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Dear family and friends,

As I write this, the last spring retreat has ended and the first summer staff arrive on property in two days! Alyssa and I really enjoyed the spring retreat season, and it was very nice to host campers again after the sabbatical. Alyssa ran an escape room for multiple retreats, while I ran ranges and facilitated the zipline.

Our summer staff numbers dropped a few weeks ago. This is to be expected most years, as people get jobs or things come up. However, it is a little higher this year than normal. It has been incredible to see how God has provided summer staff to fill those holes over the past few weeks! Just last week, we lost a programmer for our high school weeks, and within a couple hours, someone had volunteered to come up and fill that need. We are thankful to God for this and many other provisions.

As we look forward to this summer, Alyssa and I are preparing to lead summer staff in Bible studies through Isaiah. All of the summer campers will be memorizing a set of four verses. This year, our summer verses come from Isaiah 12:2-5:

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” With joy you will draw water

exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously, let this be made known in all the earth.”“

We would appreciate your prayers as we lead these studies this summer. As we teach summer staff through Isaiah, counselors will also be leading their campers through these verses.

How have we seen God work recently?

- God provided two cooks for the west side kitchen this summer! James Williams and Ellie Brown have both graciously agreed to run the kitchen for the next few months.
- God has provided summer staff to fill the holes we had! There were certain points over the last few weeks where we didn't know how we'd be able to run the summer with the staff we had. Since then, several former summer staffers are returning to counsel for a week or two and some applicants have just been accepted. We praise God for providing for these needs.
- God provided us with a new refrigerator and help to move it! When a resident staff family left to move downstate, we purchased their like-new refrigerator to replace our very old one. We are thankful for our friends up here who helped us move it and for God's provision.
- Our yard is looking very green again! Winters up here are very long and cold, but within the last week, our trees have gotten their leaves. This is such a great reminder of God's grace and provision throughout time.

How can you pray for us?

- Pray that the resident staff and board would be encouraged during this time. As the sabbatical ends, there are many difficult decisions to be made and worked out.
- Pray for the program team during the summer, especially for the summer staff programers. Pray that we would work together well and facilitate fun for the campers, without distracting from the purpose of Barakel.
- Pray that God would call more resident staff to the ministry! Understaffing has been an issue for a while now, and the only way things will get better in this way is if more join in the work here.
- As always, continue to pray for unity among the resident staff, board of trustees, and the Barakel community.

Tim and Alyssa Elliott



Alyssa serving in the kitchen during a spring retreat! Featuring our head cook, Dave.



One of my random jobs I do as a programmer is caring for both of our game rooms. Recently, I cleared out 13 pucks that had gotten stuck in one of our air hockey tables.



It started snowing when I was working the bottom of the zipline. This picture was taken May 1st.



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