

The Climbing Way

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Chapters



Climbing For Christ Philippines in action: handing out Bibles, top left; trekking through jungle-laden mountains, and enjoying fellowship, right.



Members need to take active role

By Gary Fallesen, President, Climbing For Christ

"Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."
– Ecclesiastes 4:12

The goal of the local chapter is to equip the saints and provide fellowship. We hope that the local chapter will develop a sense of community for Climbing For Christ members who are, by nature, separated by miles and walks of life. We may have different types of jobs and backgrounds, but we are unified in the body of Christ.

We currently have chapters in California (NorCal), Chicago, Colorado (Front Range), Maryland (Mid-Atlantic), Minnesota, New York (Adirondack Mountains and Western New York), Pennsylvania, Washington (Cascade), Indonesia (JEJAK), the Philippines, and Tanzania (Kilimanjaro). More chapters may be in the offing. These chapters are volunteer-driven. They will only be as strong and vital as our members make them.

"When we get together as a local chapter, we are not just representing that chapter or Climbing For Christ international, we are representing Christ and Christians everywhere," says Isaac Will, a member of our Board of Directors and the coordinator of the Minnesota Chapter.

"I heard it said once that 'we need to wear Christ as we climb.' People are inevitably going to notice if you are wearing the latest Mountain Hardwear or Marmot clothing, but the thing we want them to notice most is the joy we have from Christ's salvation. Even though our backs are weighed down by heavy packs, our souls are freed from the bondage of sin because we have been forgiven."

Coordinators like Isaac Will are called to oversee each chapter under the direction of Climbing For Christ staff. We encourage creativity and allow a good measure of flexibility to organize chapter events according to the

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geographic area, culture, and personality of members involved. For instance, an evangelistic climb to a Muslim village in West Java, Indonesia by JEJAK is not something that could be replicated in Minnesota. But both of those chapters (JEJAK, led by Max Christopher Tilukay and Budi Yuwono, and Minnesota, under the leadership of Isaac Will) are capable of doing prayer walks and hosting Family Ministry events.

There is a great diversity of events offered. From “Take a Kid Climbing Day” to prayer hikes and overnight spiritual retreats to climbing outings and fellowship dinners. But events are only good if members take advantage of them.

To paraphrase:

- “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if a person claims C4C membership, but has no deed?” (James 2:14)
- “Membership by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (James 2:17).
- “As the body without the spirit is dead, so membership without participation is dead.” (James 2:26)

Charleton Churchill recognized this from afar. He saw what was being offered in other parts of the Climbing For Christ world and yearned for the same opportunities closer to his home. He and Lucas Huey, two brothers in Christ who had never met, both stepped up to volunteer to lead the NorCal Chapter.

A local chapter “gives those who share the same interests in the outside, adventurous world an opportunity to use their abilities, gifts, and passions to further the Kingdom of God in a purposeful, strategic, and organized way through a community of believers.”

It is outreach with a capital C-4-C. It is outreach that can spread from our backyard to the more remote places on the planet. We seek to fulfill Acts 1:8 (“And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere — in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”).

Mission presentations by chapter members who go on Evangelic Expeditions are another way to gather the locals and invite others to learn more about what it truly means to be climbing for Christ.

Keith Schultz, the coordinator of the Washington Cascades Chapter, has been encouraged by the stories of missions to remote places. “I have been inspired to act on my own responsibilities as a Christian and apply what I have been given to helping others,” Schultz says.

Nineteen percent of those who answered our first membership survey in June said they became a member of Climbing For Christ because they were looking for Christian climbing partners. (The Nos. 1 and 2 answers were to support a ministry you believe in with 32 percent and to serve people living in mountainous areas with 30 percent.) If you joined to find a climbing partner, what better place than at a chapter gathering?

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What chapters have to offer

Opportunity for service: Because of family and job responsibilities or even physical limitations, not every member can serve on an Evangelic Expedition. But members can serve locally, alongside brothers and sisters tied into the same metaphorical rope. They can pray for, encourage, and experience vicariously the mission experience.

