

# ALPINE ECHOES

Providing a mountaintop  
encounter with Jesus Christ  
through Christian camping

FALL 2019

## TODAY'S YOUTH ARE HUNGRY FOR Truth

**ROCK SOLID TRUTH.** Alpine answered this hunger with the summer theme "Unconfused." Each speaker's goal was to guide campers into rock solid Biblical answers to their questions. Each camper was encouraged to think and to ask "What do I believe?" and "Is this true?" No emotional manipulation. Just walking alongside each camper with the gospel truth.

**One high school camper, Angelina, came to camp because a friend invited her.** She wasn't a regular part of the youth group, and was indifferent to Christianity. But she had some questions! As the week went on, the speaker addressed many questions both in chapel and at jam-packed Q & A sessions. Angelina began to trust God's promises and prayed to invite Christ into her life at the Worship Chapel. She shared her decision for Christ at the campfire that night as the rest of the campers and her youth group cheered her on.



**Oona, a children's pastor from Anaheim, and a counselor again this summer at Alpine, said, "The theme and the chapel sessions have been very compelling to my campers this year."** One of Oona's campers told her: "This is when we need this. We are dealing with this in school now. This gives me a response to kids in school, because right now is when people are falling away." The campers are learning how to ask the right questions, like "What's the problem with evil in the world?"

"They are really making connections," Oona said. "They are thinking out of the box and they are wrestling with their questions. **I don't really sleep much while I'm here...but this is eternity that we're looking at!**"

James Carroll, Youth Pastor at Fountain of Life Covenant Church in Long Beach, tells about Walter, who was going into 8th grade. "Walter was an outspoken atheist. But he came to youth group for the fun and games, and would duck out during the faith lesson part of the gathering.

The youth group kids are always talking about their experiences at Alpine. So Walter decided to come along to winter camp. He was still in a place of "I don't believe in God" and "This Christian stuff is crazy." But during a chapel at winter camp, when the speaker invited the campers to make a choice for Christ, Walter broke down. He recognized that God was real, and that God actually loved him. Walter made a choice to follow Jesus.

**James said, "I see it all the time: my kids take a step closer to Christ and work through the changes as they get home. A lot of surrender happens here.** But I

have never seen a change as drastic as what took place in

Walter. His parents were overwhelmed with the change they saw in Walter's attitude. He was a joy to be around and was no longer fighting them at every turn. The change stuck. Even at church, Walter will talk to James about what he is learning from the sermon. He wants to continue to go deeper."

**God seems to have a call on Walter's life... and he was able to hear it at camp.**





# FROM THE DESERT TO THE MOUNTAIN...

**T**ODD MACKERRON, Director of Bargains Thrift Store in Palm Desert and Outreach Pastor at Cornerstone Covenant Church, **has had a huge influence on kid's lives through his efforts to get kids to camp, and specifically to Alpine.**

God gave Todd a vision over 13 years ago to raise funds to help send kids to camp. At about the same time, God was guiding Pastor Chris Hushaw, founding pastor of Cornerstone Covenant also in Palm Desert. Both were asking, "How do we reach the people in the east end of the desert?" And both agreed that one way to start building healthy families was to get kids to camp. **Todd raises funds through Bargains and various donors to scholarship these kids who would have no other way of attending a week of camp in the mountains.** He also partners with Cornerstone, Boys and Girls Clubs, The Tesoro Club and recently with Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) to bring as many kids to camp as possible. "Alpine saw our vision and worked with us to provide scholarship assistance from their end as well."

**"It's an important get-away for these kids. Some have never been out of the desert.** Coming to the mountains, seeing God's glory in nature, and just having a week away to hear from God: camp makes a difference. I have counselors now who started out attending Alpine as third graders. This summer I saw so many tears both from the campers and the counselors as they said goodbye at the end of the week. Alpine becomes like family for some of them. It becomes home. **Over the years, we have helped get over 4,000 kids to camp."**

This August, Todd and Bargains partnered with FCA to fund a college soccer camp at Alpine for the first time. Many of the young athletes have expressed their gratitude for their time here...most importantly, fifteen soccer players and the assistant coach gave their lives to Christ as a result of this soccer camp. Todd looks at these kids and thinks,

"They are the future."



Coach Enrique, CJ (FCA leader), Todd Mackerron, Vinny (soccer player and summer camp counselor for Tesoro Club).

**K**EVIN AND DENYCE come to Alpine through Bargains Thrift Store as volunteer counselors. They started coming to Alpine as elementary campers. Denyce remembers making a faith commitment at age 10 at the fire circle testimony night.

Both Kevin and Denyce experienced sexual abuse by family members at early ages. They also had family members who were deeply involved in gangs.

Kevin started using alcohol and drugs at age 12. He wasn't part of a church youth group at the time. **The only safe haven was Alpine Camp.**

"Camp was an escape for us," Kevin explained. "We didn't have a childhood."

**Being around other kids at camp was amazing. And the relationships built with the staff was so important for me.** I remember "Transformer" and "Mad Scales" (both camp counselors) and the fun and encouragement that came from being with them. Turns out, at age 15, I gave my life to Christ here at Alpine."

"The atmosphere here is friendly, welcoming," Denyce said. **"It is a safe place for the kids to become vulnerable and open up and talk with us."** Both Kevin and Denyce recognize that the kids need counselors walking alongside them to listen and not to judge. "We teach them to build integrity and to consider what they will do when no one is watching. This generation is fragile. Their response to authority is different than previous generations. We need to be guides and let God do the heart work."

"We did a prayer walk here that helped our group of girls," Denyce said, "and we talked about praying for our enemies. One girl prayed for an 'enemy' she had at camp, and they worked it out while here. These kids are from rough neighborhoods, so they have opportunity to put this into practice."

