

**“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed...Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.”**  
~ Matthew 13:31,32  
**“I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...Nothing will be impossible for you.”**  
~ Matthew 17:20

## CAMP ANSWERS QUESTIONS

By God’s grace, and through many camp related experiences, Alex B. has developed a burning heart for serving God. Staff and campers at Mountain Pass Camp like him because he is skilled in building relationships, consistent, organized, and overcomes difficulties well. Mountain Pass, a tent camp, had 270 campers this summer; 90% of the campers had never been to a church. “Many teenagers,” reported Alex, “leave camp having experienced the love of Christ in their lives. **I see how the seed of love which was planted in my heart long ago, grows in the hearts of teenagers.**”

Read Alex’ story as he related it:  
I am the youngest of four children. My mom is a music teacher and my father, a truck driver. He left home when I was 10, so Mom did her best to take care of us.

I had difficulty pronouncing five sounds so it was difficult



to understand me. My classmates as well as my neighbourhood never accepted me. Until age 12, I only saw people hurting, humiliating and offending one another. The only person who showed love and understanding was my Mom. I wondered why life was so tough and why good things were so far away from me.

I heard about Shelter+ at school and got interested in the photography, journalism, video and English classes they offered. (Shelter+ is a successful year-round Christian youth ministry in Kriviy Rig, Ukraine, which grew out of Green Pastures, a camp with KVI roots). They accepted me even though it was difficult to understand me. The staff sincerely loved one another and cared about me. I learned to pronounce all sounds. It was a miracle from God. I started to read the Bible and my life changed. I felt God was alive and lived in me. My life became meaningful.

At age 15, I had the opportunity to attend Camp Vertical. I was thinking about my life a lot. The ten Biblical values that were taught and the ten Bible

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**Campers at Mountain Pass Camp enjoying outdoor Chapel**

verses I memorized made a great impact on me. I promised God I would serve Him only. Those values were stored in my memory and whenever I make a decision, I remember them.

The next Spring, I wanted to attend the KVI sponsored Staff Training Workshop. The minimum age was 18 and I was only 16! By special permission, I was admitted. I was impressed by the number of Christians who wanted to serve God, were dedicated to one cause and wanted to do it right. I took the counselor course. Everything Dave told us about being a counselor, taking care of children, loving and accepting them, was very useful for me a few weeks later when I was counseling at Mountain Pass Camp.

The atmosphere at Mountain Pass Camp was so special that I wanted to return the next season. The director invited me! I served wherever something needed to be done. The changed hearts of children and youth inspired me. Eventually I was asked to be the Program Director. This year I became the Director of Mountain Pass Camp.

**Camp answers questions** which cannot be answered by parents or friends. Camp unleashes campers' potential. I am thankful to God for His leading in my life. I want to be faithful wherever He places me.

## HOT SUMMER

Irina S, director of Camp Friends for Life, attended KVI's Staff Training Workshop about 20 years ago. Today she is the coordinator of the camps in their denomination in a country where Christian camps are prohibited. For this reason they used tents and moved from one location to another for safety.



The temperature was 50 degrees on the first day of one of their Day Camps. Thirty-two teenagers showed up. "We played games, sprayed water on the campers and prayed that there would be no sunstroke or heat exhaustion," Irina reported. "The heat continued but the teenagers showed up every day. The highlight of the camp was when six teenagers repented and decided to follow Jesus. The mother of one of the boys called Irina to thank her and the staff for operating a great camp and said they deserved the highest title and award from the Ministry of Education.

## A VERY HAPPY PERSON

My mother is a Christian. In order not to offend her, I went to church. Because I was not close to the Lord, I became friends with bad guys. We did the usual bad things. But even worse, I participated in roof-walking on high story buildings putting my life at risk.

At age 14, I attended Camp Shalom. The atmosphere was great – lots of love and genuine friendships among people. My counselor showed me by his own example that to live with God is much better than to live without Him. I really saw Jesus at camp.



Daniel

I couldn't resist. A few months later I knelt, repented and asked God to forgive my sins. I quit all my bad habits, and most importantly, I stopped swearing. God changed my life. Today I am a very happy person. I know God, have a great family, great friends, and I do what I love doing, playing guitar. Praise God for that unforgettable camp session at Shalom. Thank you to everyone who makes Christian camps happen, and who prays for them.

