence and the time went incredibly quick and we believe the Lord allowed our prayers to be heard and effective, with many teens seeking to be counseled at the conclusion of the service that night.

My challenge to those of you at CBC is to pray about and consider how you would be involved in any future missions trips and or camps in the future. Certainly everyone can pray, some can help out financially, and still others may be called on to be part of a trip. Lord willing, my wife and I will have the privilege to help out again.

A WORD FROM JOHN NARVAEZ

It was a privilege to go on this missions trip. I was amazed to see how God can work in many people's lives like the kids at the VBT. We handed out some tracks while we were in Nebraska. We also handed out some fliers for the VBT. Yes we were rejected sometimes, but we still didn't give up. I handed a track to a guy that sold fireworks and after that I felt good. It was also amazing to experience how such a small church can really sing with a lot of passion. Working with the kids at the VBT was fun and it was amazing to see how God can work in young people's lives. When we went to camp Castle Rock I was nervous at first, but I got over it. Camp was a lot of fun, but the best thing about camp was the preaching with brother Dwight Smith. He was such a good testimony to all us campers. One of my favorite sermons was when he preached on Samson how sin can get to the best of people. That message really spoke to me. That is my testimony.

A WORD FROM LISA DUNN

Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. I Peter 5:7

Before this trip, I was nervous to say the least. Not because of not wanting to serve the Lord, but the unknown of where we were going and how He would see fit to use me. We were going far away, for a very long time and we would be in charge of other's children. That was a daunting task to me. Right away, GOD showed me that all would be fine. Our first night, at Fairhaven Baptist College, was above all we could have ever asked for. The hospitality that was showed to us by fellow believers just spoke volumes about how the rest of the trip would be. I spoke to a gentleman who has been to our church, taken classes with Dr. Strouse, and showed me that God's people are the same no matter where we are. See, I was not placing my trust in GOD as to how He would take care of us. When we arrived in Alliance, the girls were taken to "the ranch" where we would be staying for the week. Again, I was worried about logistics and how we were going to be housed and where we would cook our meals. But again, ye of little faith, God was ahead of me, and provided over and above anything we could have asked for. The Crowell ranch was amazing! Brenda and Terry Crowell gave us free reign of their home for the week. From converting their garage into our dining room for 25 people, to letting us use their kitchen and to allow 9 girls to take over their home, was beyond words. They are sweet people and will not be forgotten.

In Laurel, again, the girls needed to be housed in someone's home. We were blessed by the Mooreman's. This sweet couple gave us their basement. Again, the girls did not have to be separated. We could all stay together. God prepared the way. Why had I not gotten it yet?? We had a lovely time with this couple, who shared their wisdom and memories of old with the girls. The girls really enjoyed spending time with them. In the evening, they could be found in the living room just talking and enjoying the Mooreman's company. They woke up at 5AM to pray with us and send us off to a camp that they hold dear to their hearts.

When we arrived at camp, I was thrown a curve-ball. I had always just dropped my kids off at camp. I was never a camper or a counselor. But, I knew that I was probably going to be a counselor, but I expected to be in the cabin with our girls, not separated from them. Well, counselors were short and I was needed in another cabin. I had a meltdown. What was I going to do? I did not know these girls. Who would walk with me in the dark to the skunk? Where was Jimmy and how was I going to get out of this!?? GOD had other plans. He rebuked me and I needed to shape up. My girls in Meadowlark Cabin were great!!!! They were kind, sweet and wanted to see what GOD had for them that week. We were able to have devotions in the evenings and they expressed how Dwight Smith touched their hearts with the preaching. God went before and took me out of my box and showed me that He had other plans for me. He needed to increase and I needed to decrease.

I learned that I need to trust God more and get myself out of His way. Matthew 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3:5,6

If asked if I would do it all again, the answer would be yes!!!! GOD showed me that there is so much more in serving Him than serving myself. Many lives were touched because we allowed Him to use us! I went to be a blessing to others but I was the one blessed!

A WORD FROM MELISSA MERGEN

Our family was able to experience serving together and coming alongside this kindred ministry, and it was encouraging to meet fellow believers with similar goals and a mutual love in our Savior. I was encouraged by several ladies at Heartland Baptist and their testimonies of how they came to join the church there in Alliance. They are very thankful to have a church family in Alliance and were appreciative of our group taking our vacation time to travel there and work with them. I am praying specifically for 2 older girls who were disruptive at times during class time (going into 7th/8th grade) and who sometimes seemed disinterested. I spoke with them privately and gave them each one of our tracts and stressed that we came all this way to try to share the good news of the gospel with them and that I was praying they would take in what they heard all week. They seemed to respond in a positive way and I noticed more smiles from them for the rest of the time - I am praying that those girls will be impacted by the preaching that they heard and that the Holy Spirit will bring the verses to their minds that we sang throughout the week. This brought me to reflect on the fact that sometimes troubled young people are looking for someone to show they care. I need to remember that Christ loved the unlovely and that I should seek out more opportunities to reach those who seem less interested - you never know how the Holy Spirit will work on someone's heart behind the scenes.