Outdoor fellowship with other tribesmen and women: Churches provide for the fellowship of believers, but there is something special about sharing time together in God’s creation with others who share a similar passion (be it hiking, peak-bagging, or rock climbing). Most churches do not offer outdoor ministry.

Combating CDD and providing valuable family time: Most opportunities to introduce young people to outdoor fun and overcome Creation Deficit Disorder will occur at the local level. Family Ministry is also most likely to happen through chapter events.

Summit Stewardship: Caring for His creation starts locally. Chapters can work on cleaning up trails and climbing areas in their own backyard.

Partners In Climb: Local climbs might give members a chance to introduce non-Christian climbing partners to the friends we call “brother” and “sister.”

Discipleship: While members can learn much by serving on missions and even reading stories in *The Climbing Way* and on our Web site, there will be additional opportunities to learn from one another that can only happen at the local level.

Fun(d)raising: We cannot complete the work He has for us without funding. Those for whom He has provided cannot give without knowing about this ministry. The local chapter allows word of mouth and a chance to spread the word about how Climbing For Christ delivers the Good News of Jesus to people who otherwise would not hear. We go where others cannot or will not — from the local trail and climbing area to the ends of the earth.



A View

The New Path

By Ace Concordia
 Coordinator of Climbing For Christ Philippines

Climbing For Christ Philippines celebrates its first anniversary as a chapter on Oct. 18, 2008. It all began with the Climbing For Christ (C4C) Web site. I was so blessed when I found on the Internet that an organization like this existed, and I signed up as a member. Then Climbing For Christ's founding president, Gary Fallesen, sent me an encouraging e-mail — one that had me take a path I never saw coming.

Gary asked me to help put together C4C Philippines. I was excited, but deep inside unsure of myself. Putting together a climbing chapter wasn't on my list of things to do in life. I had a good business going and I was involved in ministry. It was a pretty good path I was traveling on. Then God's detour sign showed up. Just as I was getting used to the trail my life was on, right before me were two paths. I could take the usual path and totally ignore the new one, and life would go on. Or I could explore the new path. Being the adventurous soul that I am, the choice was obvious. I took the new path.

But the decision to pioneer the Philippine chapter was more than an adventurer's whim. In my Christian walk I have come to understand that my existence is a constant search for purpose. You can never really say you've arrived, because only God knows when you have reached that point. I've also learned that to find purpose you have to be willing to be re-directed by God. To reach the peak of your life, you have to follow the Guide, listen to Him, and fully trust Him. When He says stop, you stop; when He says go, you move forward, and when He says we're taking a different route from here, He has a good reason. You never question the Guide; only He knows where you should go, what you should be doing, and where you should be. So with a nervous step I took the new path that led to C4C Philippines becoming a part of my life and ministry.

Since then, He's increased my friends in the climbing and adventure community. People like Pat, Andrea, Gerwin, Jason, Theres, and the rest of the Climbing For Christ members. Our membership in the Philippines has gone beyond 40. We have climbers signing up and communicating with us from all over the Philippines. I'm no longer just a casual climber or a weekend warrior. We have schedules that have picked up the pace of my climbing. We have made new connections with organizations that could help us in fulfilling our mission. We have been able to visit churches in the mountains, give out Bibles and speak with the people who live there. We have been able to share the Gospel with fellow climbers. When God's favor follows you, you know you're on the right path.

But more than these events and accomplishments, when I became part of Climbing For Christ the most significant part of this new path was the way God has been changing me. On a recent survey climb on the mountains of Benguet, the length and difficulty of the terrain, plus having to cross numerous hazardous cliff-side trails, made me more worrisome and fearful than usual. This is when I realized what God was doing. He was showing me that there is still room for me to grow my faith, and to trust in Him. When I came into contact with the people of the mountains I saw a side of ministry I had never seen before. I was moved with new feelings of compassion. I became more thankful for the life I live. All these new experiences and revelations have made me come to understand the purpose of Climbing For Christ in my life. God is using Climbing For Christ to help me grow personally in my Christian journey. Before we can bring change to the people in the mountains, there has to be change in us.

