

WILDERNESS PROGRAM UPDATE

New to Big Sky's Wilderness Program this summer was the advanced backpacking trip, which went deep into the Bob Marshall wilderness. Jennifer Hinson, one of our trip leaders, had this to say about her experience:

“Wow, what a trip! God Almighty used advanced backpacking to walk me through many lessons that I see clearly in hindsight was the only way to learn them. Our group of 10 began as individuals largely unfamiliar with each other, and, after forging our way through the hills and valleys of the rugged Montana backcountry for 7 days and 6 nights, emerged as an efficiently functioning, close-knit group of friends with memories good enough to last a lifetime. We all faced different challenges throughout the trip, and with each challenge, I watched the members of our group help each other in various moments of need. Of course, the terrain itself was beautiful and proclaimed the very hand of God at work in His world, but I was most affected by the people I was with and the bond we developed. God used this trip to remind me that He allows us to go through trials so that we may grow and learn in ways that are not possible without difficulty; that His desire for us is to trust and rest in Him now, rather than worrying about what is to come; and that each member of the body of Christ serves a purpose in His plan.”



UPCOMING EVENTS
A Big Sky Breakfast
 December 11, 2021
 For: 6-8th Graders
 Date: Jan 21-23, 2022
Jr High Snow Camp
 For: 9-12th Graders
 Date: Feb. 11-13, 2022
 (2021 L.I.T.'s attend free)
Senior High Getaway
 For: 3-6th Graders
 Date: March 11-13, 2022
 All retreats are \$75.
 For more info, check out
www.bigskybiblecamp.org

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Big Sky is a great place for a retreat, family getaway, pastor getaway, business meeting, cared meal and more!
 Go to www.bigskybiblecamp.org for more info.

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BSBC NEWS | FALL 2021

MEET THE KIRNANS

We are very excited to welcome Big Sky's newest full-time staff member and his family to camp! This fall, Sean Kirnan joined Big Sky as Director of Development and is joined in ministry by his wife Kim, son Ezekiel ("Zeke," 10), and daughters Katie Rose (8) and Maggie Joy (6).

Sean comes with 16 years of non-profit leadership experience in both higher education and Christian camp ministry settings. He is eager to encourage and support Big Sky's champions in investing their time, talents, and treasures to see the Kingdom of God continue to flourish at Big Sky. Kim has been involved in camp ministry for years and has served as an educator and private piano and guitar instructor. She has a passion for special needs ministry and looks forward to serving at Big Sky when not homeschooling their children. Both Sean and Kim enjoy serving the local church in music ministry.



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A PROMISE KEPT UPDATE

Please join us in praising God for His graciousness to Big Sky through the Swenson Foundation. They have turned a dream into a reality with the blessing of a \$3 million gift towards Big Sky's "A Promise Kept" campaign. As always, God's timing could not be more perfect as we have far outgrown our current facility. To keep updated on the progress of this project, stay tuned for Big Sky's next newsletter and check out www.bigsky-promisekept.org. Thank you, Swenson Foundation, for allowing Big Sky and Camp Promise to expand our reach with the gospel of Christ!



THANK YOU ORTS!

In 2003, Jeff and Emmy Ort answered God's call to relocate from the east coast to lead Camp Promise, Big Sky Bible Camp's ministry to individuals with special needs. Throughout their time at Big Sky, they have been an encouragement to countless families, taking time to listen to them and love them with the love of Christ. Camp Promise has grown under their leadership, with the ministry now running year-round through the Friday Night Out program in Kalispell.

Over the years, God has grown not only their ministry but their family as well. Jeff and Emmy are blessed with seven children in all, two of whom are foster/adoptive kids with special needs. Their heart for people with special needs continues to impact many lives, including those closest to them!

Jeff and Emmy will remain in Kalispell and will continue to be a great resource and encouragement to other foster/adoptive families in the Flathead Valley and beyond. We'll miss them here at camp, but they hope to volunteer and plug in where they can.

Thank you, Jeff and Emmy, for all you have done and continue to do to encourage families and individuals with special needs.



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TRADITIONAL CAMP UPDATE

We asked several of our summer staff to share a way that the Lord worked in their life or used them this summer:

Joella Landis

There was a girl in my cabin who had never been exposed to the gospel before. She was given a Bible on the first night and she immediately began poring over it. Every afternoon during R and R for the rest of the week she read it with me or the other counselor. On the last day I asked her what she had learned, and she explained the gospel back to me and then mentioned that she was excited to share it with her parents as well. It was so amazing to see God working in her heart throughout the week!

Allison Miller

This summer I felt most challenged to consider, dwell on, and delight in the heart of Christ for sinners (prompted mostly by my discipleship time with my discipleship mentor). This understanding has shifted the way I pray and increased the amount of time I spend in prayer, especially in praising Him.