A WORD FROM BREANA MERGEN

I had the privilege to go on this trip with my family. We flew into Denver. On the plane, Evie and I had the opportunity to talk to the people sitting next to us. They were very interested in the tract we gave them and wanted to know more about this trip. This was an encouragement to me, as I had been nervous about handing out tracts before. The Lord used this to show me that I need to be bolder in my witness for Him. It was a blessing and encouragement to see the Vasels and Grubers again and to meet some of the people from their church. Their love for the Lord shone through the way they sang and helped in their Vacation Bible Time. We need to be praying for them that their love for the Lord will continue to shine to pierce through the cold, black darkness of Alliance.

I thank the Lord for allowing me to go on this trip. Pray that the gospel continues to reach the hearts of the people of Alliance.

A WORD FROM JACKIE PARISE

I just want to start by saying thank you to everyone who supported me both financially and through prayer. I also want to thank everyone who helped with requirements (prayer partners, reference forms and my accountability partner.) This was my first time going on a mission's trip and it certainly won't be the last. It was an amazing experience and it was a great privilege to be part of the team.

Since it was my first mission's trip I really wasn't sure what to expect. At first I was nervous about how HBC would be but the whole church was very friendly and enthusiastic towards our group. They were excited and extremely thankful that we came to help their small church. The VBT went better than I expected, as the week went on more and more kids were there. On Tuesday we had 18 kids and by Friday we had 27! Something that was a huge blessing was the offering. The goal was to raise \$250 and we ended up getting over double that.

I had a really good time getting to catch up with the Grubers & Vasels and getting to know a lot of people from their church. The girls were all able to stay at one family's home, the Crosswell's. They were kind enough to open up their whole basement for the girls to stay in; and it was very nice to meet and fellowship with them. We were also able to get a few work projects done (patching holes in concrete floor and re doing the Grubers front porch.) Most of the girls were able to spend some time with Mrs. Vasel and we even got to plant some flowers for her.

At the end of the week it was very hard to say goodbye to everyone. We miss them all very much but we know that God is working in their church and we are praying that there would be inroads from the VBT into the church.

Camp was also a really great week for the group. We did awesome activities, met amazing people but most importantly heard wonderful preaching. We had the opportunity to be under the preaching of Dwight Smith all week and it really spoke to my heart. A specific decision I made while at camp was to fully surrender my life to the Lord. I don't know what his will for my life is but whatever it is I am going to give my best to do it. Something else that was a huge blessing to me is that God gave us the energy we needed to have to carry on everyday. We did a lot of traveling, had safety and we're still able to do things like host services and attend camp on very little sleep. Was this because we were so good? No not at all. We had the strength because God gave it to us and I am very thankful for that.

Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

A WORD FROM JOSE NARVAEZ

I had a really great time in Nebraska. When we first went to Heartland Baptist Church service, it was awesome to see how everyone was singing and praising God. You could look around and see everyone singing with smiles on their faces. I also had a great time being in a play that spoke to children about salvation. At first we had a small group of kids attend the bible school, and little by little kids started to invite more and more kids. Pastor David started preaching about Christ and salvation and some kids got saved. What also happened was that we were sleeping at the church but got moved because we painted the floors; we moved to the Powers home which was more comfortable. We left Nebraska and went to Montana. Pastor made some gas stops and we passed out some tracts out to people in the gas stations. We had a great time doing it too. We went to Castle Rock camp and Evangelist Dwight Smith was there. The preaching there was powerful. It spoke to many of us and challenged us spiritually. One thing he talked about challenged me to make a decision. Camp was great but nothing beat the preaching.