I thank God for the new path He has shown me. I thank Him for the wisdom to have chosen to walk in this direction. I cannot see what plans God has for C4C Philippines in the future. But I pray that through C4C Philippines we may be able to raise up a new breed of Christian missionary — one who is equipped with legs that would walk to the farthest mountains; eyes that search for the lost; hands that would serve those in need, and a heart that desires to share the love of Jesus Christ. I praise God for this new path in my life that is Climbing For Christ, because it has given new meaning to my ministry, and has brought me one step closer to living a life of purpose. †

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People carrying charcoal to sell, above. The remains of the church in Soliette, right, after Tropical Storm Hanna.



Sick Haiti needs a Doctor

By Gary Fallesen

“Jesus said the healthy don’t need medical care, but the ill need medical care,” says Miguel Rubén Guante, Climbing For Christ’s missionary to Haiti. “All of Haiti needs help, but we must choose the emergency to help.”

God sent us to help the people in the mountains in southeastern Haiti, specifically to the village of Gentilhomme and now to some of the neighboring villages in the Chaîne de la Selle.

Haiti is said to be a Catholic country. But it is also said that daily life there moves to the rhythm of spirit religion. The beat of the voodoo drum is often synonymous with the heartbeats of those caught in Satan’s wicked lie.

“It is not easy to change the mind of the people,” Miguel says.

Haiti has been a slave to spirit religion since supposedly freeing itself from France through a bloody revolution in 1804. Today, spirit religion still lords over communities with voodoo priests calling on the spirits that will guide their villages.

We call on the Holy Spirit and follow the direction of our Guide, Jesus Christ.

“We can’t see God face to face,” Miguel says, “but if we are doing as Matthew 25:35-45 (tells us), I think we are doing the correct things.”

The passage of Scripture that Miguel is referring to speaks about us serving “the least of these.” Jesus told His followers: “For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me.”



Seedling Bank (or Food Nursery) to be used to help farmers grow better crops.

This is what we do.

God has sent us to help the people of Haiti’s mountains with physical needs. From providing food to the hungry to assisting farmers with crops, as we are doing with our Food Bank and Seedling Bank projects. From teaching about sanitation in a place where there are no toilets to developing a water system that will provide easier access to water to drink and for irrigation. From teaching children in a place that never before had a school to teaching pastors and church leaders that there is One True God, and voodoo is the work of Satan.

Mission: Haiti is ongoing. It is 24/7. The budget for the work He has given us in Haiti will be in excess of \$50,000 for 2008 by time this year is done. Climbing For Christ needs prayer and financial support.

In December, another short-term mission team will go to Gentilhomme and Malasi for two weeks to share the love of Christ with the people living there. We are going to take a doctor, but, more importantly, we are going to bring them the Great Physician.

“The glory of God is when we are doing His will,” Miguel says. “Is not that we don’t want to help the people who are living in the cities. No! Only we choose who are the needy” that God has sent us to help in the mountains.

We believe that revival in Haiti will begin in those mountains. The people living there will turn from spirit religion and worship Jesus Christ — and Jesus alone. This is the only way Haiti can be saved from its misery and despair, from its poverty and violence. †

In December, Gary Fallesen will be returning to Haiti for the fifth time since God first took Climbing For Christ there in June 2005.

“Healthy people don’t need a doctor — sick people do.”

