

*“God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”*

*2 Corinthians 9, 8 (NLT)*



**TAL AND CHRISTINA JAMES**

## *News Update*

**SEPTEMBER 2016**

*Dear Friends,*



David bonding with our dog Zorro on the long drive to Yellowstone

Summer has gone by so quickly again and it was certainly a busy one: Aside from offering drop-in archery and participating in community events, we also went on a road trip to **Yellowstone Park**, meeting the young adult group from Indianapolis, which usually comes to Penelakut for 1-2 weeks in the summer. They had suggested to meet “in the middle” this year, and organized and fundraised for the trip. So there we went with a couple of people from Penelakut, kids and dog ☺. We had a great time, saw many exciting sights, but in the end all agreed that next year we would arrange for a camping trip much closer to home – somewhere on Vancouver Island. We all felt, that that would be much less stressful and open up the opportunity for working people to participate, even if only for a couple of days. However we all loved camping together and are looking forward to doing it again.

Remember our/your prayers and desire to have a **building** to use on Penelakut? Well, just before we left for the Yellowstone trip we were told to apply for the use of a **portable** that had been vacated by an organization and given to the Penelakut Band. We met with Chief and Council, proposed our idea of providing some services that the community desires, but most of all work with the community to facilitate the needs and wants by utilizing the portable. Chief and Council decided to rent the portable to us – for \$1.00/month with the request to provide some sort of activity for the youth. (Mind you, we do have to cover utilities, insurance etc. ☺) This is a **huge answer to prayer!** Now we can be more present, have the ability to host and spend one-on-one time and accommodate some of the requests of the community. In September we started a weekly **youth group**, which has been attended faithfully by around 12 kids (to be honest we don't have room for more at the moment – the portable is quite small). It has been dubbed the **ROOTS HOUSE** for now. Already we are able to deepen longstanding relationships, especially with the youth; teens that we have known since they were little. We are very much enjoying the time we have with them.

**JANUARY 2017**

Well, I guess I did not sent this back in September ☺.

We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and a good start into the New Year.

At this time we are asking you to especially pray for a **young man, Ian** \* that we have gotten to know since he came out with his mother to archery, when he was just a little guy. He soon became one of our best archers and now comes out whenever we (especially Tal) are on the island on his own initiative. Ian, now 15, is the oldest of seven (# 8 is on the way); he had to learn early to take responsibility for his younger siblings and cousins. His parents are alcoholics; they deeply love their children, but are often

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\* All names are being changed for privacy reasons. God knows who you are praying for ☺

unable to take care of them properly. Social services have placed Ian and his siblings in foster care or the Penelakut group home many times. Ian is struggling with many **challenges**: He dropped out of school, even though he wants to start again; however that proves difficult, as he has been either suspended or dropped out repeatedly before. He also struggles with alcohol and dealing with frustrations and anger appropriately. From a human point of view he has no chance to succeed in life. And yet we have hope: He has **many gifts**: He is very good with children (when he chooses to be); he really wants to break the pattern that has been set for him, but does not know how. He is smart even though he is missing the many maths and reading and writing skills. He wants to learn how to live his life responsibly and is seeking out Tal's company whenever Tal is around. We have loved Ian for many years and often feel helpless watching the many negative influences in his life and often bad choices he makes. He is very close to his brother Jeff, who is now 14. Both have been a part of our lives for such a long time. Please pray for wisdom and for Jesus to touch their hearts and give them the strength and opportunity to change their lives. We see so much potential and yet there are so many obstacles.

**Corbin** has almost completed his time in **Germany**: Starting middle of August January he stayed with my parents and attended school in Hamburg. He will come home on February 1. He really enjoyed his time, but school was hard for him: First of all it was of course all in German and then a lot of what is taught in Grade 11 in Germany is not taught until College in Canada. However he made it, greatly improved his German, got to spend a lot of time with family and made a couple of new friends. He could have stayed until the end of the school year, but I guess he is homesick, misses his Canadian friends and of course we miss him as well.



Corbin

We are planning our **furlough** for **Fall 2018**, as we don't want to take out the kids of school. In 2018 Corbin will have graduated and Connor will probably spend some time in Germany just like Corbin did, so that will give us a lot more freedom to travel. We know a visit is long overdue and we miss connecting with you in person, but with Corbin being in his final 2 years in High School we don't want him to miss too much.



Connor teaching archery

**Connor** joined the Lacrosse Academy in the Public School, he wanted to give it a try and so far he loves it. The daily training is good for him and he seems to like the school as well. He also has become a great help teaching archery. We are training him as well as some other teenagers to take leadership responsibilities in this and they love it! Connor loves hanging out with his family on Penelakut and wishes he could join us for youth group over there, but the time doesn't work with his lacrosse and schooling.

**Tal** is spending a lot of time on Penelakut utilizing the building. He absolutely loves being able to meet with a variety of people spontaneously and have a place to host. I would love to be over on Penelakut a lot more, but am also working part time as an ESL teacher (I know, I think it is funny too), and that restricts my time more than I would like. However I had signed the contract before we knew that the Penelakut band would give us the portable to use and don't want to back out of my commitment.

Tal visiting with one of the Penelakut Elders



We are also planning to extend especially the **outdoor**

space (e.g. covered patio) of the portable as soon as possible for larger meetings (right now we are crowded if there are 10 people in the room) and the facilitating of outdoor workshops such as drum making, carving classes, butchering classes etc. We also need to get some work done in the interior and purchase some **supplies** for the running of the youth group etc. Unfortunately there is no cooking stove as the space is so small, but we make do. In December we finally got some sofas donated, before that we were on camping chairs ☺. However, if you are interested in donating specifically towards the running of the ROOTS House, we would be thankful. For now everything is coming out of our regular budget and that means we are going over budget ☺. Especially building additions are simply not possible for us to finance. We will do some fundraising with the youth and hope to also eventually cover some costs by letting some other groups use the facility for a fee. However that is not set up yet, so if you are interested in giving a onetime gift towards the ROOTS House that would be wonderful. Or if you live close by and have access to cheap supplies and/or labour, that would be great as well.

Thanks to all who prayed for **our niece D.** as requested in our last news update. After some very troubling episodes, she has settled down a bit. She is back staying with her cousin's family and seems to be doing well. Though she dropped out of school, she started a youth work training program. The family also moved, so she so that helps her to avoid some of the negative influences that were surrounding her in Nanaimo. Please keep praying with us, she carries so much pain and hurt.



**Christmas 2016** is over, but I am keeping this picture in here as a reminder to all of us, that God not only has sent Jesus, but also loves us with a tender heart and protective arms around us for eternity. And even though there is sometimes pain we have to endure or watch others go through, we know that He is always by our and their side, just like a loving mother or father will always be there for their child.

**Thanks to you,** our friends and team! You have stood with us for 15 years now (yes, we have been with NAIM for 15 years, almost 16 actually) and we are very well aware that we would never be able to do this ministry without you, without your prayers and gifts. I wish, we were better with staying in touch, ministry and life is so busy, that writing a letter gets put to the side much too often. However that does not mean that we do not think of you and are not thankful for you. I am working on starting a Facebook page for our ministry and will let you know when that is up and running. Hopefully that will help with urgent prayer requests and staying in touch in a more personal manner.

*May God bless you, as you are a blessing to us!*

*Huy'ch q'u Siem*

*(Thanks to all of you! / I raise my hands to you!)*

*Tal and Christina with Corbin and Connor*

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