A WORD FROM MIKAYLA DUNN

First I wanna thank everyone for their support, both with prayer and financially. Thank you so much! This trip was truly a once in a lifetime offer and it was a blessing to be able to go. Nebraska and Heartland Baptist Church were a great experience. It was a real encouragement to see their church and the people with the way they act and how they treated us like one of their own. The lord worked in the VBT everyday and we even saw one saved. From Nebraska we went to Mount Rushmore and then into Laurel, Montana. First Baptist of Laurel was a blessing to be in and serve at. The couple we stayed with was such an encouragement to me in the way you could tell they were so happy to be there with us and serving the lord. From there we went to Yellowstone National Park and then to Castle Rock Baptist Camp. Camp was such a great experience and we had such a good time. We climbed Storm castle mountain, white water rafted, and so many other things. Brother Dwight Smith was the preacher and he did an amazing job. God really worked through him. I was really impacted by him and the preaching. Something he said really impacted me and probably was something we could have applied to the whole trip, "Don't focus on the giants, but the giant slayer". We get so stuck looking at our circumstances that we forget who's in control and that were in Gods hands. I need to focus more on where God wants me when I come out of a trial than where I am in the trial it's self. On our way home we stopped at the Schofield's church and also stayed at Fare Haven Baptist college. These were such blessing to be at. Thank you again to everyone and especially to Pastor David and the rest of the adults that went. Couldn't have done this without you!

A WORD FROM CHLOE PARISE

This missions trip/ camp was truly amazing! I learned a LOT! In just preparing for the trip I learned that God can do anything! When the trip was first mentioned, it truly seemed impossible. There were lots and lots of details that needed to be figured out. Little by little, the details were made clear. Through the youth auction, I was able to raise above my support. I'd like to thank all of the people I worked for. You were all very kind and I really feel that I was over paid! God also worked out it so that my parents, Jarod and Jackie could go. One detail that I really see how God worked is that originally Adam was supposed to leave for boot camp in March, which would mean he'd graduate around the end of June and part of his leave would end up being in the beginning of July which would interfere with the missions trip. God worked it out so that his date got delayed and he didn't end up leaving until May which pushed his graduation to August. This is just one of the many ways God worked!

Friday (July 1st) we left CBC around 6:30am. Before we took off we were given a pack of 40 tracts to hand out throughout the trip. After some driving, we ended up arriving at Fairhaven Baptist College in Chesterton Indiana. They were all very welcoming to us. They have a huge facility there. They are very humble about the fact that it's God's and they don't deserve it. Saturday we departed from Chesterton off to Alliance, Nebraska. The girls stayed with the Crowell family. They were very nice to us and allowed us to use their basement, kitchen, garage, and bathroom and they even offered us their food! Sunday we had services at Heartland. Pastor Gruber preached a very challenging message on revival. After the morning service they had their lunch fellowship. There, I was able to meet several people from Heartland and kind of reconnect with the Gruber's. Taylor and Allie have matured a lot and are both very sweet! Cameron and Jared are the same as before just taller and louder. Monday (The 4th of July) we set up the park for VBT and got several things prepared. I went to the grocery store with Mr. and Mrs. Mergen, Breana and Evie. Before I had tried given out tracts but kept getting rejected. When I was at the store I was able to hand out at least 25 tracts with Evie. We did not once get rejected! Later that day there was a BBQ type thing at the Crowells with the rest of the church family. It was nice to just relax and we also enjoyed quite the water fight! Tuesday, was the start of VBT... we had around 15 kids. There were many people from Heartland that were there and ready and

willing to help out. Wednesday, we pretty much had the same amount of kids. In the afternoon, Mrs. Dunn, my mom, Breana, Allie, Jackie and I had a chance to go over to the Vasel's house to garden. We finished rather quickly and spent the rest of the time fellowshiping with them. It was a true blessing to see their testimony. Despite all that Mrs. Vasel is going through she is still very positive and always has something funny to say! Wednesday evening, Pastor Gruber preached about our vision before Christ. He brought up several good points but one that I really like is how our vision is determined by our communion with Christ! Thursday's VBT we had about 25 kids. There was a boy (Branen Eyrich) he accepted Christ as his Savior that day! His younger sister (Selah Eyrich), started asking me questions about the preaching. She had a tender heart but seemed very confused. I prayed for the Lord to have her come back and that'd he help her understand the gospel. Friday morning, Mrs. Dunn and all of us girls were talking in the kitchen and she asked us to share a blessing from the previous day. I shared about how Selah was curious about God. Mrs. Dunn and a couple of the other girls started to pray for her as well. God answered our prayers by having Selah there that day! During the preaching Pastor David started to describe what hell would be like. Selah tapped me and was sobbing and asking me if she'd go there. I explained to her that only she and God can know that. She told me that she has done some good things and that she listens to her parents most of the time. I started to talk to her about how we are all sinners and we can't go to heaven unless if we confess our sins and believe on Christ. She was still confused just not as much as before. After the preaching was over, Selah asked me if she and I could talk. We sat down and she said that she wanted to be saved. I ended up talking to her for about 10 minutes to make sure she understood it and she accepted Christ as her Savior! This is the first opportunity I have ever had to lead anyone to the Lord so it was really something special! I'm thankful God gave me the opportunity to share the gospel with someone else! Selah and I went over and talked to Pastor David and Pastor Gruber. They then had Selah and I talk with Mrs. Vasel. She seemed to understand everything but had a few questions since she has gone to a church that teaches you're saved anytime you confess your sins. After talking with Selah, Mrs. Vasel and I got to talk for a bit. We talked about how seeing things like this makes you thankful that you know about Christ. Talking with Mrs. Vasel was an encouragement for sure!

