

AWA Alaska Mission Project Update



Cast All Our Cares Before Him

Spring has finally sprung here in Alaska! I've been starting a lot of my newsletters with the weather, but it is a marvel to me how different the weather is here. Really, everything is so different here. So much so that many people say it's like living in a different country. I agree with them.

One of the most noticeable things about Alaska is its remote nature. It's separated from the lower 48 states by Canada, and Alaska's communities are also remote from each other. The capital of Alaska is Juneau, which is only accessible by boat or plane. 80% of Alaska's communities are off the road system and rely on aircraft for year-round access. The biggest city in the state is Anchorage, which is on the road system, and for us out here in Dillingham, that's where we go when we need to "go to town".

Our most recent road system endeavor was for a Pathfinder/Adventurer camporee to the town of Seward,

where the kids could fellowship and see more of the beauty of God's creation. Our family and another family from our church were going. Though it was a blessing, it was a logistical nightmare. We wanted to fly our family of four on the AWA plane (cheaper than flying us all commercial) to the Anchorage area to join the group, which would include Yosi's mom and sister, who would be flying from Mexico in time for the camporee. We were dependent on the weather being good, though. I was looking for a vehicle for us to drive once we got there, as well as a place to stay. Both needed to be affordable. I got housing lined up at the Alaskan Conference camp meeting campground in Palmer, which is almost an hour away from Anchorage. Still, since we're missionaries, the good folks at the conference don't charge us.

I asked around for a vehicle to drive for the days before

the camporee. Still, I hadn't received a response before our departure, so I reserved the first available car from the car rental company, a 5-seater. It wasn't going to be enough for our family of six when we picked up the in-laws at the airport. We'd do multiple trips. Since we had a car and housing, I started looking for an airport near the car rental place in Wasilla. I called the airport to ask about parking availability, but there wasn't anything available! The helpful guy at the airport said he'd keep me posted in case something opened up.

The day of our flight, we loaded the plane, fueled it, and checked the weather one last time. The weather was looking iffy across the mountains separating us from Anchorage, so between me and the flight briefer, we decided I shouldn't try to get through them just yet. I decided to go to the last airport before the mountains and wait on the ground until the weather improved so we could get to our destination as soon as possible. I was trying to get to the car rental place before they closed, but I couldn't. We went ahead and took off, flying a couple of thousand feet above the tundra, skirting around some smaller mountains along the way.

About an hour and a half later, we landed at our mid-way point just before the mountains. The community is called Port Alsworth, and it's beautifully situated between the mountains on Lake Clark. We landed on the gravel runway, and I taxied to the end, where I saw there was a bed and breakfast. I parked there, and we moseyed over to the main house where a man was caring for his bee boxes. He was very pleasant and let me use his wifi to check the weather and make phone calls. Little did I know that he started the airport, and the air taxi that operated out of it was started by him as well. I got to work on the iPad and phone, and Yosi and the boys made small talk with the man and his wife. The weather looked to be improving, as forecast by the briefer, and not only that, but I got a call from a church member in town where the campground is, and they said we could use their truck, which had six seats! I then called the Palmer airport, which is 6 minutes from the campground, about parking, and they said they had plenty! My guts finally started to relax. The family and I walked the runway and enjoyed the scenery before saying our goodbyes and resuming our trip.

The stresses of our trip were not over. I could tell multiple stories about how God provided for our needs and even some of our desires during the trip, giving us the blessings of fellowship and the enjoyment of the natural world. But for the sake of time, let me conclude by saying

that even though it would have been easier to stay home and not go through the struggle and stress of the trip, we were able to better see God's providential hand opening the way before us and know that when we are in humbling and challenging circumstances, His strength is made perfect.

This life on earth is humbling and challenging, isn't it? It has its highs and lows, but really, if you think about it, we can never fully let our guard down. We are in a battle, and we need to be aware of that at all times. But may we know where our strength lies and that when things are looking discouraging, we can come before our Father and cast all our cares before Him, knowing that He careth for us, surrendering our plans to Him to be carried out or given up if He so asks. I know from experience that walking in faith is not something you master overnight, but let's allow challenges to mold us into who God wants us to be, seeing them as opportunities to see God's ability to sustain us rather than as impossibilities meant to destroy us.



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**Josh, Yosiday, Isaac and Caleb Fix
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at the Alaska Mission Base.**