

Winter Newsletter 2012



May your New Year be filled with Hope, Joy, and Peace

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17*

In junior high school, I spent a lot of time on the bench too afraid to take the shot during our team's basketball games. I liked basketball, but didn't want to make a mistake in front of my peers. This very shy, self-conscious little girl could scarcely say 'boo' in public. In high school, my life took a dramatic change after being given the opportunity to spend a few months with missionaries in Japan. I'd never seen such a concerted effort to get God's Word into every hand and home.

The apostle Paul clearly states that Jesus has the power to change a life forever. Skeptics will ask if such a thing is possible. Is an invisible God powerful enough to change a life? My grandfather Warren Wyeth Willard, founder of Camp Good News, describes such a transformation in his book *Confessions of a Minister*.

Wyeth Willard's pranks could produce roars of laughter from his peers and frustration to the point of tears in his mother. Suddenly in the eighth grade, his behavior was so changed in class that his teacher asked him, "Wyeth, what's happened to you lately? Are you sick?" He responded, "No, I wasn't sick. I was gradually becoming a different boy." He writes:

Some time after I had been baptized, and received into church membership, I radically altered my attitudes. Mother and Dad were no longer my enemies; they had become my friends and companions. My brother Lawrence and my sister Betty were partners rather than rivals. Steal? I just couldn't take anything that didn't really belong to me. The fact of the matter is this: of my own accord, through the Spirit of God working in my heart, I made restitution in money to Frank Cartier for the ice creepers I had stolen from him. Shortly thereafter, I visited the Middlesex Fruit Store on Main Street, and paid up for the candy I had stolen from Peter Provetzas and Peter Frangulis. In July and August of 1917, I peddled fruit and vegetables with my Uncle Mason Litchfield at Nantasket Beach. In November of that year, one Saturday I put on an old pair of khaki pants to play foot-

ball with the boys. I reached into my pocket and found to my surprise a one dollar bill. That was a lot of money in those days. If I had kept it, no one would have known the difference. It was an awful temptation. But now I was a Christian. What was a Christian's duty under the circumstances? After an inner struggle, I knew the answer. So I mailed the dollar with a letter of explanation to my Uncle Mason in North Scituate. He was so surprised and pleased with my honesty, that three years later he made me his business partner. In the two decades (1921-41) that followed in a summer venture, nearly a gross business of four hundred thousand dollars passed between us.

Not only had my attitude toward parents, teachers, and all other persons changed, but also my view of God's creatures other than persons was different. I no longer flogged Grandma Litchfield's prize pigs with barrel staves, just to hear them squeal in pain. I no longer shot songbirds, stoned stray cats, or pinged out the windows of my neighbors. My life had changed.

Willard credits his life's redirection to role models he met at church and a children's camp. Camp Good News continues to steer young people in the right direction, while encouraging them to have fun, learn new skills, and make lasting friendships. Staff is key to our success, as illustrated by the e-mails and letters we receive throughout the year. There is no easy fix for the uncertainty and trouble faced by today's youth, but working with young people, teaching them to sail, put on a skit, or enjoy tutoring at Christy Hall is an amazing opportunity and priceless experience. Assistant Director Karen Place Carlson, lecturer at Yale University, stated "A week at camp can have major significance on a child's life".

We look forward to welcoming new and returning staff and campers in 2013.

Jane

A Life Changing Experience

Few campers have as colorful a background as W.W.W., but Samson had his own tale of woe. Like many children, Samson was growing up in a single parent home; mom worked, and he liked to wander the streets for fun. To complicate matters, Samson had arrived from boarding school in Uganda, Africa, just a year and a half before camp began. The campers and staff were amazingly sensitive to his struggles, but more to the point, Samson made some positive changes by summer's end.

Head counselors in both the girls and boys camp commented to me about Samson's improved behavior, and the family friend who arranged for him to come to camp wrote:

I want to thank you and your staff. You have all truly enriched Samson; it was a life changing experience. He has a sparkle in his eye and a broad, gleaming smile when speaking of the good times he had at camp. More importantly he came back with a redirected sense of purpose, discipline, and outlook on his choices. He was here singing Christian songs from Camp and playing them on the Internet. I heard the stories of being "beached" for poor choices and the movie on discipline. Deep down, he appreciated and respects the limits and discipline. He has a new found enthusiasm for the Bible and Jesus' teachings. He has promised to work hard and give back to Camp



Good News. He has pride when speaking with his friends about where he went for the summer and has many stories to tell. His studies have improved significantly and he is prepared for 8th grade. He loved Sasha and his daily tutoring.

You and your staff have changed a life. God bless you for hanging in there with Samson, he is a special kid, and we got him at the right time to direct his path.

*Thank you all!
Blessings,
Susan*



Much of Samson's success can be attributed to his ever present and determined head counselor Orval! Certain behavior would land Samson at Orval's side, but this grew into mutual respect and friendship. Orval's years of experience as a teacher and coach gave him the tools to patiently work with this struggling young man. What a pleasure to have had Orval and his wife Margie at camp last summer.

Margie spent her days putting together delicious meals in the kitchen. Here they are pictured resting on the dock off the boy's beach where the campers and counselors are cooking s'mores over a campfire. They had lots of laughs and were grateful for the many opportunities to share the Good News. Orval especially enjoyed morning devotions with the counselors before breakfast.



