



I stated in my annual report that this year was a roller coaster ride. Throughout the last year and a half, Lake Beauty has seen a lot of turnover and transitions in our staff. This is a common occurrence when new leadership comes about, yet the reasons given by those who left were more life situations rather than a bad taste or feeling towards myself or Lake Beauty. If you have been on the property this fall/winter, you would have seen a lot of new faces; this is sometimes scary since the camp life/atmosphere usually brings about thoughts of comfort and consistency, and with so many changes, it can leave an impression and uneasiness in many.

Many of our staff went on a retreat this fall; through all the hustle and bustle of the retreat season and turnover, we were able to take time and focus on the mission God has placed on both our hearts and for this place. I've labeled it the Lake Beauty Way – this is what and where we see Lake Beauty headed with our staff, guests, and mission.

Proclaiming Jesus - We bring out biblically-based speakers who share God's Kingdom and mission with campers, families, and programmed retreats. Our staff also does this as we serve one another and our guests. We want to be Christ-focused and redemptive-minded in what we say.

Reflecting His Love - There are many ways we can reflect God's love to others. We do this most aptly by serving others and through the stewardship of Lake Beauty and its property. This includes all who step foot onto the property, whether employed, camping, or dropping off somebody. We have limited supplies and resources and want to utilize them well. Jesus did a lot of teaching, but some of his most notable times were through his actions based on the love and mercy he showed to all.

High Quality - We want guests and employees to have a great experience at Lake Beauty, though this does not mean it will be perfect. We are called to strive for excellence, not perfection. Through our service, facilities, programs, and teachings, we want to continue to meet people where they are in life. Lake Beauty has been around for a long time, providing a sacred space for many guests to encounter the living God.

Christian-Camping Experience - Like most camps, Lake Beauty is set apart from the busy lifestyle of the everyday model. Lake Beauty is a place where people can learn more about who they are and who God, their creator, is as well. Camp is a place where people can gain various 'tools for their toolbox.'

I am proud of those God has called to work out here as we begin a new chapter in the operation of Lake Beauty Bible Camp. We celebrated many new and old faces who entered the property in 2023. There were 76 new decisions to follow God made during the summer season. Countless moments were shared between families at our various activities. We were able to continue building partnerships with our owner churches and donors. Financially, we are in a better position and understanding of our funds and budgets, which allows us to charge accordingly.

2023 was the year when the wheels finally stopped just turning and began to gain momentum and movement. I am excited to have finished my first year as your Executive Director with a clearer vision than when I started. I look forward to having an entire year-round staff, those committed to serving all our guests and God with a greater purpose. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your journey.

I like to say that Lake Beauty resembles the stones God instructed Joshua and the Israelites to pull out of the Jordan River. Those stones were to be a remembrance of God's power and work within the lives of the Israelites. Lake Beauty has always been and will continue to be a place set apart where guests can encounter the living God, creating their own Ebenezer in the process.

Humbling Servings,
Phil Tolbert
Executive Director