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# COUNTRY *Matters*

REACHING  
THE

# YOUNGEST

 Village Missions  
Keeping Country Churches Alive



# A View From the Country

with Brian Wechsler, Executive Director

Dear Friend,

If you've ever driven through the small rural community on a two-lane state highway, you've needed to slow down a little bit to really see it, since you can drive through so quickly. You might get the impression that there isn't much going on there. In fact, in some small towns, you can see the entering sign from the leaving sign. And yes, the populations tend to be two, maybe three figures at most. But what you might miss is the impact of rural American communities. Supreme Court decisions have been decided because a small group in a small community believed that they had the right to teach about Jesus after hours at the school, in the same way other clubs have the right. And the Supreme Court decided this little community asking for these freedoms was right. The impact is felt far beyond that town. It's felt in every urban and rural place in the land.

And it started because we care about reaching the youngest. Because we know, while it might be a little corny to say, "We need to invest in young people because they represent

our future," that is the truth. And when they discover who Jesus is, what His love has done for them and can do for others, they do something. They get busy and do amazing acts of love, simply because they are following Jesus. Reaching them assures that the gospel will be proclaimed and demonstrated in the next and the next, and the next generation.

If you get a chance to go through one of these small towns in the future, stop and have a soda at the gas station! You might discover quickly that little places can make a big difference. Enjoy the soda-pop, as we might say. And meet some folks.

Keeping Country Churches Alive,

Brian Wechsler  
Executive Director, Village Missions

Hunter, KS

## REACHING THE YOUNGEST IN HUNTER, KANSAS

**AMAZING THINGS** are happening with the youth in Tyler and Misty Larson's community in Hunter, Kansas! You'll be astounded at the high number of youth participating in church activities. Hunter, the closest town to Bethany, their church, has a population of 200. Yet, 50 kids come to summer camp, over 30 regularly show up to AWANA, and over 50 come to summer VBS. That's  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Hunter's ENTIRE population, all youth, all learning about God together!

What's even more amazing is what these kids are doing now that they are learning about God's great love for them. If you keep reading, you will find out about the enormous efforts the kids are making to return that love not only to their community, but to the world. And it's all because of the love they've received!

*Read on to find out what's going on in their community...*

Bethany Church



GPS Coordinates:  
39.176596, -98.266258

## SHAVING HEADS FOR JESUS

This summer during VBS, the kids heard about an orphanage in Haiti that needed help. They put their heads together and raised \$201 on their own!

But then, one of the high-school youth workers volunteered to shave his head, if the kids could raise \$300 by the end of camp. Well...that was motivating! So motivating, that they raised over \$700 for the orphanage in Haiti!

These kids are not only making an impact on their community, but they're reaching out into the world! They are sharing wonderful acts of love, the very thing that honors Jesus and their relationship with Him.



