



Monday Matters

November 10, 2014



This is a story we need to share with all of you. Our son, daughter-in-law and their children are missionaries to Bethel, Alaska. Anthony and Kristin are planting a Dream Center to reach out to the 57 villages surrounding Bethel, emphasizing need-based Christian ministry. Their vision is also to plant churches in some of the villages for the Native people and to develop future Native pastors and leaders. Below are some excerpts from their recent newsletter.

Back in January Pastor Stephen Brown from Kenai, AK, extended an invitation to us to visit his church and share our vision for the Bethel Dream Center. There we met Dennis and Anita Merkes who before we knew it were working to get a team out to Bethel to help us.

Normally getting a group together to head out to Western Alaska on the front end of winter is a hard sell for even the grittiest. Yet when Dennis extended the invitation, he had 37 people sign up and was turning people away who wanted to come serve.

The team arrived on October 22nd and stayed for 5 days and got an amazing amount of work done. They leveled the building, put a new roof on, put up all the foam siding, and put on the new metal siding. Western Alaska made sure to give them the best weather it has to offer: low teens, flying snow, rain, fog, and 20 minutes of clear sunshine. It was impressive to watch each man dig in and take on each task with a sense of personal responsibility.

For those that leveled the building, it meant punishing cold and wet work. First we had to cut off the old metal skirting and then crawl around in the snow, ice, mud, and then the puddles of ice water - working jacks

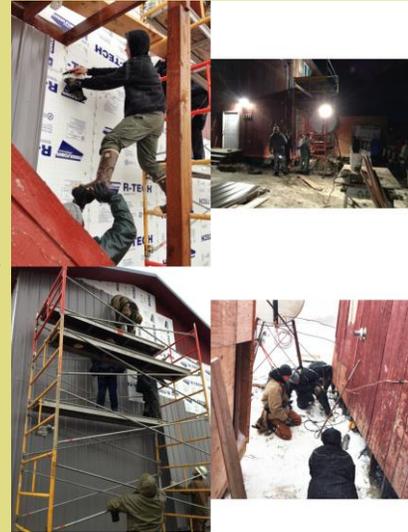
that would be moved several times throughout a four day process. It was an amazing thing to participate in and witness first hand. The building was off kilter so much that when inside, it felt as though one might have vertigo. But after they finished, the building was level and comfortable.



The team was also able to put on a new and much needed roof. In the flying snow and icy conditions, it was a risky job. The men donned harnesses and tethered themselves to the roof and tackled the meticulous objective of removing the old roof and putting on the new. For days on end they worked in a stooped position on a slippery roof.

Getting the building leveled and a new roof was amazing in itself, but we were also able to get the 2" foam insulation and metal siding up. This has already had a dramatic affect on how warm the building feels. The building was built in the 1960's when walls were only 4 inches thick. Now we have 6" walls!

With all the great things that happened while the team was here, we need to share the most amazing. He came on this trip with a fairly rough background. As a teenager his mom got him started on hard drugs when she shot him up with cocaine. From there Tanner has spent most of his life kicking against drug addiction and the accompanying oppression. On this trip he suffered from night terrors and was obviously struggling. In my conversations with Tanner he was transparent about everything, including the fact that he was not a Christian. Yet he did allow us the opportunity to circle around him and pray against the night terrors and oppression he was facing.



Then in the early morning hours of the last day, something happened that still amazes me. Tanner gave his life to Christ! Tanner experienced new found peace and joy. Kristin and I are extremely grateful for all the work accomplished, but we would have gladly traded all of that to see Tanner come to Christ.

To learn more about the Nelson and the Bethel Dream Center click here: [Nelson News](#)



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