

June 2025: Report to the WA-AK LWML District Short Term Missions Committee

This summer marked our 20th year of VBS in the Yup'ik village of Nunapitchuk in southwest Alaska. This mission exists to proclaim the Gospel with village partners who invite us and work alongside us each year as a component of their ongoing ministry.

A team of seven missionaries traveled by small plane and boat to reach our friends on the Yukon-Kuskokwim River Delta this June to celebrate the hope we have in Jesus and share His love, thanks in large part to the generous grant from the LWML.

The village school was once again our headquarters, after being closed last summer for emergency foundation repairs. This is the largest community space in the village, and a welcoming place for over 100 joyful participants each day.

Our theme was **“Walk with Jesus”** ~ based on John 8:12. Jesus said “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Each day, we explored what it means to follow Jesus ~ with Bible stories, music, crafts and games focused on His love, His truth, His peace, and His light for life.

We welcomed over 100 children, youth and families each day: young mothers with their babies and toddlers, grandparents with their grandchildren, and teens. This “family style” Bible school ~ all ages learning, singing, and growing together ~ is a wonderful blessing and a poignant illustration of the body of Christ. Amidst the traditional summertime subsistence harvest of fish, eggs, and berries, this community makes a strong statement of faith as they begin each summer learning about Jesus and shining His light.

As important as the structured programs throughout the week are all the unexpected, unplanned moments when God’s grace, mercy, peace and love are revealed through a ministry of presence. Pastor Larmi, from Lamb of God Lutheran in Wasilla, baptized a baby on our first night in the village. After that, another family approached us, desiring to have their baby baptized. We joyfully supported them in coordinating with the church elders to have it happen soon with a visiting pastor from another village. It is a profound joy to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this place, blessed to witness the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit.

We give thanks for Jesus, the Light of the World, enlightening all who believe by the power of the Holy Spirit. We give thanks for the generosity of the WA-AK LWML. Your love is shining the Light of the world all across the boardwalks of Nunapitchuk, Alaska. Praise the Lord!