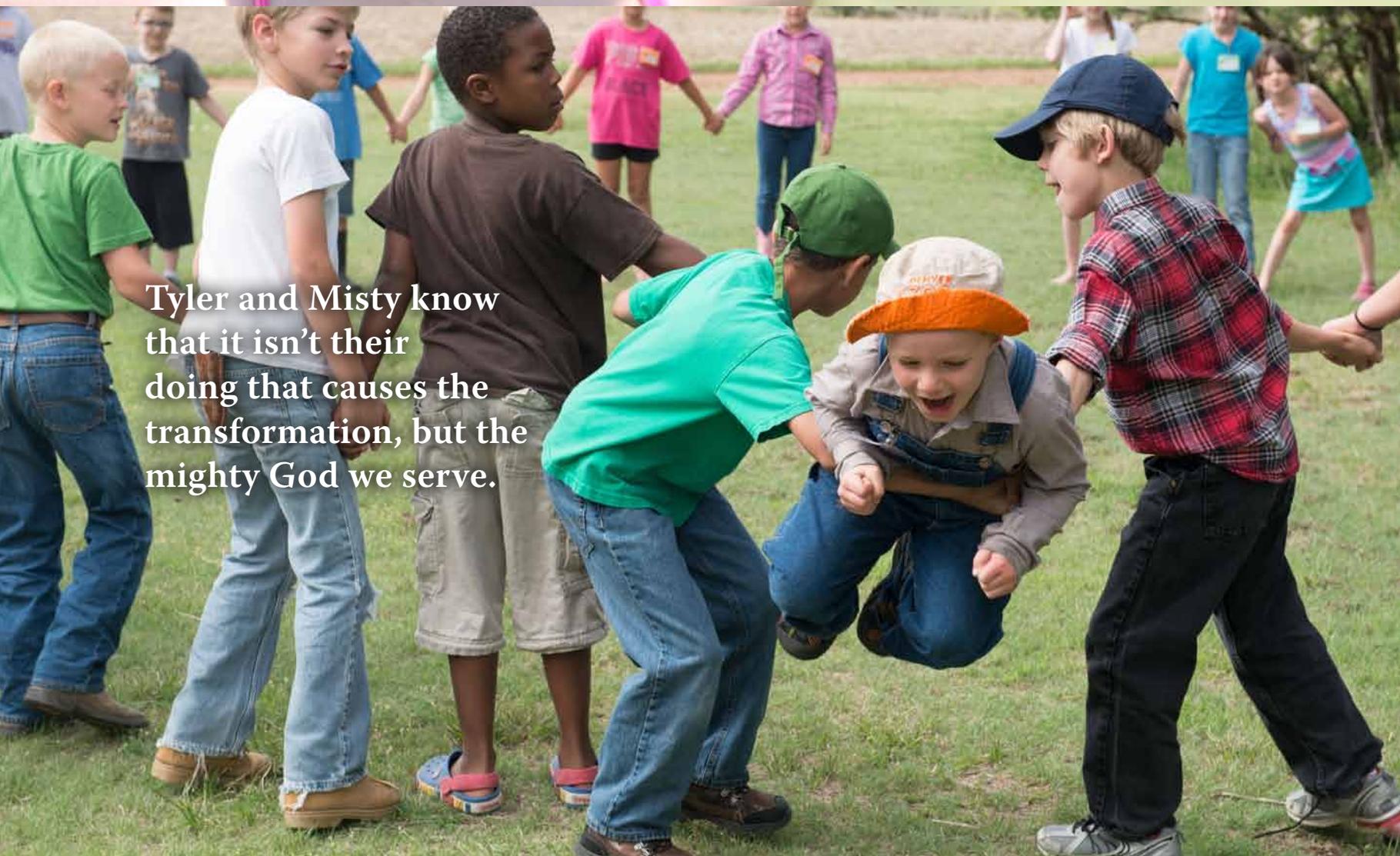
## Reaching Back

But it gets even better. When Tyler and Misty are able to 'Reach the Youngest,' the youngest reach back!



*“Kids who were campers come back later as counselors, and teach the kids and do devotions. It goes from us teaching them, to us teaching them to teach others!”*

*“That’s one of the goals we have, to make it so that they get so filled up with the word of God that they have a desire to tell others that as well.”*

