

# GBC News



## Drama

by Don Roe

"How did camp go this summer?"  
"The kids were great, camp went well for everyone except the head counselor and myself..."

In the six summers Charlotte and I have been here we have been very gratified to see how well the children, sometimes very needy, are cared for. Over the years I have changed my main focus from dealing with the campers' behavior to encouraging the staff and watching them grow. It is a very fulfilling ministry.

The biggest challenge I had this summer was the "drama" among the staff. The teens define disagreements and fights as drama. Whether it is which boy likes which girl, who is doing the most work in the cabin or other issues of respect the result of drama is staff disunity. Their focus moves to themselves and their interpersonal relationships and feelings and away from representing God and His love to the campers. It is poison.

We have had issues every summer, it seems to me that that is how teens are wired emotionally, but this summer instead of calming things down and letting them run their course we acknowledged the problem and tried to deal with it. This made for a very difficult August.

I bring this up not to disparage our staff—I am continually amazed at how God uses them to love and minister to the children—but because it is Christmas time! The world portrays Christmas as a magical time when everyone gets along and the evil in the world is pushed back for a few days. And most people think of camp as a place where children have fun and all become Christians and live happily ever after. No drama.

But when I read the Bible account of Jesus'



This statement is completely reliable and should be universally accepted:—"Christ Jesus entered the world to rescue sinners". I realise that I am the worst of them all. *2 Timothy 1:15*

birth I see a lot of drama. Conceived out of wedlock, born in squalor, forced to flee to Egypt to escape Herod. Born to set the people free by being despised, rejected, tortured and executed for their sins. Not much "Christmas magic" and warm fuzzy feelings—quite the opposite—evil seemed to have its' way. But we know that it was all in God's perfect plan.

Summer camp is the same. I despair when I witness the staff fighting, ignoring the kids or being selfish. Yet they are growing immensely spiritually and emotionally and God uses them miraculously in the campers' lives as they witness to what He is doing in theirs. And when I remember what it was like when I first started counseling 36 years ago not much has changed. I went to camp because I was too young to get a "real" job. Some of the other counselors bullied me because I was different and I hated them for it. I made mistakes with the campers and wasn't very mature with the female staff. Lots of drama. But God changed the way I saw myself and my future plans as I struggled with caring for the campers when I was still a child myself. And God is doing the same work today with the young people He leads to camp each summer.

As we enter the Christmas season with its' joys and stress, let's remember that the drama is what makes a story exciting to hear. That there is no "Christmas magic"; just sinful and selfish people struggling to love and accept one another in Jesus' name. And that as we live in His grace the evil in the world really is pushed back and people are drawn to the Love of the Light of the world.

## Our Faith Journey *Jake & Martha Friesen*

### Greetings in the name of the Lord! Ps 34: 1-10

We know that you will be thrilled (as we are) to hear the awesome things that God is and has been doing during the summer months of camp with hundreds of inner city children and youth. You have prayed and supported us with the purpose of seeing Jesus in the eyes of these young lives as they come to camp with no hope and in some cases, no desire to live. We saw the mighty power of God reach down and touched individual's lives and transform them with His great love. Through Christ, and Christ alone, they have new hope. We also know that Satan was in no way asleep at Gimli Bible Camp this summer. He worked hard to discourage anyone from seeking the truth and freedom that they receive in Jesus Christ. He fought against people making the choice to ask Jesus into their hearts. We witnessed the struggle with one particular teenage girl and the stronghold the devil had on her. The battle continued for a few days but in the end, she found Jesus and the battle was won by our great Saviour. We give all praise and glory to God - it brought all of us to our knees praying as we continued to hold her up before the throne of God's grace and as she was delivered from bondage - Praise the Lord for His marvellous works.

Every year we wrap up the summer camps with a 55 plus seniors camp. It was a wonderful week as prepared meals for about 80 to 85 seniors. The weather was beautiful and we avoided Manitoba's famous mosquitoes. What a blessed time we had.

During the off season, Gimli Bible Camp is a retreat center for churches — families and youth groups. Our focus now turns from a very busy and fruitful summer camp to hosting retreats and enjoying a different type of ministry. Hosting each weekend has allowed us to meet so many wonderful and special people - we know this year will be no exception. God knows each heart and each situation that enters Gimli Bible Camp and we trust that as a host couple, He will use us in a mighty way to minister to and through our lives and we anticipate all that this hosting season will bring. We are grateful for all the friendships that have developed!

We cannot say thank you enough for all the helping hands throughout the year. Our hearts are overwhelmed with love and joy as we see people, both young and mature, abandon their own agenda and to give time and energy to work hard at camp. We are so grateful for every hand that has touched our facility and for every prayer that has been lifted for the camp. May the Lord bless and keep you. We continue to be thankful for safety throughout the year as well as health.

Thank you to those that have given and supported financially and/ or prayerfully. We know God will bless you for your commitment and support  
God is good - all the time! All the time - God is good!



