**Bearing Fruit – August 22, 2021**

**Youth Mission Report & Forgiveness**

**Youth Mission Trip: The Mission to Mission (June 19-26, 2021)**

Mission, South Dakota, hosted a tiny camp, by usual workcamp standards: 89 campers, from 7 churches and 6 states. We worked on 17 sites and put in 2670 hours of work for our residents.

This camp was quite different due to the Covid restrictions. We did not mix much with campers from other churches, and our crews were made up of members of our own group instead of campers from different youth groups. About the only contact we had with the Lakota people was with our residents. Still, we worked, we learned, we laughed, and we cried. Seeing the level of poverty on the reservation was difficult but meeting some amazing residents who managed to rise above their circumstances was inspiring. Sadly, not all of the residents did so well. We also met Linda Garriot of Tree of Life Ministry (<https://www.treeofliferelief.org/>), a dynamic Christian who brings an amazing faith and intelligence to service to the Lakota people. The theme of our program was “Worth It,” emphasizing God’s love and valuing of us and others. Our youth soaked up the experience and shared deeply about their faith and their struggles. That brought us closer together and closer to God. Camp is a “mountain top” experience, an intense and effective moment in our youth program. Our task is now to take what we gained in Mission into our regular routine.

Please pray that our Mission Team continues to learn and grow from this experience. They are: Kevin, Kayla, and Parin Schmidt; Rachel Johnston; Marta and Ryan Sundquist; Sara and David Vandeford (our ringers from Florida); Sam Falkman; Nalani Johnson; and Blair Nelson. Special thanks to Parin and Marta for their work, leadership, and hours behind the wheel, and to Nalani for her warmth and leadership. All our youth were all-in for this trip, both for the work and for the spiritual challenge. Thanks to our church family for all their support.

Please keep our youth—the church of today and tomorrow—in your prayers.

**Today’s Offertory**

Our musical offering comes as a gracious gift from our friend Karen Arhcbold and three of her students:

Laurel Bacote is a storyteller who recently graduated from Wheaton College with a B.A. in Communication with a theater concentration. She has been singing her entire life and is grateful for this opportunity to sing a song from her favorite musical, Hamilton. When Laurel is not singing, she loves to act, dance, read, and write.

Madeline Johnson currently is a senior studying music and theater at Olivet Nazarene University. She has been involved with theater for 15 years, performing in musicals and teaching theater classes. She is so happy to use her voice for Christ.

Kaleb Cruz currently is a senior attending Wheaton Academy and has enjoyed music of all kinds ever since he was born. Only recently he has become interested in the performing arts, falling in love with Wheaton Academy theater department freshman year. He feels lucky to participate in several shows, both as supporting and lead roles. He says, “I thank God for all my talents, and I cannot wait to see what he has in store for me.”

The song they are singing, *It’s Quiet Uptown*, has themes of grief and forgiveness. As you listen, ask God to hold your grief and offer a prayer forgiving others. This is another way we bear the fruit of God’s love.