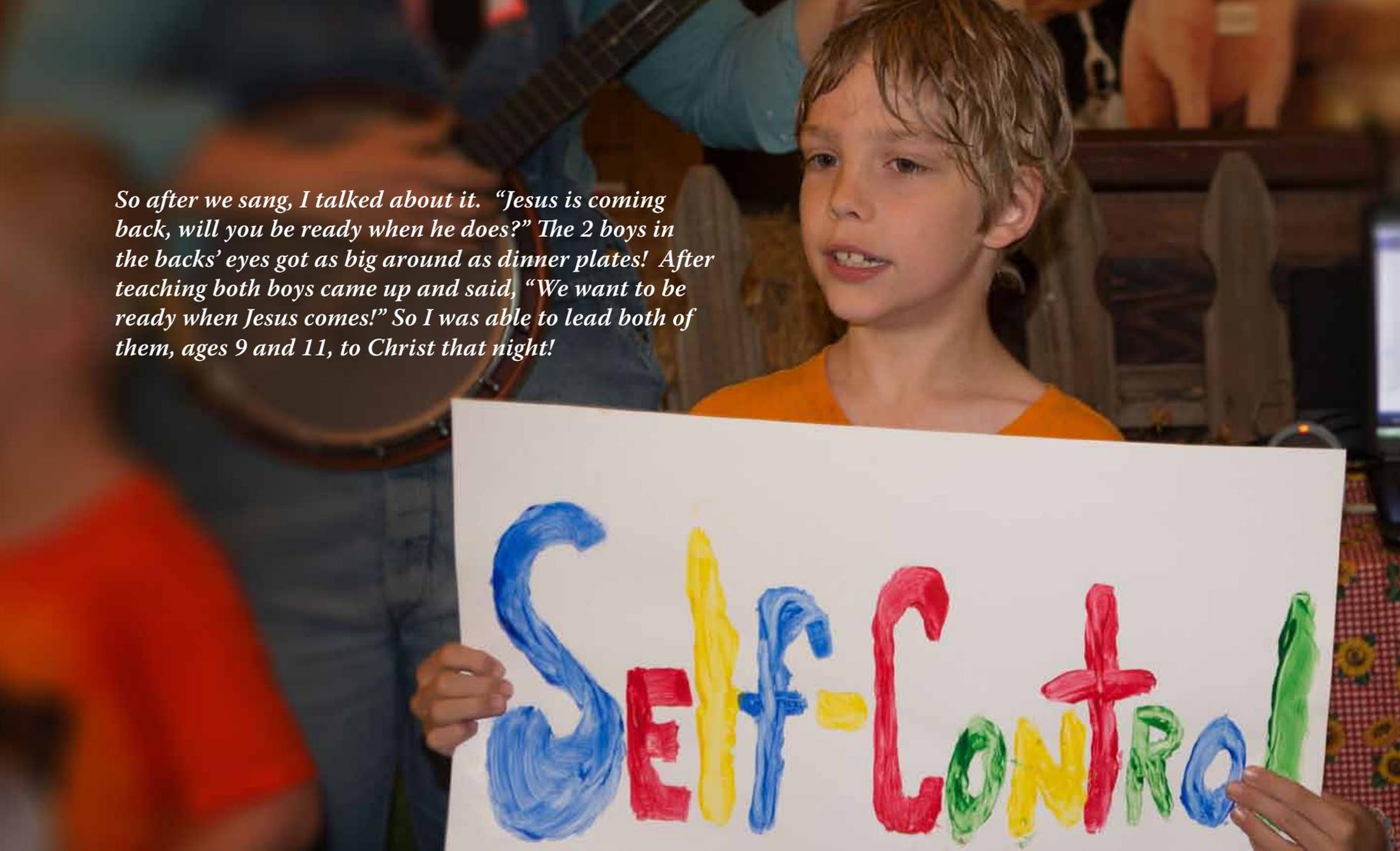


Tyler and Misty know that it isn't their doing that causes the transformation, but the mighty God we serve.



*One night at AWANA, I was frustrated, wondering if I was making any difference in the lives of the people in the community. I was visiting with our District Representatives, who reminded me, 'its usually about that time when God does something big.'*

*Two weeks later to the day, we were singing 'this little light of mine' at AWANA... the last line just stuck out to me for some reason... it says, "Let it shine until Jesus Comes, I'm going to let it shine."*



*So after we sang, I talked about it. "Jesus is coming back, will you be ready when he does?" The 2 boys in the backs' eyes got as big around as dinner plates! After teaching both boys came up and said, "We want to be ready when Jesus comes!" So I was able to lead both of them, ages 9 and 11, to Christ that night!*

*"It's God getting a hold of these kids and changing them. I can't do anything for them, I just point them to the One that can."*



## **A Small Town Can Change a Whole Nation**

**Did you know that an important Supreme Court Freedom of Speech case started in a Village Missions Community?**

**The kids in Steve and Darlene Fournier's NY community loved Good News Club, but were denied the right to hold it at the school like other clubs. When the school was unable to respond positively to their appeals, they teamed up with the Rutherford Foundation to do something about it.**

**Now the Good News Club and other religious clubs across the nation are allowed to meet in school facilities, and it all started with reaching the youth!**

**....And here's more good news – Steve and Darlene are still on great terms with the school!**



Using your smartphone, follow the QR Code to learn more about the Supreme Court Case.





**“Our prayer is that the kids would see that God loves them completely and totally, and that they would learn to trust Him. For every aspect of life.”**

**-Tyler and Misty Larson. Hunter, Kansas**

**Your partnership is invaluable. There is no greater cause than each person knowing the love Christ has for them. We couldn't do this without you.**

**Thank you for your support!**



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