

WEEK 46 • NOVEMBER 18, 2023

USA-Alaska: God's Gift of Light

Acts 13:47—“For so the Lord has commanded us: ‘I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.’”

Sammy sat on his bed watching the Alaskan twilight. A loud knock announced the arrival of his parents' drunken friends. Sammy's heart pounded as he covered his ears and tried to ignore the noise in the next room. It wasn't long before shouting erupted in the living room. Chairs scraped the floors, and fists hit heads. Sammy couldn't stand the noise. Then courage pumped through his body. Not tonight! Sammy thought. I'm getting out of here! Sammy grabbed his coat and boots and pushed through the crowd and out the door.

The cold air stung his cheeks as he pulled his coat around him and walked down the dirt road. Where can I go? he wondered. Down the road he saw a house with the porch light on. He recognized the house as the home of the new Bible workers. He had heard that the couple opened their home for kids to come to play games and listen to Bible stories. The sound of children's laughter floated in the air.

Sammy wondered whether he should stop or keep walking. He slowly made his way to the door, knocked, and stepped back, ready to run if necessary. The door opened, and a smiling woman invited him in.

Sammy stepped inside and sat down on a blanket with another boy. As he listened to the story, Sam realized that here was a different way of life where he didn't have to be afraid. He listened as the story of the wise men unfolded. Later, as he walked back home, he realized that, like the wise men who had followed a bright star and found the Messiah, tonight he had followed the bright porchlight and had found a safe place where he could be just a kid.

People living in Arctic Alaska have some of the highest drug and alcohol abuse and suicide rates in the United States. Sammy is one of many young people whose lives have been changed by the Bible workers ministering in the remote villages of the arctic. God has called the Arctic Mission staff to shine the light of Jesus in a dark and challenging world.

Part of our Promise offerings regularly support the ministry of caring for the children of Alaska by the workers who seek to reach them for Jesus there and in similar ministries around the world. (Remote native villages are in a region of Alaska that is isolated and cannot be reached by road or ferry.) Tandis Perkins is the director of development for Arctic Mission Adventure at the Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, United States.

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