



Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

JUNE 2021



It's Crazy! Kids Everywhere!

"We praise God for what He is accomplishing Wednesday nights in the wall tents!" Pastor Nathan Lundgren was commenting on their weekly Youth Group meetings. When the Lundgrens began Youth Group at Valley Bible Church, Kooskia, Idaho three years



Nathan & Brittany Lundgren

ago, they met in their living room with three to four young people attending. The group has since grown to 35-40 each week, necessitating a move to a large tent outside, and then to two tents put together! A wood stove keeps them warm; and in fact, Pastor Nathan teaches near the stove and ruefully stated, "By the end of the night, I am pretty well cooked!" Nathan and Brittany have been joined in this ministry by Jake Squires and Hannah Croskrey, two church members.

The format of Youth Group follows a philosophy of teaching the Word family-style, that former Cornerstone Bible Institute president, Howard Friesen taught to the Lundgrens. Nathan explained, "We play no organized games, we have no worship team. We feed them a meal, and then sit down in the tent to open God's Word together. I don't 'dumb' the lesson down for them, either. They receive a full-on sermon. We



The Youth Group tent

believe kids are not born into programs, but families. It is God's design for us to be in a family ... and healthy families eat together and they talk and fellowship together."

Recently, Rich Stepanek, father of another NICE missionary, Claudia Singer, challenged the teens, refuting evolution from a biblical and scientific basis. He told them, "The more I study Genesis and science, the more I come to realize that the Bible and science go hand in hand." Currently, Pastor Nathan is teaching through Ephesians, and the young people thank him for preaching the Word, and keep coming back for more! The Youth Group team have begun building an outdoor fire in the backyard during Youth Group, and a number of parents stay and visit around the fire. Some of the kids hang out by the outdoor fire during the meal, too. Pastor Nathan said, "They have no qualms about walking in and out and through our house. It's crazy, kids everywhere! I am literally a shepherd on Wednesdays; herding kids back to the tent!"



Rich & Sue Stepanek

While 35-40 teens is a significant amount for Kooskia, Pastor Nathan stressed that it's not the numbers that are making them so excited and amazed. It's the response and growth of the teens. "The kids give me hugs and thank me. The people in the community stop us to tell us that they are proud of us for what we're doing with the youth. Quite frankly, I am feeling strong emotion in my chest just sharing this!"

God is at work in Kooskia and elsewhere where NICE Missionaries serve. To God be the glory! Great things He has done!

So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7