*"IT IS BETTER TO BUILD CHARACTER IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH THAN TO REPAIR THE BROKEN LIVES OF ADULTS."*



# Prayer Partner

## FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO PRAY



### GOD'S AWESOME DEEDS

God has brought to life more than 1,500 Christian youth camps in the former Soviet Union. Over 45,000 volunteers served in these camps this summer. Two hundred thousand campers would be a conservative estimate. These children were loved, cared for, shown how to follow Jesus, taught Scripture, prayed with and prayed for. We have no idea how many made a decision to follow Jesus during their stay at camp or will make that important decision later. What we do know is that there are hundreds of thousands of people today in the FSU whose walk with Jesus began at camp. Thousands are raising Christian families, serving in churches, leaders in many areas of society, and many have become camp directors. Why not pause to think about God's awesome deeds through Christian youth camps, THANK HIM and ASK HIM TO CONTINUE HIS AWESOME DEEDS in the former Soviet Union.



### TEN MONTHS OF DISCIPLESHIP

"He liked his counselor, the Bible lessons, games, hiking...everything!"

"Our son shows more gratitude to his parents for all we do for him and thanks God for it."

"It was important for our son to be in a healthy male environment that encouraged him to become a man."

These are parent responses after their sons returned from Camp Vertical. Vertical has a ten month Discipleship Program to guide the boys in becoming godly men. The boys restudy each Bible lesson for one month to learn and apply the principle. **Thank God for Vertical, and pray:**

- For the boys as they do the weekly assignments
- For the mentors as they call the boys each week to hold them accountable
- For Igor, the Vertical Prayer Coordinator, who encourages prayer partners to pray passionately, like Daniel
- For a suitable campsite in Ukraine for Vertical to purchase to stabilize the camp.



### BRILLIANT CAMP EXPERIENCE

Natia had never been to camp and she didn't want to go because she did not know what to expect. She protested against everything – sports, singing, Bible studies, friendships! However the last two days of camp were different. She was friendly and participated in everything, even prayer and was the first to respond to the call for repentance. After returning home, Natia wrote this letter to the camp director:

"I didn't expect such a brilliant camp experience. Each day was special with its creativity, games and Bible discussions. The discussions taught me more about Christianity and Faith. My life changed at camp when I decided that I want to be a Christian. I want to be His follower my whole life."



Natia B.

**Thank God** for the thousands of teenagers who became Christians in summer camps and pray for their spiritual development.



### PROTECTED AND BLESSED

Bible camps, in five FSU countries where Christian gatherings outside of the church buildings are strictly forbidden, were organized and operated by God's faithful servants. God gave the pastors faith to rally the churches to get involved. God gave the camp leaders courage to take the risks involved and the wisdom to deal with the officials. God gave parents the confidence that He would protect their children. Dozens of camps were in operation. Not one incident has been reported. Not only did God protect staff, campers and facilities, He blessed them richly as they sang joyfully, studied the Word diligently, played enthusiastically and prayed fervently. Thank you for praying God's protection and blessing upon them. **Please continue to pray** that the seeds sown would produce much fruit.

## FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO PRAY CONT'D



### CAMPSITE FOR VERTICAL

A suitable campsite for our boys' camp in Ukraine has not been found yet. A central location with natural endowment, easily accessible, and in a supportive community is important. God knows where this site is. **Please continue to pray** that God would lead us to His chosen place.



### LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, November 2-4

Our staff in Ukraine is zealous in building a strong supportive camping association that produces effective leaders. Their annual conference is well prepared administratively, has an attractive program and outstanding instructors. Thank God for this educational opportunity to advance Christian youth camp leaders. Over 200 have already registered. **Ask God** to send hundreds more, and to bless everyone and every aspect of the conference.



### MUSTARD SEED PRINCIPLE

Oleksandr and Lesya were two campers along with hundreds of other campers at Green Pastures Camp in Ukraine. Lesya's mother was the camp director. Eventually the Word of God penetrated their hearts. As the love of God grew in their hearts, so did their love for each other so they were married. Dave Loewen had the privilege of attending the wedding. Lesya's family is the founder of Shelter+, a year-round Christian youth ministry in Kriviy Rig, Ukraine. Oleksandr and Lesya are part of the leadership team that serves hundreds of youth every week. "It is our calling and nothing can stop us," they say.



Oleksandr, Dale Wiebe, Lesya

This summer, Oleksandr and Lesya visited camps and various youth ministries in Canada to observe how it is done here so they can improve their camp and ministries in Ukraine. Winkler Bible Camp, where they visited for a week, and director, Dale Wiebe, went the "second mile" in hosting them. Lesya said "Everything is organized and works so harmoniously

at WBC,". Shelter+ is an example of the Mustard Seed principle, among the hundreds of vibrant ministries that have grown out of camps. We have much to thank God for.



