



August 2009

# *The Word of God* **NEWSLETTER**

an  
ecumenical  
charismatic  
missionary  
Christian  
Community

How does God top more than 25 years of Pine Hills Boys & Girls Camps?

## **The Best Camps Ever!**

We have been running the Pine Hills Boys and Girls camps so long that they are now led by former campers—who were themselves at camps led by former campers! There is a heritage of more than 25 years of building into the lives of young people, introducing them to a deep experience of the Lord, and pointing them toward a Spirit-empowered life for Jesus. And God has blessed the campers and staff year after year!

This year we faced some special challenges. More than ever before, the camp is reaching young folks with no historical connection to The Word of God. This is wonderful in that it extends the reach of our mission. But it also means that campers come with less background and have to 'hit the ground running'. Some have no experience with charismatic life before getting thrown in the deep end at camp. But God worked wonderfully to open kids hearts and bring them into an experience of the Spirit.

Given the state of the economy, there were financial challenges, as well. Many families struggled to be able to afford camp. Initially we only had 50+ boys signed up, largely because of this. We had a tremendous response among the girls, eventually accepting 128 campers! However, many of them needed scholarship help, as well. Eventually we were able to make it possible for 92 boys to come to camp. In total we extended more than \$15,000 worth of scholarships, almost three times the annual amount for the last few years.

But the investment by community families, former camp families, churches of campers and others was worth it. Both the Boys Camp and Girls Camp leaders reported that this was probably the best year ever—and that is saying a lot! There seemed to be a greater sense of unity among the staffs, more responsiveness on the part of everyone to the Lord, and on top of all that they had great weather!

Below you can hear from the campers themselves about their experience at camp. Let's keep praying for them that what the Lord began in them at camp will be sustained in the year ahead.

*(Continued on page 2)*



*The Pine Hills Boys & Girls Camps were both 'bulls eyes' this year. Some of the biggest ever, and by all reports, the best. The Lord continues to draw young people into a close*

*relationship with Himself—while they have loads of fun!*

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Seems to me ...

## Have a great day, Dad

By Phil Tiews

*These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deut. 6:6-7*

I can remember hours spent holding a flashlight and passing tools to my Dad as he lay amid a neat arrangement of parts with his head inside a washing machine or some other household contraption. He is a Fixer. Not so much an artist or craftsman as the person you need when your American refrigerator breaks down while living in Japan in the 1960's, long before parts-by-internet. He would find a way to make a part or do without and get things running again. He could convert a coal-fired household furnace needing stoking every few hours into an oil-fired, full-automatic one, assembling parts intended for other purposes. His motto? It might well be stated as 'There's got to be a way'!

I have a few tools my Dad gave me, but they are not very significant among the tons I have purchased on my own. But my Dad gave me a many great gifts, among them the courage to try and a practical creativity. He passed on a valuable heritage.



&

We have been given a tremendous heritage. Foremost, of course, life in Christ, the Gospel, and all that goes with it. In particular we have received gifts in regards to life in the Spirit, life with brothers and sisters in community, and life with other Christians in ecumenical love. These are gifts that we are most certainly to enjoy, but also gifts to pass on. Israel was called to pass on the Lord's word to its children. Jesus calls us to pass on His Word and gifts to not only our children, but to all.

In this issue you can read about some of the ways the Lord's Word, and in particular the gifts He has given to us in The Word of God, are being passed on to another generation. Of course, we need to start with our own children (and increasingly, grandchildren), but I am delighted to see the 'passing' is beginning to extend more broadly. For example, the majority of boys and girls at the Pine Hills Camps this summer had no historic connection with The Word of God. And our Community Life Nights included many visitors, both young and old.

Having freely received, let's freely and generously—and very intentionally—give to emerging generations that they, too, may enjoy the Lord's wonderful gifts.

Pine Hills Camps 2009

## The Boys Share

- At Pine Hills I really experienced God and had a lot of fun. Thanks a lot, J.
- I really liked the high dive. It was sooooo awesome. I also liked the final battle. I pulled liked, 13 raider flags. I threw a balloon at Mr. Awesome, but it bounced off and I got really amazed. I also kind of experienced God. Not as much as last year though. But I will still try to be good at home and talk to God all the time. Well, that's about it ok. Bye. C.
- I felt God's love for the first in a long time.
- I really experienced Jesus this year at Pine Hills and that is very special to me.



- I have never been so close to God in my life. M.
- I experienced God's love for the first time.
- I gave my life to Jesus and went all out for him for the first time this week. C.
- I experienced God's love powerfully for the first time. And I had one of the best weeks of my life. M.
- This camp was one of the most fun things involving God I've ever had. I wish I could come every year but I hope that others have the same experience as me.
- I heard God's voice and learned how much he loved me.
- I have experienced God in one of the most intense prayer meetings ever in one of the best weeks of my life
- I have been going to Pine Hills for 3 years and this year I experienced God's love the most. B.

