

February 2021

Dear friend,

Our God is Able! I fondly recall this summer camp theme from when I was young and a camper at Pine Ridge (Jack & Jill was still the name if you were wondering). The Bible verse underlining this theme comes from Daniel 3:17, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." And God certainly did deliver Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Our team at Pine Ridge, including the board of directors, is overwhelmed at how God sustained and provided for this ministry in 2020. I last wrote you in August, and at that time we had no idea how we would financially end the 2020 year, although the outlook was pretty bleak after cancelling half of our summer camps and not having any guest groups attending. I'm so pleased to tell you that through many generous gifts, we finished the year breaking essentially breaking even. Thank you to all who helped make this possible.

Now we face 2021, and while there are still some headwinds and uncertainty, we believe it is time to boldly move forward in faith that God will continue to meet the needs of the ministry at Pine Ridge. As I write, summer camp registrations are coming in very nicely and we are beginning to see guest groups commit to coming again for retreats. With that said, I want to be clear that Pine Ridge is committed to following all of our state licensing guidelines and providing safe and healthy experiences for our guests as allowed by the MDHHS.

I have been holding back on writing about something for over a year now. I find this a truly amazing story of God's faithfulness to doing His work at Pine Ridge. Late in 2019, Pine Ridge received an extraordinary legacy gift from the estate of Richard and Eleanor Ver Lee. Richard's parents were Uncle Jim and Aunt Alice Ver Lee, our founding camp directors. The gift was substantial enough for us to immediately consider expanding the number of beds in our Retreat Center, a need we have had as we turn many potential guests away for not having enough beds for their group needs.

So, we excitedly began working with an architect to renovate some of the completed and unfinished lower level spaces in the Ver Lee Retreat Center. The plans call for adding two bunk rooms with a total of 28 beds, each bunk room having its own bath and shower room attached. Additionally, it changed what we initially planned as a small conference room into a guest speaker/leader bedroom. I personally was super excited to share these plans with you, our ministry partners.

Then, March 2020 came, and as you are all too aware, our world changed. We immediately put a stop to all of our construction plans. And we realized that we might need this extraordinary estate gift just to financially survive the year. Over the months after March, we certainly did need these funds to keep paying our bills.

But, **OUR GOD IS ABLE** to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think. (Eph. 3:20) By the end of 2020, God had restored all of the funds we had used from the estate gift.

So, our board of directors has given me the green light to move ahead, confident that God will supply to meet all of the needs of His work. We are ready to move ahead with the project, but now that we have all of our cost estimates updated, we are \$70,000 shy of being able to finish everything that is hoped for.

I believe strongly that there is a huge need for camp ministry right now! People are realizing that we need to be with other people in community, especially brothers and sisters in Christ. God created us with social needs. Indeed, being together is critical to our spiritual growth (Eph. 4:11-16).

Will you help us meet the need to serve more guests? To serve more churches? To serve more campers? Pine Ridge exists to share and model the message of Jesus, the gospel, the good news that shares one can find all of their hope in Him alone. Our promise to you is to obey Jesus and work diligently at His work.

I look forward to seeing how God will continue this amazing story to meet the financial opportunities at Pine Ridge through the faithful stewardship of partners like you.

With much gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Grifhorst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin Grifhorst  
Camp Director