### KVI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gerald and Bev Huebner were invited to become KVI board members this summer. They received their



Gerald & Bev

love and vision for camping many years ago at Camp Arnes in Manitoba, under Dave & Elfrieda's leadership. Gerald and Bev have been instructors at Camp Vertical in Ukraine several times since 2013 and Gerald has taught at the National Agriculture University in Kiev. He possesses extensive senior management experience which will be an asset in raising governance and administration in CCI/Ukraine to the next level. KVI board members: Stan (Chairman) & Bev Hamm, Esther Unruh, and Dave & Rose Froese join us in welcoming Gerald & Bev to the KVI Board of Directors. **Pray** for wisdom as the KVI board carries out its mission.



### CHRISTMAS CAMPS

Campers and staff are excited about Christmas camps. Reuniting with their camp friends to reminisce about summer camp is more than fun. It is experiencing that unique camp atmosphere again. It is strong encouragement to follow through with the decisions made at summer camp. It is fellowship with friends and mentors. It is celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the King of kings.

Organizing Christmas camps is much work and requires much faith, courage and money. Ask God to supply all their needs and to bless the Christmas camps.



## ORPHANS ATTEND VERTICAL

Fourteen orphans call Elena's village house their home. Elena loves each one of them and cares much about their spiritual development. When she learned about Vertical she became excited. She wanted her teenage boys to experience what it means to love Jesus in real life with men, not only in church. She told Viktor, the Vertical director, "I really wanted 13 year old Nikolai to hear the prayers of the men of God."

Five of the orphans who wanted change in their lives, arrived at camp. They were assigned to various tent groups in order to avoid problems. Except for a few incidents, the camp ran smoothly. The intense sports program, canoe trips, cooking their own dinners, the manly camp atmosphere, made the boys wish the camp session was longer and gave them the desire to return next year.

In a telephone conversation with Elena after the five boys returned home, Viktor heard the following comments:

- The Bible is read often. Prayers are not only about themselves but also for others. Loyalty to each other has increased.
- Vladimir now thinks before he speaks.
- Edward became calmer. He prays and seeks God more.
- Rustam became more confident in his behaviour. He said, "I want to be at Vertical as often as possible. I want to become a counselor."
- Andy matured. He was surprised to be with so many men and teenagers who pray together.
- Nikolai is a difficult boy. We hope his camp experience will help him find the Truth in life. He learned all ten Bible verses and wants to recite them.

The five boys decided to be baptized and on September 2 it happened. Elena ended the conversation by thanking Viktor for accepting her boys at camp and spending time with each one. They are looking forward to attending the Vertical reunion this fall.



## A VERY GRATEFUL MOTHER

"Max is a special boy. His behaviour keeps him in bondage. I really wanted my son to experience life in a new environment so I sent him to Camp Vertical. He was very happy at camp. He liked everything – the sport competitions, the 10 Bible character studies, and memorizing all the verses. He liked the help he received when he couldn't do something.

"Max returned home like an adult. My expectations were met 100%. I am very grateful to you. I would send my son to such a camp again. You do the great mission of God."

**Viktoria, mother**

## KVI'S DAILY NEEDS

The staff and camp leaders in the former Soviet Union and the KVI board thank you, our faithful donors, for every gift. We depend on your generosity daily. We can carry out our commitments when our receipts average one thousand dollars daily throughout the year. We haven't achieved this average yet this year. Consequently, several important projects are still waiting to be done. In faith and hope we carry on developing young staff and increasing the effectiveness of senior staff. Thank you for including KVI with your donations thus being part of this fruitful ministry. We look forward to your continued support by helping us reach our goal by the end of the current year.



## KVI LEGACY FUND

There are millions of youth in the former Soviet Union (FSU) who have not heard about Jesus. Your gift to the KVI Legacy Fund is a gift that keeps on giving during and after your lifetime.

Vladimir Shevchenko, KVI's CEO, recently stated that although there are over 1,500 Christian youth camps operating in the FSU, **we have only scratched the surface. The purpose of the KVI Legacy Fund** is to ensure that the Christian youth camping ministry in the FSU keeps on growing. We invite you to support Christian youth camps across the FSU.

The KVI Legacy Fund is being held by Abundance Canada, a faith-based public foundation registered with the Canada Revenue Agency. To support the Fund, please make your donation directly to Abundance Canada. Donations can be made by cheque, credit card or e-transfer. They can also receive gifts of stocks, mutual funds, life insurance and gifts through your estate. Charitable tax receipts will be provided. **To learn more, go to [www.abundance.ca](http://www.abundance.ca).**

Please keep in mind that KVI still needs your regular gifts for our operational budget.

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