- I've experienced God's love in a way I have never experienced before here at Pine Hills. Thanks to prayer meetings, I have recommitted myself to Christ Jesus.
- I've experienced God in many ways before this year at camp, but this year was really special because I was 'slain in the Spirit' for the first time. And it was one of the best experiences in my life. M.
- I spoke in tongues for the first time. D.
- This camp experience has been the best experience in my life. I have built up my joy, confidence, (muscles), spirit and lot more stuff. This camp is the best and I hope I can continue coming.
- For the first time ever I've felt the will to get out of my shell. M.
- At Pine Hills I came to be the man that God wanted me to be both spiritually and mentally. I thank The Word of God with all my heart for the great service you have done to me. Your works have saved many souls and I am truly grateful for your undying efforts. P.



Spending a week at Pine Hills was the best thing that happened to me in my summer! I met so many friends there. There were so many activities for us that the councilors and staff put together, such as game day and workshops, but most importantly there was the prayer meeting which was where I and other girls could just say "Yes" to Jesus.

As I said before, I met so many new friends at Pine Hills. I thought I knew everyone there, but I was mistaken. We had 125 campers this year and 50 counselors which is the record. I met girls I had never met in my life and girls that I saw before at Pine Hills but never spent time talking with them. There were campers that traveled from Florida and Ireland to come. I have so many new friends who are going to the same high school as me.

There were so many activities that we could do at Pine Hills. In the morning we would have initiatives, which were different obstacles for cabins to try and overcome. We would have to work together as a cabin and listen to each other, or we wouldn't be able to finish it. Those were one of my favorite parts of the day.

My favorite initiative was the 12 foot wall. The 12 foot wall was a wall (of course), but we had to climb up it with nothing to hold onto just our cabin mates pushing from below or pulling up at the top. The catch was that only three people were allowed at the top. The extras had to go down the latter and 'spot' for the ones who hadn't climbed yet. You were not able to help them up. We had so much fun doing that.

Other activities were workshops which would last most of the afternoon. Earlier during the school year we signed up for what we wanted to do during workshops. My favorite workshop was swimming. They had a high dive that was 15 feet high, which you could jump off. Other workshops I did were

Broadway Revue, which was dancing. We would perform that later at the talent show. I also did Pine Hills Scrapbooking. They had all sorts of activities from dancing to sports to arts and crafts to horseback riding even to a high ropes course.

Most importantly at Pine Hills we came closer to God through morning and night prayers and on Wednesday and Thursday night prayer meetings. During morning prayers they would introduce a new chapter to us because our theme this year was: The Greatest Story ever told. The counselors would perform a skit for us and then one of the leadership team would give us a talk about the chapter.

For example, one chapter was the Entrance of Evil. Ruth Dirkes gave a talk to us about because of the fall of Adam and Eve, Satan is going to tempt us, but we have our guardian angels to protect us from Satan. After the talk we would have a some time to praise Jesus.

On Wednesday and Thursday we would have one night to just praise Jesus. It was exactly like morning prayers with very moving skits and a talk. The only thing that was different was that we had so much longer to praise God. There was prayer ministry in the back of the tent. I saw so many girls slain in the Spirit and almost everyone was crying (in a good way). I felt so much closer to God.

Before I went to camp, I was very anxious about high school, but after those two prayer meetings I felt so much more peaceful. God worked through so many girls and especially in me. I feel that I can praise Jesus without worrying what my friends think of me. The prayer meetings were by far my favorite part of Pine Hills.

Pine Hills was so much for me and I bet for all the other 124 campers there also. I can't wait to be a counselor there someday.

## Problems in Prayer

By Dave Mangan

As we begin to develop a life of prayer we will have many fulfilling and exciting times with the Lord. Jesus is leading us into an adventurous relationship with the Father. But it is also the case that every Christian I know or have read about confesses to having great difficulties at times. The most common problem in prayer is dryness.

### It's like a desert here

Dryness is that experience in prayer when you feel you're not getting anywhere. It feels like God is very far away and your prayer doesn't seem to be accomplishing anything. Perhaps you used to be able to pray with great freedom for an hour and the time passed quickly. Now praying for fifteen minutes is just hard work. Your attention span is very short and you are distracted very easily. You will start out trying to pray very fervently and end up very quickly thinking about the strangest things and you're not sure how you got there. In the midst of it all, these difficulties seem insurmountable. But if we are able to respond well to this challenge, the very problems we encounter can lead us into an even more fulfilling relationship with God.

