

THISTLE

MINISTRY UPDATE



SPRING
2022

Together Again



I am thrilled to share that we were able to have our first young adult retreat **in person** in nearly two years! It was such a blessing to gather, worship, and connect with people from across the state. Our main speaker was Lance Kramer from Kotzebue. He shared powerful messages about unforgiveness and Jesus's call to live into the Church. We also had some great panel discussions where we got to hear from elders of Golovin, Bethel, and Anchorage. They answered a lot of questions about getting un-stuck, sharing valuable wisdom and pieces of their stories.



Of course there were plenty of activities focused on having fun. We were able to enjoy things such as ice fishing, skeet shooting, snow-machining, even a 3v3 basketball tournament. We also saw the return of the Young Adult Retreat Olympics, a team-based competition series that includes some NYO events as well as sillier activities such as blind eating and speed puzzling.

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

Resident Spotlight



I'd like to take a minute to introduce you to our Resident Assistant Sam Cross. Sam, originally from Nome, is coming out of a season of wandering and has a strong desire for guidance and growth. It has been hard, yet so rewarding, to walk with him through this season. Seeing him unlearn lies that have hurt him throughout his life and take steps towards true freedom in Christ is a staunch reminder of why we are here. Sam has started a weekly gathering where he prepares a meal and facilitates a community building time.



He plans to add in different events and eventually have a rotating schedule that includes things like elder spotlight, worship, serving the homeless, and a myriad of other things. Perhaps the most encouraging piece of Sam's leadership is that he has been able to engage the whole House community. On multiple occasions all House residents have chosen to be involved with Sam's gatherings which is a huge win. Please pray for him as he continues to take steps away from darkness and into healthy new norms.



Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

James 1:17

Workshop Update



We were recently blessed to have CYAK staffer Drew Williams stay with us for a week. During that time Drew lead a workshop on how to make cutting boards. After a few sessions both residents and staff members have made some really beautiful cutting boards and we now have another product to create and offer.



Caleb Szczepanski (recently hired CYAK operations manager) has also started opening the shop to residents on a weekly basis and has a host of skills to share. Lastly, we have found new materials and suppliers to improve our crafting quality. This includes moving from sawblades to alloy sheet metal, locating bulk hardwood providers, and beginning to incorporate some animal materials such as antlers into our projects.

Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created. - Revalation 4:11

House Study

House study continues to offer both encouragement and challenges. We finished our study on Jonah which fostered a lot of good conversation around God's grace, compassion, and our human tendency to function in bias. Following Jonah we spent two weeks taking a

close look at love, covering things like biblical love vs worldly love, Greek and Hebrew root words, common misconceptions, and the utter necessity for us to function in love. We are now launching a six week series studying Psalm 23 in which we will be gradually unearthing the question, “do you trust the Lord to care for your needs?” During our first session looking at Psalm 23 we had some excellent conversation including EVERY present resident choosing to share things that have helped them process trauma and move past the point of feeling consumed or trapped by it.



Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
Colossians 3:16

Family Update

A big praise and improvement for our family has been the reemergence of date night for Simone and I. It has proven quite difficult to find time or energy to connect as husband and wife with work and young children, but we are thankful and blessed to have been able to start dating again (and for those friends who love our girls while we go out). We are also continuing to find new ways to enjoy being together as a family, and to get time with others when we can. The increase in daylight and warmth brings the yearning for summer and all things outdoors. After a long winter of cold, sicknesses, and adjusting to having a new little baby, we are excited and hopeful for what this next season will bring. Hopefully much growth and fun for us as a family, and opportunities to travel and be with others.





And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Support Update

In our last update we asked those who do end-of-year tithing to consider contributing to the Aarigaa House ministry. This request was generously answered and we are currently fully supported as a result of it! Praise God and thank you all for your continued support, relationally, prayerfully, and financially. We could not do this without our team.

Prayer Requests

- Wisdom and growth in parenting our sweet girls
- Planning and coordination of summer projects at the House
- Discernment in conversations with residents about their next steps

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