Winter is a beautiful time of the year on Cape Cod. While walking through the campus, one can't help but thank God for this place. Many of the staff last summer were international and former alumni. It was thrilling to see second and third generation campers return to appreciate the counselors, cooks, and other leaders. Everyone met together for morning chapel to sing and learn about our awesome God.

Parents continue to praise the staff and last summer's program as they make plans for 2013. Staff recruitment is under way, so please help to get the word out!

Thoughts From Our Alumni

Christine reflects on life after Hurricane Sandy. As you all know, on October 29th a hurricane came our way. It was quite the experience to sit in the living room and watch 90 mph winds blow transformer after transformer out. We are several blocks in from the water and uphill, so we were blessed with a dry home, although our boat did float off its rack and take a solo voyage. However, lots of homes are damaged or gone. It has been simply amazing to see what the pretty ocean can do. The islands attached to Toms River (Seaside Park, Seaside Heights, Ortleigh Beach, Lavallette, and Normandy Beach) are still closed and no one can live on them.



Christine did a great job as Head Counselor of the Girls Camp last summer.

This semester I am a pastoral intern at the First Presbyterian Church of Tuckerton. I am also still a member of Toms River Presbyterian. Tuckerton is small, Toms River is large, and both congregations were hard hit. In the Tuckerton congregation alone 27 homes were badly damaged. Some may not be re-

built. In Toms River Church the homes number in the hundreds. So housing has been a whole new challenge with congregants living all over the state with family, friends, other members of the church, and in RVs and trailers.

However, as with all of life's challenges, God works in amazing ways. New ministries have formed that would not have gotten started without the overwhelming need of storm relief. New relationships have formed between congregations inland and congregations at the shore. We have had several churches ask to partner with us and stay for the long haul in relationship to minister together to the community. Donations have come in that will make new ministry opportunities possible, which we could not have dreamed before. Lastly, communities have become more closely knit. The first two weeks following the storm, while we all had no power or phones, neighbors just worked on each other's homes. Wet carpets and insulation were ripped out as quickly as possible, trees were cut up, and everyone has a sense of community that they did not have as strongly before.

So yes, the storm was bad, it will take years to recover, and for many, their lives have been permanently changed. But God has nonetheless used this to birth ministries and bond people together in new relationships. We thank God for being with us through the storm and for being so great as to give us the strength and opportunity to serve in new ways.

Blessings to you all,
Christine

Another former staff member writes:

This fall, I had the privilege of spending the semester abroad in the UK. I travelled with two professors and a group of 24 students from my school. We studied Victorian Literature, specifically focusing on the life and work of Charles Dickens.

My favorite cities to visit were London and Paris while my favorite overall venture was our three-week long stay at some cottages in Northern Ireland. I cherished our time worshipping in different churches and cathedrals across the region and with so many brothers and sisters in Christ from different denominations.

On our free weekend in Paris, we were even able to meet up with the Berloty boys who were campers and workers for many years at Camp Good News. It was a joy to catch up and fun to see how long lasting memories of summers at camp can be. Being abroad for three and a half months certainly gave me the travel-bug, and I look forward to returning sometime in the future!

Stephanie



Stephanie and Hope



Saint Paul's Cathedral - London, UK

St. Paul's is a lasting monument to the glory of God, a symbol of hope, resilience and strength in the city of London. (Saint Paul's Cathedral, 2012)



Tressie and Mary

Tressie would often offer to help the staff. She is looking forward to joining the Leadership Training (LT) program in 2013 and recently wrote:

Dear Jane,

I would personally like to thank you for the amazing summer I had at Camp Good News. This summer was truly amazing; it was unlike any other year. I was blessed to be back, and would like to thank you for making that possible.

If I had not spent this past summer at camp, my relationship with God would not be where it is today. You have opened my eyes to the Lord, and I accepted Him as my Savior. I would like to thank you for all the opportunities you gave me and everyone at camp.

Also, I would like to mention the staff members, you did it again this summer. I don't know how you do it, but you always find the best people. I'd like to mention Mary and Sarah Blais; I learned so much from them, but they also really helped share God's message and His love.

Thank you for such a lovely summer. May God bless you.

Sincerely,
Tressie

My grandmother says the best thing she ever did was send me to camp. I think she's right!

Donations needed for Camperships and Repairs

Every year, many parents are awarded scholarships to send their children to camp. Please let us know if you would like to help send a child to camp. For those considering a gift other than cash, (e.g. stocks or securities), your charitable deduction may be at the current value rather than its original cost.

It is a blessing to have a dedicated team of year round staff. Jude and Linda man the office, Paul is always willing to lend a hand and keep an eye on the place. Todd and Carlos continue to clear fallen trees, fix the fences, and work together on the other endless jobs around camp. The Yellow Sub and Gert's former cabin seem to occupy their time right now.

The guesthouse on Route 130 still needs some finishing touches. The kitchen cabinets are ready to be installed and the outside trim needs a few coats of paint. This building was always the best place for staff to rest or visit on their time off, or have a staff party. We'd like to get it ready for them.

Hope to see you in 2013!



Carlos and Todd



Route 130 guesthouse kitchen

Jane Brooks, MSN
President, The Society for Christian Activities
Director, Camp Good News

Hope Willard Brooks, MD
Jane's Assistant

Stephen Willard Brooks, MD
Vice President, Society for Christian Activities

Karen Carlson, PhD
Assistant Director

Faith Willard, MS in Counseling
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