

The next morning, we surveyed our camp, but not much got wet and what gear was left exposed was undamaged. It was just Gillette weather welcoming us to the area. As is usual for Camporees and especially international camporees, our conference leaders hold a meeting every morning at 7 AM to go over the days' events, provide safety updates, answer questions, but also, to check on how everyone's doing. Well, this particular morning, our leadership warned us that around 4 PM we were going to have a severe thunderstorm come through town, and that the evening program was cancelled. From the surprise storm the night before we knew that iPhone Weather apps were not going to be reliable. God had given our leaders the wisdom to reach out to the national weather service, which provided the camp with an expert on weather patterns. Leadership wanted us to know that this was not going to be a typical storm but that it was going to be one with 70MPH winds. Now I don't know about you but when I'm looking for new tents at REI or Amazon, most tents don't have a mile per hour rating on their wind protection, especially not for 70MPH. I brought this information back to camp and relayed it to our teachers. Our plan was to tie everything down well, securing the canopies with heavy gauge stakes, and tying down all the rain flies with every rope they have available. We prayed for God's protection and continued about the day as if nothing was wrong.

Teacher Jonathan and I would catch each other at times just in 1000yrd stares, our minds doing somersaults and wondering what we were going to do to keep the kids safe. We would keep busy with honors, pin trading and meeting people from the other side of the world. Every hour or so, pulling out our phones to check the weather. Clouds were on the forecast for the afternoon but we were carrying a mental cloud with us already. We met back at camp at 4pm as we saw the dark clouds finally rolling in to camp. In the morning, we made the decision to have a bag dinner and hunker down in our tents for the evening. I told everyone to use the restrooms as soon as they were ready to avoid using the bathrooms during a thunderstorm. Once we stowed the gear and supplies, I followed my own advice and headed for the porta-potty. This is when I noticed that the entire Lake Union was



evacuating camp to seek shelter at the honor barns. The curtains of rain were already visible in the sky but had not reached us yet. So, I made the decision to do the same; I ran back to camp and instructed everyone to grab their food, a chair, blanket and a water bottle because we were abandoning camp as well.



As we marched our way down to the barn, we saw someone waving their hands at the crowd. It was a coordinator repeating something over and over, and he was yelling: "This barn is full. Keep moving down, there is no more room here". The crowd quickly picked up the pace, and our group slowly started to get separated. In trying to look forward to seeing where to go next, I lost sight of Jonathan and Leo, as well as Pam. Tanya and Valerie were farther ahead of me, and Sofia was starting to panic and cry. I could hear the thunder rumbling louder every time, and the flashing of lighting was getting brighter and brighter. This is when my brain switched from pathfinder leader to dad mode. I squeezed my daughter's hand a bit tighter to ensure we wouldn't be separated in the crowd's rush. Looking down at her face, I can see the worry and tears making their way down her cheeks and mixing with the rain falling. "Keep a song in my heart" popped into my head, so out of nowhere I started to sing the Pathfinder Song to her. She joins me, both of our voices cracking as we make it down to each verse.

So many times, we talk about having faith in God and putting our trust in his hands, but theory and practice can sometimes feel so far apart. As a leader, and at this moment as a father, I must show my daughter how strong her father's faith is. She must be able to look at me and KNOW that she will be safe, protected, and cared for as long as she holds my hand and stays with me. This is the same faith I need to have in my Heavenly Father; that no matter how dark the clouds, how hard the wind blows he is watching over us. In Isaiah, the Lord promises, "For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you." Isaiah 41:13

People start piling in by the dozens. Cell phone service has died. Verizon brought in a temporary tower to help provide more coverage to the campers, but the number of people concentrated in one location has clearly overwhelmed the system, where not even a text can go through. In our haste to leave, we also forgot our two-way radios. We have no immediate way of

contacting each other. Eventually we were able to meet up with Tanya and Valerie next to one of the roll-up doors. In small moments of service, I found out that Jonathan and Leo were able to make it safely into the first barn, entering through one of the backside doors. Pam was able to get a ride on a golf cart to the backside of our building, but was temporarily separated from her gear as some kids volunteered to help her carry it in.

As more people filled up the building, some embraced in joy, finding each other after being separated like we were. Others were watching their dinners waiting for more instructions, and other larger clubs pulled out their guitars and started singing. They were praising the Lord even as the storm was raging outside and even as the metal doors were rattling. And after what felt like an eternity there was an eerie silence outside of the building. The doors weren't shaking anymore, and the wind had stopped blowing water underneath the threshold. Curiosity made someone open the door to survey the damage. To our surprise, we could see sunlight. The dark black clouds had passed over us, leaving huge openings in the sky to let the sun shine through. This is when the doors were rolled up and the entire building burst into roaring clapping and cheers from everyone. We all stepped outside and were blessed to witness not just one, but two FULL ARCH rainbows.

You will hear stories from other clubs and their experiences with Tuesday's storm. Stories about their courage, their fear, perhaps even of their rescue, but they will all tell you about how God kept his promise. You see, the camporee's theme this year was Believe The Promise. Never was it more evident that God is with us, than this very moment. We really don't have anything to fear, but sometimes we need to go through these kinds of storms in life to get shaken up, to be reminded of that fact. Depending on the source and interpretation, it is said there are 3 to 30 thousand promises to be found in the bible, and every single one is true. When we ask the Lord for his help in our lives, we must also honor the Lord by believing that we will receive his blessing. So let us walk this life with our heads high, holding on tightly to His hand, and with a song in our hearts claim at least this promise, "Do not fear, for I am with you".



God bless you church Family. And thank you for your prayers.

--Carlos Aguilar

"Church Family: Do you need yard work done? Concrete? Digging? Lawn work? Pruning? Clayton Olstad is looking needing and praying for work. He has his own tools. Please call him: 707-771-4978 Pricing is fair!"



JOB OPPORTUNITY AT THE NCC

The Northern California Conference Office is looking to fill the position of Accounts Receivable and Remittance Accountant. Interested, qualified individuals should go to the website at nccsda.com for more details and to submit an application.