Both Kevin and Denyce come back each year as counselors for the kids from the Coachella Valley. **"We are grateful for our life experience. We can relate to these kids and what they are going through.** And they can relate to us. We create good memories here."



Denyce (on left in black) and Kevin (middle with gray sweatshirt) with some of their group from the Coachella Valley

# THE MANY FACES OF GIVING

**GIVE TO ALPINE.  
YOU CAN SEE THE IMPACT.**

**E**very summer and a few winter camps, Daniela Mitre would come to Alpine with her youth group from Cornerstone Covenant Church. She's had quite a history here: starting at Makuala, then on to Sawmill camp during middle school and high school. She has been an assistant counselor, a volunteer counselor and worked as summer staff both on Adventure Staff and this summer as Head Lifeguard. Ironically, she remembers being told by a lifeguard as a Makuala camper to "stop running!"

Cornerstone Covenant partnered with Bargains Thrift Store to help pay for scholarships. Daniela volunteered at Bargains, and thrived there. She also put in extra hours to help other kids get to camp. "It was great life experience: I'd see a need and get it done." And it was all for a good cause.

When Daniela was in 5th grade, she lost her dad to cancer. "Working through that at camp with my counselor, I came to a turning point: I realized I had a testimony and that I had a Father in heaven who loved me."

**Daniela experienced Alpine as a place she could come to re-set with God,** especially when she got older. "Alpine was an important part of my journey as I grew in faith. I was one of those kids who rededicated my life to Christ every year. There was always that point in the week when we would open up to each other. It's a safe place to do that. I've learned that no matter what happens, God will redeem it either for ourselves or for others. I've learned to wait for that connection and how God will use each situation." As a counselor and on summer staff, Daniela's been able to connect with campers who have experienced something similar.

**Daniela has also recently chosen to donate toward projects and improvements at Alpine. "I see that God is really working here and I want to support that.** Growing up, I saw the kids from the Boys and Girls Club come up and experience Christ for the first time during that camp week. I've seen how many kids are reached and the impact of a week at camp. And, I see the financial needs, and I want to help."

"I see giving money toward updates and upkeep as a way to help facilitate the kids' experience. If the kids are on the ropes course, it adds to their experience if everything is in good working order. It all adds to their ability to trust God and they are then more open to hear God's voice."

**When asked what she would tell others about the opportunity to partner with Alpine through giving, Daniela said "Give to Alpine. You can see the impact."** 🌲

**To become a monthly donor to Alpine, visit our website at [www.alpine-cc.org](http://www.alpine-cc.org) and click DONATE.**

*Daniela as head lifeguard  
with Jayden and Antonio*



## UPCOMING PROGRAMMED EVENTS

All are welcome.  
To register, visit [www.alpine-cc.org](http://www.alpine-cc.org)  
or call (800) 350-6289.

### FALL EVENTS

#### WOMEN'S RETREAT

October 11-13

#### MEN'S RETREAT

November 1-3

### WINTER CAMPS

#### JUNIOR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL COVENANT COMBO #1

January 3-5

#### JUNIOR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL COVENANT COMBO #2

January 10-12

#### HIGH SCHOOL

January 24-26

#### JUNIOR HIGH #1

January 31-Feb 2

#### JUNIOR HIGH #2

February 21-23

#### JUNIOR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL COMBO

February 28-March 1

#### ELEMENTARY

March 6-8

Contact us for info on  
booking your own group's  
camp, retreat, team-building  
or banquet experience.





P.O. Box 155  
Blue Jay, CA 92317



(Funding for and/or  
Gifts-in-Kind)

**ARE YOU CONNECTED WITH  
SOMEONE WHO COULD BLESS  
ALPINE WITH:**

- 1. Volunteers!** For painting and various projects.
- 2.** Heavy duty golf cart that can manage hills for Program use.
- 3.** Camp vehicle for passengers and cargo (AWD with good mountain capabilities).
- 4.** Commercial-sized 3-compartment stainless steel sink.



## THOUGHTS

### HORSE SENSE: BETTER TOGETHER



**Joel Rude**

Executive Director

**H**orses at camp have often been a very good thing.

The same goes for well-yoked ministry partnerships. Horses at camp provide a source of adventurous fun, meaningful connection and increased confidence. Ministry partnerships deepen trust, generate greater creativity and bear more richly rewarding fruit.

One Belgian draft horse alone can pull up to 8,000 pounds. Two such draft horses together can pull 20-24,000 pounds, 33% more than the usually assumed "two horses can pull double the amount of one." However,

two draft horses raised and trained side by side can together pull up to 32,000 pounds, four times the result of one horse alone!

Alpine's ministry partnerships work the same way. As you read inside, tying in with even one network of ministries in the Coachella Valley significantly increases the number of campers who encounter Jesus here every year. Serving Royal Family Kids Camp, Teen Leadership Camp, and Camp Hope America greatly increases the number of abused and neglected children who get to experience *safely and simply being a kid* along with many others who understand their struggles.

A growing number of what Alpine calls "hybrid camps" combine the camp staff's programming and

recreation experience with a large church's spiritual formation expertise and built-in follow up. **Churches such as Saddleback, Mariners and Rolling Hills Covenant have intentionally "harnessed up" with Alpine so the strengths of each are more effectively leveraged for the benefit of campers, counselors and staff.**

Alpine used to run a horse program decades ago...alas, "neigh" more. However, the intention of its founders to "be better together" in helping churches disciple their children continues to develop. Ministries learning to combine their strengths side by side are seeing more and more weight lifted from heavy hearts through the love of Jesus... and horsing around at camp! 