### A short story about how a 12 year old boy changed my heart towards missions:

In our earlier years we didn't know much about missions or camp ministry until our own children started to attend Gimli Bible Camp in summer time. We as parents would drop them off on Sunday and we would go back home, but one summer as we brought our children to camp again the Camp Director asked me if I wouldn't want to be a Dad for one week to these inner city children that needed so desperately a Father role model. My first response was "No, I don't think so", but the next year there was a tugging on our hearts so we said yes to God who did a mighty work in our hearts that year. We tried it for one week, Jake as counsellor - and Martha as kitchen help, and the experience we had that week changed our hearts to missions. We saw first hand the need for these young kids that did not know or didn't understand that somebody would love and care for them as they never had heard the word "love". Jake had a boy in his cabin that came from a very abusive home, his dad was in jail and his mom didn't care for him and food was not available so when he was hungry he would go to the streets and search through garbage to find something to eat, or go and steal from others. At camp he was in trouble with other kids and beat them up. One day he tried again to fight with the boys so I tried to stop him from doing it and he got a hold of my arm and bit me! I took him on my lap and held him tight so he would let go of my arm and told that I loved him and that Jesus loved him even more. After an hour of wrestling with him he gave up and started to relax a little so we could talk. Then he poured out his heart which was filled anger and frustration. It was so painful to hear, but after that I could pray with him and halfway through the week he came to me and asked me if he could come home with me and that he wanted me to be his Dad. He didn't want to go home and he pleaded with me to take him home and we shed tears together as time came for the bus to pick him up. That changed my life forever.

Lord thank you for sending your precious Son to this earth, to show us the way, to heal us, and to save us. Amen.

We wish to all God's blessings this holiday season and the new year to come. From our hearts to yours.

Jake & Martha Friesen  
Home Church: Niverville CMC



*Adam, Paul and Blayne had a challenging week*

## From the Trenches

*by Blayne Stobbe*

Often my favorite campers are the ones that cause the most trouble. It gives me a chance to hang out with them and develop a relationship one on one. One of these opportunities stands out to me from this past summer. It was midway through the summer and this week I was blessed with two co-cabin leaders, one was a father of three who took the week off to help out. We were doing one of the first evening devotions and the boys were not being quiet. We presented a challenge to them, that on top of the evening snack, the most quiet, best listener would get an extra treat. Also, once they were quiet for a short period of time they would get their snack. Gabe took exception to this and didn't want to sit quietly for 30 seconds or whatever reasonable time that had been set. He got off his bunk and ran outside. I followed him and walked after him for a while. This became much of a pattern for most the rest of the week. It was a rare occasion to get him into the Chapel or to stay for a full devotion time. We took turns being with him, but I tended to take it most of the time. Then one evening he came into an evening devotion halfway through and we told him he would have to wait for his cookies till the end like the rest of the boys. He flipped out and ran back outside. This time Gabe didn't just run away, by the time I got close to him he was throwing wooden checker blocks at a building and he had overturned a couple tables. We have three major rules at camp: Don't hurt others, don't hurt yourself, and don't destroy property, and the director came by and reminded him of this as I was restraining him as gently as I could without putting myself in harms way. He struggled for a long time and eventually he seemed to calm down and, as holding him would not be productive anymore, I let him go. Throughout this time we were having a strained conversation. Gabe grunting "I wanna go home", my response being, "let's go talk to the Director then". He didn't want to talk to the director, I'm really not sure why. After I let go I followed him and he went into the cabin, which I was a little wary of, but he climbed into his bunk and sat there fuming. I walked in on an interesting scene, after having trouble to get the boys to focus for more then 5 minutes earlier in the week, all the boys were memorizing their memory verses or reading their bibles. I kept an eye on Gabe, but another camper called me over and wanted to show me something in a graphic novel style bible that my co-leader had brought along. Then another boy called me over and recited a verse to me. Eventually the director popped in and the boys wanted to show him all the things they were doing as well. When I glanced over to Gabe who was still sitting on his bunk he looked confused. All these boys who were doing good and positive things were getting attention and rewards. This didn't compute with Gabe because this was not his usual way of getting attention and he had probably not seen people get attention in this manner before. The week went

"Gabe" was dumped at camp against his will by a foster parent who paid for the week with a bad cheque. Please pray for him

