

It has been quite the summer! We are so thankful for your prayers and care for us over the last couple of months. You have a part in all that God has been doing in and through us.

In May we celebrated 3 graduations

Natalie: Graduate of Boyce College, works as an assistant to the Activities Director at an assisted living place in Louisville, KY

Katie: Graduate of Cornerstone University, served at Barakel this summer, works as a care giver for Home Instead assisted living in Lansing, MI, lives with Jon's mom

Gretchen: Graduate of Fairview High School, served at Barakel this summer and is now a student at Grand Rapids Community School, living with Hannah in her new house and working at Tropical Smoothie



Then came Summer:

81 days...from May 28 – Aug. 17. In these days we worked with 97 college age summer staff, over 200 high school volunteers (STEP program) and many adult volunteer staff.

The faces and memories included in these numbers is astounding! The community of Barakel encourages as well as challenges us to continually trust in God's faithfulness, goodness and grace as we serve together in a variety of ways each day...a special bond develops as a result and it's very difficult to part ways and so we pray that this will help us to be homesick for our eternal home in Heaven with Jesus Christ!

Some Details - JUNE~JULY~AUGUST

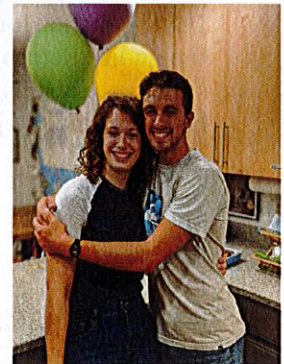
Each week 33 college-aged kids served as counselors.

~4 staff ministered to an average of 25 Techs and Engineers each week – overseeing their work, evening fun before chapel and discussions about chapel as well as the verses in James each day. Isaiah served as a crew leader for 3 weeks in the West Side dish room.

~ 16 staff spent time with their own tribe of seven 4-6th graders and 13 staff with nine Jr. Highers. They introduced each day's memory verse from Psalm 19, helped them clean their cabin for inspections, participated in scheduled games, tribe times, enjoyed spending 1-1 time with each camper, played games and cooked a meal outside (and the older kids had chapel and slept out as well!), and worshipped together in chapels. For 6 days. 8 weeks straight. 138 hours of supervising. Phew!

Each week roughly 24 recent HS grads ran each of the 13 activity areas, helped in kitchens, captured moments on cameras and worked on landscaping while 6-8 of them also spent time with a specific tribe as an Assistant Counselor when not working an assignment. They also met for their own Bible study (Ephesians) each Friday evening and Sunday am. Gretchen served as an archery instructor, media yep and an A.C.

Each week 4 leaders served as Assistant Head Counselors, 4 as Programers, and 2 as YAPS P.A.'s. Katie filled this role again this summer along with her now fiancé, Luke – testing their relationship in multiple ways! He proposed to Katie a year from when they started dating...and plan to marry next spring ☺



Dear Friends –

Thank you for your continued support of the ministry at Barakel + the variety of ways you do so!
What a joy to partner with you in proclaiming the Gospel —
The Fords

A Brief Glimpse:

I'd like to tell you about Ari, a counselor who had a girl in one of her tribes that broke her heart – because the girl struggled to obey while here but also because of the hard home life she came from, not having someone looking out for her. (An adult in a local school paid for her to come!!!) It also broke Ari's heart because this girl didn't know much about Jesus Christ and His saving work on the cross – and many weeks later, Ari is still burdened for this camper and her standing before Christ. Will you join us in praying for the salvation of "Sasha" and many others who spent time here this summer and heard the truth of the gospel but haven't recognized their need of a Savior yet?

Jon spent much of his time teaching the summer staff during our 2 weeks of training as well as many Tuesday In-Service times along with a "Prayer and Prep" time prior to the campers' arrival on Tuesdays. The summer staff spent time studying the 10 Commandments (and keeping them in the right order!) along with some of the attributes of God. The YAPS studied Ephesians as well and the Techs and Engineers spent time in James 1 each week.

While still overseeing the waterfront, the Trading Post computers, and staffing, he stepped back into the role of WS Programmer (for 2 weeks) and YAPS coordinator along with being the Men's Head Counselor this summer.

Stacy enjoyed serving with the ladies the Lord assembled to counsel here this summer as well as leading Chapel in the Woods each Thursday night, listening to a variety of women share about our identity in Christ, which seemed to be an anchor point for the 8 chapels. I also met on a weekly basis with 4 of our summer staff ladies and spent some of our time looking at James and 1 Peter as well as working on memorizing Ex. 20 (10 commandments) and Psalm 19 (campers learned 4 of those verses this summer). I helped plan food for Monday night snacks during changeover days (for about 50-60 "kids") and our 3 outings with our summer staff so I filled quite a few shopping carts with just drinks, chips and cookies – haha!!



Gretchen dressed as "Barney" with Stacy and Stacey ☺

Oh, and by the way, we still had 2 kids at home...well, between their own week as campers and Isaiah serving as an Engineer crew leader for 3 weeks, we really didn't! The boys found ways to be a part of the ministry and befriending some of our summer staff once again. With Katie serving again as the YAPS PA and Gretchen a YAP, we rejoiced that our kids continue to choose serving here alongside us in many ways!

We're anticipating our fall season here at Barakel with Retreats kicking off with Family Camp Labor Day weekend. Jon will serve in the East Side kitchen once again for 7 weeks and Stacy will help with the Ladies Retreats in chapel and hosting. The last week of August found our kids: back to school (3), starting new jobs/coaching (3) and our oldest moved into her very own home! Quite a contrast from how they looked just 11 years ago...

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The Kids in 2008. ☺