Please pray for the Eyrich family! Her mom as well as many other parents/family members came to the parent rally that night and heard the gospel. Friday night, we cleaned up the VBT decorations and said our goodbyes to the Gruber's and Vasel's. That was really hard for all of us but God comforted us with the fact that no matter what happens we have the hope of seeing them all again!

Saturday morning (July 9th) we took off for Laurel Montana. The Mann's were kind and served us a nice dinner. We then went to the Moorman's. They are a super sweet couple! Us girls, stayed there for 2 nights and the guys stayed at First Baptist Church. Sunday we heard 2 very great messages. One thing that the Pastor said on Sunday morning was "Don't just pray about people; pray for them!" Sunday night's message was on liberty. The 3 main points were: 1) Do I have liberty? 2) Do I share liberty? 3) Do I abuse liberty? The third point was very convicting. It was all about how we are abusers of liberty if we aren't being a testimony of it. Monday morning we departed early from the Moorman's. We drove through Yellowstone. I'm not going to say too much about Yellowstone since God was the focus of our trip but I want to say that going through Yellowstone made me wonder how people can possibly believe in evolution!

Monday night we arrived at camp. At camp I was able to make friends with several girls who were there for the preaching and nothing more. It was a blessing to be able to hang out with them and have conversations about God and just truly how blessed we even were to be at camp! There were lots of heart touching messages preached. One very convicting message was "Build your House". Brother Dwight preached on how Christ is the basis. He talked about how we need the right building material he challenged us with the question "is it wood, hay or stubble or gold, silver and precious stones?" For me, the most convicting point was the builder. In order for things to be successful I must have the right attitude! A very good though Brother Dwight said was "Quit trying and start trusting!" Another very good message Brother Dwight preached was on Samson and how he wasted the potential he had. Another really good message he preached was from Romans 10:14 & 15 called "How?" The second question in verse 14 "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?", was a very convicting message. To think that there are people who haven't heard about Christ is saddening! It was a great reminder that I am responsible for telling others about Christ!

It was very encouraging to get back and have Mrs. Kerr and Pastor Smith welcome us. Thanks everyone so much for your support prayerfully and financially! We really couldn't have done it without you!

A WORD FROM REBEKAH NARVAEZ

I thank God for giving me a good spiritual experience. In Nebraska at Heartland Baptist Church we passed out a lot of tracts and we even shared some testimonies in the morning. Working with the kids was also a good experience because we helped them memorize verses and we even did fun activities with the verses. Then we went to Montana and our Evangelist was brother Dwight Smith . One of the lessons he was teaching about was going out and sharing the gospel and not being afraid to do it and if God is calling us somewhere then we should go without a doubt. He also talked about Samson and how he grew up in a Christian home but as he got older he was playing around with sin and that got him down a really bad road. So I thought about the message and the sins I'm doing now can affect me in the future. So I got a lot of things changed in my life and I came back changed and I'm willing to stay to my changes. I thank God for these two trips it was amazing and an impact.

A WORD FROM ALLIE MERGEN

This was my first missions trip, and even while I wasn't able to go on to Montana the Lord still really touched my heart. To see the Grubers again was a blessing, and as was mentioned before, their church's singing was powerful, and you could tell they meant what they were singing. Their singing encouraged me to think about what I am singing. During the VBT, I was given the privilege to work in Mrs. Gruber's class. Her messages really spoke to me personally. On the very first day while Pastor David was preaching, I had three girls in my row, and they were paying close attention which was a deep encouragement to me. A few of the people I handed tracts to seemed interested, so if you would please pray for them, and for me, I would be very thankful.



COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

50 East Paletown Rd
Quakertown, PA 18951
(215) 541-1430
www.communitybaptistpa.com

Don't miss next month's edition...

WHERE GOD IS GLORIFIED, HIS WORD IS MAGNIFIED, AND HIS PEOPLE EDIFIED