

OCT - DEC 2023



NUTSHELL NEWSLETTER



RHODES GROVE CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BRAD MOWERY

In the last quarter newsletter, I shared about remaining in Jesus. I discussed three aspects of remaining in Jesus from John Chapter 15. We learned that to remain in the vine means to be united to Jesus (connection), to rely on Jesus (dependence), and to stay in Jesus (continuance). This time, we will look at who this teaching is for and how do we "remain" in Jesus?

So, who is this teaching for? In one sense, Jesus' description of remaining seems to be an all or nothing deal. If someone remains in Him, His love, and His word, this proves that they are his disciples. To not remain in Him (and His love and word) is to show that one is not a disciple at all. So, to be a believer is to remain. But on the other hand, "remain" is a command (v. 4). Jesus tells us to remain in him and to remain in his love (v. 9). It's something we must do. So, is remaining in Jesus something that is true of all believers?

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MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dan Conley
Vice-President and
Executive/Personnel
Commitee

Dan was born in NJ and raised by a single mom until the age of 9, when his mom married his stepdad, Tom, who taught him how to hunt, fish, and care for his family. At 12 he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior and was later baptized by his pastor.

Dan has worked in construction trades and building operations for most of his career. Starting with his dad doing drywall while he was still in school. Summers and evenings were spent working with the family business. He has had a variety of jobs and experiences, giving him a broad spectrum of skills. Dan enjoys working with his hands and is happy to help with any kind of project. Today he is employed with Commonwealth of PA as a Project Manager for the Army National Guard.

He met his wife at Heidlersburg UB Church and was introduced to Rhodes Grove for the first time shortly after. They were married at camp in Dec 2006, at which time he took on many behind the scenes jobs, maintaining fences and the barn at camp, transporting horses and moving off-site camps. His heart for camp grew as they worked together as a team to serve the campers that came through the summer horse program.

Dan and Heather have three children, Moriah 14, Nathan 12, and Rebecca 9, that are home schooled. Family trips are often planned around historical or other educational sites. Life is full with camping, biking, hunting, farming and now the activities that the kids are involved in. Time together as a family is so important to them. Over the summer we enjoy clearing the trails, riding the horses, and getting the campsite set up and ready for campers to come. The family also loves being able to host for the weekend groups through the winter season. It is a blessing to be able to be at camp as a family.

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MEET THE STAFF



Jason Blair
Head of Guest Services

My name is Jason Blair. I have been a resident of Franklin County most of my life of 42 years. My wife Lynette and I have 2 girls, Elise 10 and Gabriella 7. They currently attend Shalom Christian Academy where I also work part time cleaning the school. We currently attend and are members of LifePoint Church in Chambersburg. I served in leadership for 9 years at our last church Shady Pine Mennonite Church. We like to go hiking at nearby trails and I hunt, fish, and pretty much we all have a love of the outdoors. We are fans of the Penn State Nittany Lions, Philadelphia Eagles, and Philadelphia Phillies. I am looking forward to serving His Kingdom here at Rhodes Grove and very excited to see the growth and change here at the camp.



MEET THE BOARD (cont)

Having not been able to attend any kind of camp as a kid, Dan values the chance to send our children to Rhodes Grove. Where each of them has come home with a fresh view of who God is, the chance to be loved on by caring staff, and make lifelong friendships. Dan is intentional about sharing camp with others whether they come for family camp, a week in the summer or other events. He wants others to be apart of what God is doing at Rhodes Grove camp.

For Dan, life has had its ups and downs and over the years he has held onto Philippians 4:11-13 "I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength".

It has been an honor to be able to use the talents that God has given him to serve on the board of directors at RGC on and off since 2009.

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

There are certain streams of Christian teaching that have made this unnecessarily complicated. They have suggested that remaining in Christ is something additional, something special, that we gain through a crisis experience that takes us into a higher, deeper, or victorious life, sometimes even called the “abiding” life. It also suggests that Christians can be broken down into two groups: the “haves” and “have nots.” The ordinary Christians who believe in Jesus but don’t remain and the extraordinary Christians who believe and remain. But I think it’s simpler and closer to the text to say that remaining, like faith itself, is a reality true of all Christians but also an experience that we grow into by degrees. It’s not that some Christians remain, and some don’t. If you believe in Jesus, you are in him. You are united to him. You are connected to the life-giving branch. But no matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you can experience the reality of this connection to Jesus more and more. You can become more fruitful. There are degrees of fruitfulness. The passage not only speaks of bearing fruit, but of bearing “more fruit” (v. 2) and “much fruit” (v. 8). You can enjoy Jesus more. That’s why Jesus says, “I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!” (v. 11). He not only wants us to have joy, but he also wants us to have full joy. You can experience the power, and joy of your connection to Him in greater degrees, as you grow in ongoing daily dependence on Him.

This leads to a final question: how do you remain? If remaining in Jesus involves ongoing daily dependence on him, what does that look like? Jesus himself tells us. We remain in Jesus by letting His words abide in us (v. 7) and by abiding in His love (v. 9-10). To put it simply, remaining in Jesus doesn’t require advancing beyond the gospel to something else. It doesn’t demand a crisis decision or a mystical experience. It just means keeping the words of Jesus in our hearts and minds, so that they are renewing and reviving us, and helping us be more like Him. And it means keeping ourselves in His unconditional and abundant love.



Christmas at the Grove

Sunday, December 10, 2023
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Lighted Cottages, Carols, and
Narrated Nativity Scenes