on and it didn't really get any easier to get him to Chapel or devotions or any other activities for that matter. I ended up spending a lot of time with him on the beach skipping stones just talking to him. Maybe this is too far, but I look back on these moments as father/son moments, where I could just spend quality time with him. And even though we were missing devotions or Chapel, I could have my one on one talks about why I believed in God or just about basketball and why the Miami Heat didn't win. I greatly enjoyed it either way and Gabe got the attention that he desired and needed. The last night there were a few of us outside sitting on the play-structure. One camper from another cabin was someone that Gabe looked up to and thought was pretty cool and this opened up an interesting opportunity. We wandered down to the beach to admire the stars and the moon, which are particularly spectacular over the lake. While we were admiring the stars, the "cool" camper was saying how amazing God was to create all these stars and how he was an awesome God. This was the second really confusing time for Gabe, because this "cool" camper believed in God, believed he had created everything. Gabe even asked him, "Do you really believe in God?" The other camper affirmed that yes he did, how could you not looking at these stars? The next day while Gabe and I were skipping stones, he asked me why I would rather be in Chapel. I said I really enjoyed singing to God and I was always interested in what the speaker was going to say and this week we had an interesting speaker who added mime and dramas to his message. We continued throwing rocks in the water and about ten minutes later Gabe tells me he's thirsty, so we head back to the main area to a water fountain. When we get there we can see the chapel and Gabe tells me he wants to hear what the speaker is saying today, so we walk in late, but for some reason Chapel had started late, so we missed very little of it. Gabe was good the whole Chapel and listened well. This was probably the first Chapel he sat in on in four days and he was on his best behavior. When it was time to leave, Gabe was saying that he wanted to stay and come back next year, which was unusual because for a vast majority of the week he said he wanted to go home. Through patience and willingness to adapt, Gabe ended up having a week where when he left with positive memories. Now I don't know where he is at spiritually and personally, It seems quite arbitrary to judge where someone is at spiritually, but I do know Gabe made positive steps. Even if he didn't accept that Jesus died for him that week, he still went from what he said "believing in himself and not trusting anyone else," to pondering, was there a God who made this all, who loves me and cares for me? He left learning that he can get positive attention by being good. There is a seed planted and it needs nurturing and water and I pray that God will give people opportunities to care for that seed of life that is somewhere within Gabe now.



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**Prayer**

- ✚ Jake's family and health.
- ✚ Construction of new chapel/ gym would go smoothly.
- ✚ For all those who are lonely at Christmas—especially those who don't know Him.

**Praise**

- ✚ Architectural plans and site preparation for the addition were done at no charge.
- ✚ God's work this summer in campers' and staffs' lives.
- ✚ Gift of a 2005 van.
- ✚ All the volunteers that give of their time and prayers.

**Needed**

- ✚ Commercial floor cleaning/ polishing machine.
- ✚ Chop saw.

**and wanted...**

- ✚ Solid wood screen doors for cabins.
- ✚ Cordless drill

**Greetings From Our Corner Of Heaven**

*by Charlotte Roe*

Sometimes I can't believe how awesome God is. There are billions of people in the world and yet He cares about me! He is my biggest cheer leader. This was one of the best summers ever. For one thing, the kitchen always had enough volunteers, sometimes too many. Because of that I met some real special people who have become my dear friends. My spiritual eyes were opened a little more and I can see how important it is to love and care for His people, and I tried to make that my focus instead of just trying to make it through the week.

One of the desires that God has put in me these past few summers was to have devotions with my kitchen girls. The desire was there but the energy wasn't. This year God again brought it to my attention. So I put my fear and exhaustion aside and decided to trust God. What a blessing it was, I am so glad I was obedient. One of the highlights was watching one of the girls getting baptized at our church this past fall. She came to work for us three summers ago when she was 14 years old. She was not interested in God at all. By the end of that summer she gave her life to God and her favourite place to be was Chapel. This year I made her my head dish girl. She was honoured to take the position and did a wonderful job. I just feel so privileged to have watched her grow up in the Lord these last three years. This is what camp is all about! This is what life is all about! Let's keep that in mind as we celebrate our Saviour this Christmas. It is all about Him!

**Bekah** has moved to the city and is living with her sister. She has taken some courses on teaching swimming and this January will be starting her job as a swimming instructor. I have never seen her so excited to do something new, she usually has a lot of trepidation in new things. In the mean time she has been volunteering with special Olympics swimming and has been enjoying that. Don and I are so happy for her, but we miss her terribly.

**Ian** is still with us, but not for long. He will be moving in with his respite worker, Kathi, as she has gotten her fostering license to have special needs adults in her home. When all the paper work gets done, hopefully by January, then he can move in. This has been a hard decision for us but I think it will benefit him. Kathi keeps him busy, where at home he is very idle. Ian works at Cornerstone during the day. It is a recycling plant here in Gimli. He seems to enjoy it.

**Kris and Vic** are doing well. They love their house, and so do we as now we can come and spend the night and spoil Nathaniel. He is 17 months old now and of course we think he is the cutest kid in the world.



**Margo** is on her last year of Bible College, and has done quite well. It has been a lot of fun watching her mature these last few years. God is doing amazing things with that girl. She will be coming home for Christmas on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December. Yippy!

**Don and I** really enjoyed a little trip we took to Riding Mountain last month. It was a nice little get away, but now we are preparing for a longer trip in January. We will be going to Florida for two weeks, the longest vacation we have had by ourselves since our honeymoon. We will be staying at D&D Missionary homes. It is a place for people who are in ministry to go and rest for real cheap. When we are down there we even get to rent a car for free, it is a blessing!

**Thank-you so much for your prayers and support this year. Don and I want to wish everyone a very blessed Christmas. Celebrate God, family and, friends, these are the true treasures of life!**

**Family**

We have been through a lot of changes this past fall. Bekah and Ian have both graduated from high school.



Want to receive the newsletter by email? Corrections or changes? Please tell us, we want to keep in touch!

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