September 2017 So long ALASKA Summer Snapshots

“Wow, what a summer! I went…. I got to.... It was amazing when God…” Those might be your conversation as you thumb through your summer photo album! Ecclesiastes 3:1 comes to mind, “There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven - “We want to open up our virtual photo album, give you a snapshot of our summer events, and answer those questions from our perspective!

Ministry Happens when God Answers Prayers and His People Respond

Last Spring you prayed with us for God to send Ministry Work Teams. God answered as His people responded! We were blessed with 5 work teams plus volunteers. Despite the wet and cool conditions God’s people enthusiastically accomplished the tasks. InterAct’s property is important as it is utilized for multiple discipling activities, includingLEaD Alaska discipleship ministry, and numerous activities, and office for InterAct Ministries Alaska. Many of the ministries would be difficult or impossible without this well-maintained facility. Enter- God’s people responding to God’s leading!

Work teams came from Illinois, Colorado, and Alaska! Despite their diversity, they shared these traits: a willingness to complete any task set before them, learn more about the ministry of InterAct and InterAct Alaska, get better acquainted with us and each other, and enjoy summer in Alaska. God worked in our hearts through the conversations, encouragement, stories, and the opportunity to develop relationships. We have heard that God also worked in their lives. Daily we celebrate the evidence of their hard work and the faithfulness of people who responded to God’s leading. We are so thankful for their ministry here this summer!

Staining was done on the decks all around,
Rocks were removed so that bare was the ground.
Weeds were ripped out so new plants could be sown,
Landscaping white rock was shoveled-oh, groan!
Wires were stripped down and installed were new lights,
Engines dismantled, reconstructed by nights.
Hammers and brushes, shovels and saws,
Nail guns and wrenches, all that work without pause.
The Campus looks great and we shed not a tear,
But next year there's more work so please do not fear!

Ministry Happens when Believers Gather

A day after dropping off a work team, we were back at the Anchorage airport meeting Dennis Charlie (an Ahtna believer). We checked our bags and boarded the Alaska Airlines bound for Minnesota where we attended the United in Christ Conference. The Conference goal was to gather those involved in Native ministry, including Native leaders, and celebrate, collaborate, and prayerfully dream about future ministry endeavors. It was a valuable time, and we enjoyed connecting with friends and colleagues from Canada and the US.

Ministry Happens when God Raises up Leaders and they Share Wisdom

Several days after returning from the Conference we hosted InterAct Ministries' Board of Directors. Steve appreciated sharing the Alaska ministry update in their meeting, and we both enjoyed hosting them in Alaska. We renewed friendships, and made several new acquaintances. We appreciate the leadership of these men!

Ministry Happens when Missionaries Support One Another

Two days after the Board meetings Steve and I packed up Trolleys and Spider Web interactive resources and headed for Anchorage where we ran the Missionary Youth Program for Send North's annual conference. We loved connecting with Send missionaries and interacting with their youth. One bonus was our opportunity to take them to Fusion Alaska, a state-wide youth conference complete with world-class speakers, artists, and musicians. We ROCKED that church listening to "We are Messengers!"

A couple of weeks after the Board meetings we jumped in our truck and drove the 6 hours to Fairbanks. Our agenda- connect with several of the InterAct missionaries. We enjoyed dinner with one family and then the next morning boarded Wright Air's Cessna Grand Caravan and soared into the grey skies headed for the village of Ruby. There we were met by our missionaries, the Tramm family, and enjoyed seeing their "new to them" home and reconnecting. That evening was most exciting as they facilitated a church leadership meeting to discuss with us (InterAct) what next steps need to be taken in their church situation. It was exciting to hear the hearts of the believers, particularly when they expressed their desire is to see people in their village come to faith in Christ. We discussed several related matters, and left encouraged by these believers and by the ministry of John and Jen among these people they

have grown to love. After flying back to Fairbanks we were able to squeeze in several other visits before heading back to Palmer. We can see God being glorified by the ministries of all these people, lives being encouraged through their love for people, and enthusiasm from each of them for what God will do in the upcoming year. Our thanks to the Tramms, Zooks, Millers and Josephs for clearing time from their busy schedules for our visit!

Life and Ministry Happen when We Celebrate Family

All of us can relate to the tremendous blessing of family, which was God's idea from the very beginning. We've had some exciting milestones this year. We have celebrated multiple birthdays, enjoyed Skype get-togethers with our family out of state, and meals together with those in Alaska. We are excited as we pray for our oldest grandson and his wife, expecting their first child in January, and our oldest granddaughter entering the work force and adult life after her May high school graduation.

All of our lives are framed by our mortality and finite days, but we share the same opportunities. We love the closing statement- Ecclesiastes 12:13 "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person."

Praise:

For the tremendous ministry of the work teams.

The encouragement of the Conference.

Prayer:

Dedicated, uninterrupted time to complete a number of writing projects for Alaska ministry.

New missionaries- those working hard to build their support teams, and for God to bring us new workers.

Preparations as we plan to teach a LEaD Alaska module on October 1-8 in an isolated village near Nome.

Alaska State Fair 2017