— Jesus in Matthew 9:12, Mark 2:17, and Luke 5:31

His accomplishments

What God has done through Climbing For Christ in Haiti:

- Built a church in Gentilhomme.
- Provided a school for the first time for about 100 children in Gentilhomme.
- Built 20 benches for the church and for the school that meets in the church.
- Paying two teachers in the Gentilhomme school.
- Many people now have a Creole Bible in Gentilhomme and neighboring villages.
- Rescued 14-year-old Gilbert from certain death after he broke his leg and was left untreated. After this, many people are going to the hospital instead of the voodoo doctors. In this case, Climbing for Christ is opening the eyes of the people in Gentilhomme and other villages to see God as their Provider.
- Fixed the roads in the area.
- Prepared teachers to educate the children.
- Established a monthly seminary to prepare pastors and church leaders to do the Lord's work.
- Taught the people of Gentilhomme and neighboring villages about sanitation.
- Surveyed water to develop a system that will provide more accessible water for drinking and farming.
- Helped the new school in Malasi.
- Established communication between the villages and Climbing For Christ to provide emergency relief and aid.
- Paying for "health insurance" at the clinic in Jimani, Dominican Republic, enabling anyone who needs medical attention to receive it.
- Provided transportation to work in villages in the mountains of southeastern Haiti, including Gentilhomme, Malasi, and Thoman.
- Started a Food Bank that fed more than 800 hungry people.
- Started a Seedling Bank (or Food Nursery) program to assist 90 farmers in Gentilhomme and Malasi.

– Miguel Rubén Guante, *Climbing For Christ missionary to Haiti*

To support Mission: Haiti, send your tax-deductible gift to Climbing For Christ, P.O. Box 16290, Rochester, N.Y. 14616-0290

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But we're more than a climbing partner service.

Isaac Will says chapters "give a local face to an international organization."

In Minnesota, he says, "It has allowed the local members to get to know each other and support one another as we journey through the daily adventure called life. Even though we do not have mountains in Minnesota, we all have mountains in our lives and having the opportunity to get to know other C4C members has been like getting new climbing partners for the every day life, not just climbing." †

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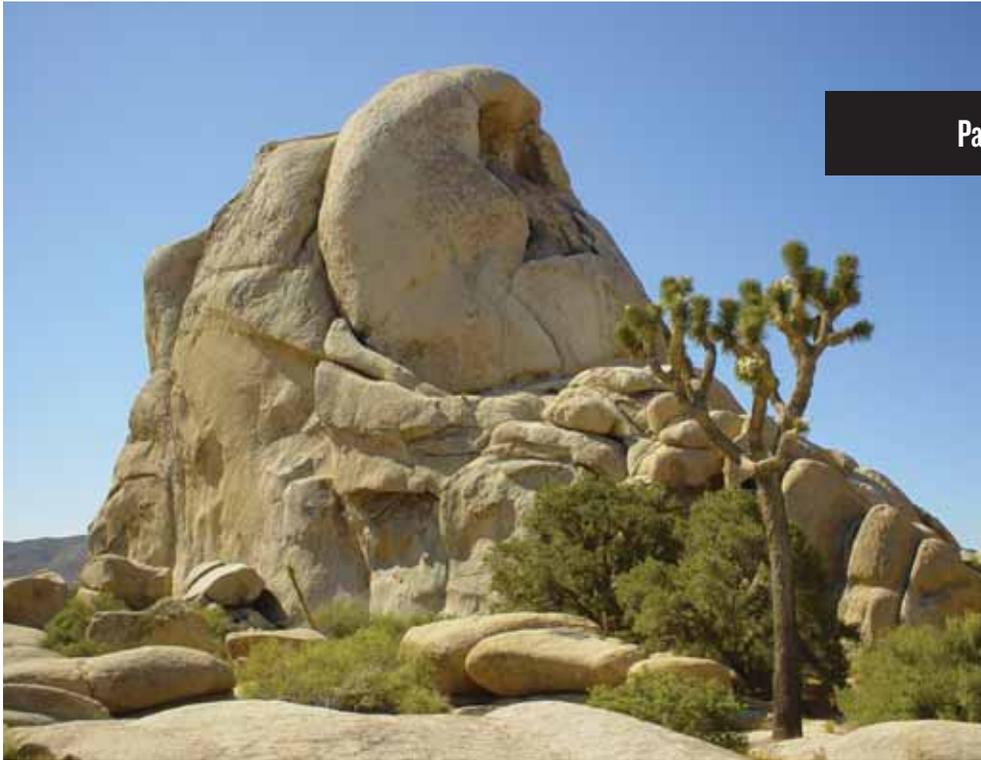
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Help Wanted: Interested in starting a chapter? Contact us via email at info@ClimbingForChrist.org. Some chapters (such as the Adirondacks and JEJAK) have started where there were many members and a leader was found. Other chapters (such as Minnesota and the Philippines) started when a leader emerged and began recruiting members. Either way works, if God blesses it.