When going through these difficult periods in prayer we are met with various temptations. The most common one for me is "I'll do it later." But, of course, later comes and goes away, and so does prayer. Another excuse is "I'm too busy and besides my whole life is a prayer." That sounds very good, and indeed, our whole life should be a prayer. But if we use that as an excuse it's like saying that my whole life is a marriage so I don't need to have time with my spouse. Another temptation is to say, "I don't want to be a phony. God

will know my heart isn't in it." To that I would say who really is the phony? Is it the person who is disciplined enough to not be a slave to his emotions and to pursue that which he knows to be the correct course? Or is it the one who lets his feelings and outside circumstances determine what he does? Remember a disciple is one who is disciplined.

### Lord, teach us to pray

Now that we have stated the problem what can we do about it? I would suggest that you pray and ask Jesus to teach you to pray. This has become a regular prayer of mine and I suppose it always will be. Don't stop here though; give Him something to work with. Remember that Jesus fed 5,000 people with only a few loaves and some fish. You may not have much but give Him what you have – time. At this point it's easy to say "I don't have any time!" It is, therefore, essential to DECIDE that prayer is important enough to do. Then make time. Arrange your day around it.

### How much time?

This answer to this question will vary depending on your life situation. Keep in mind that a little done faithfully is better than a lot done very seldom. As an example, let's take 30 minutes. You may end up taking a longer or a shorter time. When faced with 30 minutes (or any amount) to spend in prayer, it seems very long when you're already having a difficult time praying. But look at it this way. Could you spend 5 minutes praising and thanking God? That sounds easy. Then how about 5 minutes repenting from your sins and asking the Lord's forgiveness. Could you do that? Sure. Now we may not be the best readers in the world but I'll bet we all could read some

scripture meditatively for 10 minutes. And with all of our problems and those we are aware that others have, we could spend 5 minutes interceding. Finally, if we would take 5 more minutes in praise and thanksgiving, we would have just spent a ½ hour in prayer. When viewed from this perspective it hardly seems long at all. You can shorten or lengthen these example times depending on what amount of time you want to start with. If we could gradually increase the time for each phase of our prayer, we could grow it to where we want it to be.

### Done with drooping

Some people may not like the idea of structuring prayer like this, but if something is drooping don't be afraid to prop it up. But try to not get locked into a particular structure. When your drooping prayer life is standing tall, don't be afraid to remove the structure and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, give it a new and more life-giving structure. Problems in prayer are, in a sense not really problems. Rather, they are an opportunities to grow in discipline, maturity, and prayer.



*I this third article on prayer, Dave Mangan helps with the universal experience of 'dryness' in prayer. He shows how we can grow through these experiences.*

*Dave has been helping folks to open up to the Spirit for many years and he brings his many years as a school teacher to bear to offer clear and useful instruction.*

Are there any 'signs and wonders' out there?

## Signs of the Kingdom: Testimonies of God's Action

*It is always so encouraging to hear about God breaking into our normal lives with the power of His Kingdom. Below are three stories of God's action from Keith Dwyer & Dave Walton. If you have testimonies, please send them to me at phil@thewordofGodcommunity.org. Let's tell of his deeds in the great assembly—or at least it's newsletter! — Phil Tiews*

### Keith Dwyer

#### HEALING

In March of 2009 I noticed a small growth on my neck. Initially, I thought it was a pimple and that it would go away. When it grew and began looking ugly, my wife encouraged me to have my doctor look at it. He said that it appeared to be a *keratoacanthoma* growth. In most cases, *keratoacanthoma* grows rapidly, is benign and disappears within 6 months, usually leaving a scar. He said that in some cases, however, this type of growth is cancerous (*squamous cell carcinoma*) and should be quickly dealt with. He ordered a biopsy to be taken a few weeks later. I subsequently saw my chiropractor for something unrelated and she advised against the biopsy in favor of a homeopathic treatment of oil of oregano (a natural antiseptic) applied directly to the growth.

Well, I was a bit torn about what to do, but prayerfully cancelled the biopsy appointment. I had to cover the growth with a band-aid so others wouldn't have to look at it. My wife was still concerned about cancer, so I was happy to hear that Tom Naemi was coming to our prayer meeting to pray with people for healing. I received prayer and felt the presence of the Lord immediately. As Tom prayed he said, "You don't have cancer." He continued to pray and said something to the effect that this growth would be gone within a week. I felt a lot better about the situation and continued with my treatment. The growth appeared to be shriveling up and within four days it dropped off. There appears to be no scar. I believe that I am healed. Praise the Lord!