Jose Garcia

I had a camper who talked to me after a Bible class with tears falling from his face because he had denied his Father before others. He had felt the weightiness of his sin on his shoulders and was ready to hand it over to Jesus. By the grace of God, I was able to tell him the gospel once again, and once we had finished, his tears of sorrow became tears of joy. He came to know that it isn't the strength of our faith that saves, but rather it's the strength of our Savior that does!

Nicole Haag

Big Sky Bible Camp changed my life this summer. I grew so greatly in my understanding and love for the Lord. I was constantly in awe of the community at camp and the ways that God would work and move. I learned so much about how God uses weakness, about the joy of the Lord, God's sovereignty, and many little things like how to pray through scripture.

Addie Kashmier

Have you ever come to a point in your life when you realized you were just going through the motions? During this summer, this is exactly what one camper experienced. Extremely disturbed at this, she realized her desire to earnestly seek God and fully commit her life to Him. In a matter of minutes an unexplainable peace washed over her as she experienced the grace and forgiveness that our loving Heavenly Father offers to all who believe in Him!



FROM THE DIRECTOR



Thanks for reading this letter and for your interest in Big Sky Bible Camp!

There are many exciting things going on here at Big Sky, and we hope this newsletter gives you a glimpse into what the Lord is doing here. With more than 1,200 campers attending camp (including winter retreats), **2021 has been a record year for Big Sky. Please join us in praising God** for this exponential increase in opportunities to share the gospel with campers of all ages. We utilized *every bed* in our facility this summer and asked some of our staff to stay in tents in order to accommodate more campers!

Camper demand for Big Sky is unprecedented, and we are bursting at the seams. Unfortunately, we were forced to turn away more than 150 campers who remained on our wait list. We simply did not have the capacity for them. During the high-enrollment weeks this summer, our kitchen crew was feeding close to 200 campers and staff. This was extremely taxing on our dining room and is not sustainable. **But praise be to God for His provision through the Swenson Foundation of the very generous gift that transformed our dream of expanding our facilities into a reality (see front page).** I lost count of the times where I praised God for His provision of these funds so that we can build a dining hall capable of handling the influx of campers – and expand even further!

As we look to eventually transitioning to the new dining room, we also plan to add one more cabin to the Outback. A cabin like this would allow approximately 80 more traditional campers to attend camp next summer. Stay tuned for more information on this project slated for 2022.

Thank you, again, for your interest and support of Big Sky Bible Camp and Camp Promise. We will do our best to keep you updated during this season of growth and opportunity. Please continue to visit www.bigskypromisekept.org for updates on the new facility.

CAMP PROMISE UPDATE - BETH WIEGAND



It is hard to describe the joy you see on the faces of Camp Promise campers, but this year it was almost palpable!

Due to COVID, our 2020 camp programming was limited and many of our regular campers could not attend. This year, for the most part they were back, and the excitement was all over their faces. We ran three weeks of camp this year, our typical two overnight weeks and one week of day camp during BSBC's week of High School camp. What a blessing to have day camp alongside 90 or so high school students! The camps mixed well and assured us that we could continue to run a day camp program.

This year, we made some program changes during overnight camp and held a special banquet on Friday night. Campers were announced as they were escorted into the decorated chapel. They enjoyed a royal feast and some after dinner activities. The smiles were wide, and it was agreed to make this an annual tradition. We also revamped our Saturday morning carnival with lots of new games and prizes. It was a special way to cap off our week.



This fall we will continue investing in the lives of our campers through Friday Night Out in Kalspell and Promise Clubs in Bigfork, Missoula, and Great Falls. If you live locally in the Flathead Valley or in Missoula or Great Falls and would be interested in volunteering in these programs, please contact Beth at beth@bigskybiblecamp.org. We are excited for these opportunities to provide Christian community to our camper friends and look to add more people with special needs to our fellowships.



MEET THE KIRNANS CONTINUED FROM FRONT

We asked them some questions to help you get to know them:

How long have you been married? 12 years (September 12, 2009)

How did you and Sean meet? Sean cleverly created an opportunity to use Kim's musical gifts in leading worship – with the goal, of course, of meeting her. The rest is history.

What is one of your favorite parts of serving in camp ministry? Helping campers and guests slow down, take a breather, and begin to realize the Sabbath rest we read about in Hebrews 4. It's a privilege to share and affirm the gospel alongside family in Christ in a natural setting that so profoundly testifies to God's beautiful design.

What are you as a family looking forward to as you serve at Big Sky? Growing in our love for each other and the Lord and learning to embrace God's providences and good gifts. I (Sean) am looking forward to seeing Kim and the children thrive in a healthy community where they can be a blessing to others. We want our children to experience the blessings of obeying the Lord.

What are some things you enjoy doing together as a family? Laughing! The kids are too funny. We like reading, storytelling, fishing, exercise, and goofing off. And eating.

What is one of your family's favorite Bible verses? We like to sing the scriptures. One of our favorites is Matthew 5:14-16, "You are the light of the world...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Where did you attend school? Kim: Mary Hardin-Baylor, Regent University; Sean: the streets of New York City, Bucknell University, Regent University.