



# February Update!

**Very Sad News:** The theme verse for middle and high school chapels this year is Psalm 39:4: "Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life." This verse sadly took on new meaning this week with the tragic death of a 13-year-old 8<sup>th</sup> grader that I've known since elementary school. Please pray for his family, friends, and teachers in the days ahead as they grieve and figure out how to move forward.

**MCA:** We began January with our annual trip to Manhattan Christian Academy. After one day of ministry, team member Brandon Berry (an 11<sup>th</sup> grader from Windham Christian Academy in Maine) wrote, "I'm having an amazing time in Manhattan, New York!! I've been able to lead worship in the morning chapels, sit in on a really good music class, hang out with middle school kids at lunch, and share some wisdom I've learned to students in class and in personal journals! It's amazing being here. I don't want to leave. I'm thankful I still have four more days!" Although our team was smaller than the previous few years, we had the right people for the week, and it seemed to be a fruitful week! MCA was also the first week for new full-time team member Joy Anderson!



One of last year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders who stopped by to catch up

One of the highlights of our week each year at MCA is seeing alumni!



Team selfie with a 12<sup>th</sup> grader who comes to hang out with us every year



From 4<sup>th</sup> grade boy to a bearded college junior...

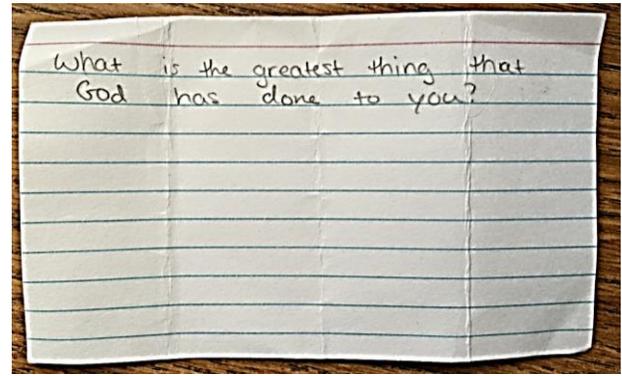
**FHS:** MCA, our biggest school of the year, was followed by another one of our biggest schools – Faith Heritage School in Syracuse, NY. Long-time Coastlandian Nate Blanchard joined us, along with local camp director Dan Rhoda and his 12<sup>th</sup> grade daughter Julie. In addition, current college student, FHS alumna, and former host family member Miriam Camloh was part of the team, along with former FHS staff member Patti Tyrrell. Patti's daughter Krystal had joined us at MCA. 😊



Fun in the snow after school in Syracuse!

**OHCA:** We finished January with a high school week at Oxford Hills Christian Academy in South Paris, ME. The most powerful part of the week, in my opinion, happened unexpectedly during an extended lunch period on Thursday. Coastlands team member Emily Nowell described it this way: *“Each day during lunch, we had a Coffee Can time with the high school students. On Thursday, one of the students asked about the greatest thing that God did to us. After each member of our team answered, Mr. Huffman opened it up for the students to also answer the question.*

*Several of the students did share. One thing that we all noticed was that, without exception, every story that was shared about the **greatest** thing was also the **hardest** thing. It reminded me of the story of Joseph. So many bad things happened to Joseph and at the end, he was able to say, ‘As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good...’ (Genesis 50:20). God allows things into our lives that may hurt us in the moment, but He has a plan through all of it.”* It was not only a time of reflection on the past but also a reminder of the hope that we have for the present and the future.



The question that started it all...

#### From one of the OHCA high schoolers:

“As some of you know I tend to hide who I am to protect myself and very rarely show the real me - I want people to come in but also want them to stay away because I'm scared to be hurt again. This week I was told it's okay to be weak and accept that I can't do this on my own. I need to get vulnerable so that the healing can come. Everyone struggles and it's hard to deal with and we build up facades and pretend nothing is wrong but all that is doing is hurting us!!! Without letting go of my facade and getting vulnerable I would be stuck in this place forever and would never be able to heal!! In all honesty this week is the best time of my year because the Coastlands Consultants not only bless me and help me to let go of the facade I've put up but they also become like friends and family. Seeing them leave is hard because you grow close to them but they leave us with love and blessings and all we can do is remember the good times and stay in touch with them!!”

**What's next?** We leave tomorrow for a week at Mount Hope Christian School in Burlington, MA, followed immediately by back-to-back weeks at Concord Christian Academy (Concord, NH) and Dayspring Christian Academy (Attleboro, MA). During our weeks at CCA and DCA our full-time team will be joined by numerous high school students who willingly sacrifice their February vacations to minister to other students. We're very blessed to have them with us!



Hanging out with Teddy Roosevelt at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago (also known as Holden Christian Academy's gym) ☺