### Dave Walton

#### THE BRAIN

I was standing outside the room that I was assigned to. While getting instructions from the nurse, I heard the man inside the room having a heated argument with someone. When I went inside there wasn't anybody but the patient. He had just had a head operation. His head was heavily wrapped. His hands were also heavily wrapped to keep him from trying to unwrap his head. For many days he hadn't been able to eat solid food because he couldn't keep it down.

When I came in he began to cuss me out. He told me to get out. I found myself, by God's grace, to be able to not react emotionally. I could really see he was feeling insecure about himself. I told him many times that I wanted to be with him. He started talking to me.

He expressed many times how he was concerned about his wife's love for him and how bad he felt he was acting. I communicated to him that his behavior was what was to be expected because of the stress of the operation and the drugs. I told him that he should not take too seriously the thoughts he had about his wife because of how hard it is to think clearly in the hospital.

He became really relaxed which helped him to keep his food down at noon. I told him about Jesus and prayed with him to have Jesus come into his life. His wife and his son came to see him. He right away told his son to shake my hand because I had helped him. I have found that hard times creates opportunities for God's love to be revealed.

We are usually able to help ourselves by speaking to ourselves what we know to be true. When we are sick it is hard to talk to ourselves. When we speak simple truths to those who are sick we help them to talk to themselves things that are true.



#### THE CROSS

I was sitting with a young man named Mike who was dying of lung cancer. He was obviously trying to find God. I tried preaching the gospel but nothing seemed to be hitting home. What bothered him most was what the cross had to do with anything.

I asked him if I could pray with him. He said, "OK". All I said was, "Lord I ask you to heal Mike and reveal Yourself to him". The power of God filled the room. I could see the Lord was doing something with him. At one point along the way He blurted out with joy, "The cross is for me."

After a while we were able to talk. He said when we prayed that he felt himself falling backwards. He decided to let go and found himself floating. He said he saw Jesus on the cross and Jesus said, "The cross is for you." He now was Spirit-filled. I heard he was bouncing around the next morning!

How can we make community life more accessible for young families?

## Community Life Nights Bring Together Young and Old

After four Community Life nights in June and July, the verdict is in. They are a lot of fun! Each evening had a great turnout and we were blessed with a mixture of community regulars, some friends who haven't been to a meeting in years, several young families with children, and some guests.

We had a great time just sharing over the potluck dinner and the activities proved really interesting. They covered things from the writings to C.S. Lewis to making a snap purse to being an entrepreneur to volleyball to developing a Christian worldview!

We wanted to make the times as much fun for the kids as for the adults. Brothers and sisters provided great care and lots of creative play for little and big kids. Their service made for a great family time for all.

Everyone enjoyed the Community Family Nights so much we are going to have to find some way to continue having them at least every once in a while through the school year. Our evening-ending Horah could use the practice! Stay tuned for news about the next event. ■



*The teams caring for the older and younger kids did a great job. The kids all wanted to come back to the next Night. Most of the workers had so much fun, they wanted to come back, too!*



*We were able to draw on the gifts of lots of folks, giving the body a chance to build itself up in love. Marsha Williamson led a great discussion of the works of C.S. Lewis. Rachael & Matt Varblow used a video series called the Truth Project to lead a discussion of Christian Worldview. John Kazanjian talked about entrepreneurship and Barb Tiews taught pie making! The diversity of the Body was on*



# **The Annual Word of God Community Picnic**

## **August 23, starting at 4:30 pm**

**@ Kopinski Park** [better known as Don & Ann's home!]

**8758 Webster Hills Road, Dexter**

**Note: MapQuest will misdirect you. Google is OK**

**Directions: take Mast Road north from Dexter for 4.5 mi**

**Turn left on Walsh Road. go 0.3 mi**

**Turn left on Webster Hills Road**

**Park on lawn along drive at Kopinski's**

**What you can look forward to:**

**Worship**

**Fellowship**

**Food**

**Games**

**Zip line**

**A great time!**

**What we will provide:**

**Brats**

**buns**

**drinks**

**What to Bring:**

- . A dish to pass**
- . Your own chair**
- . Your family and friends!**





**Band of  
Brothers  
Breakfast**

**September 5, 9-11 am**

**[Yes, that's Labor Day Weekend, but  
you have to eat!]**

@

**Covenant Presbyterian Church**

**[Jackson, just east of Zeeb]**

**Bring a friend or relative and let's  
encourage each other to grow as  
men of God.**

# Join us in August

- 8/9 Prayer Meeting, 4:30–6:00 pm**  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
5171 Jackson Road
- 8/23 Picnic, starting at 4:30 pm**  
Kopinski's home  
8758 Webster Hills Road
- 9/5 Band of Brothers 9–11 am**  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
5171 Jackson Road
- 9/13 Prayer Meeting, 4:30–6:00 pm**  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
5171 Jackson Road