Partners In Climb

Intersection Rock at
Joshua Tree National Park.
(Photo by Irving Quam)

Joshua Tree: Pretty as a picture

By Gary Fallesen

The late Todd Skinner and I were talking about how we picked climbs. We shared a common eye for making up a to-do list: photography. You see something you like and the climb starts to come into focus. Often it begins with a photo in a book or magazine in a shop or gallery.

When *Climbing* magazine's April issue showed up in my mailbox, the Gallery caught my attention. "High-Desert Spring" offered five pages of photos of Joshua Tree.

J-Tree is one of the few national parks that I haven't been to that remains a desired destination. Maybe you feel the same way. Or maybe you've been to this sprawling playground just a two-hour drive from Los Angeles.

"I think as a climbing spot, it goes right up there with all my favorite spots," says Craig DeMartino, a Climbing For Christ member from Loveland, Colo., who became the first amputee to climb El Capitan in less than a day in 2005. "It's a huge park (more than 800,000 acres) so you could climb there a loong time and not repeat routes."

Backpacker magazine referred to J-Tree as being "renowned for its sport climbing and festive campgrounds." With its namesake yuccas — called "Joshua"

Wonderland of Rocks.
Craig DeMartino
climbing above
the Indian Cove
Campground. (Photo
by Irving Quam)

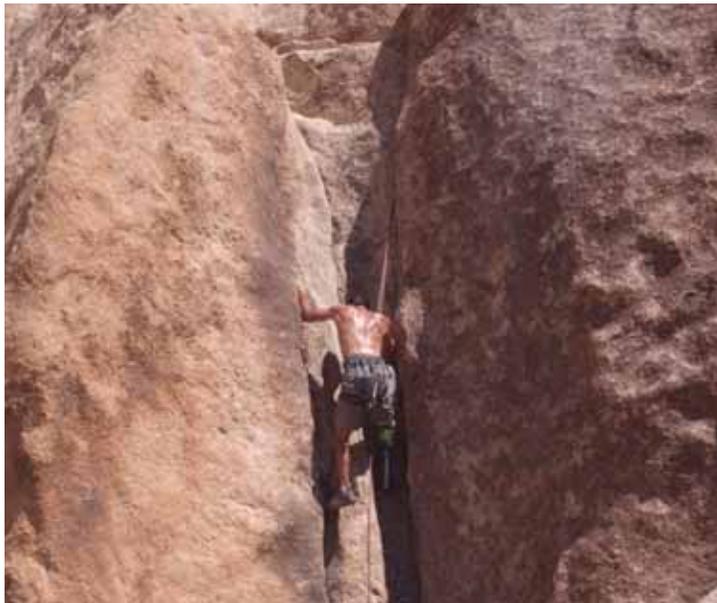
after the Biblical figure by, of all people, Mormon immigrants going West — this is a park that seems a natural destination for a Partners In Climb trip.

It is a mix of great climbing, awesome spring wildflowers (from the large, cream-colored blooms of the Joshua trees in late February to desert plants that bloom as late as June), and the local equivalent of Yosemite's leg-

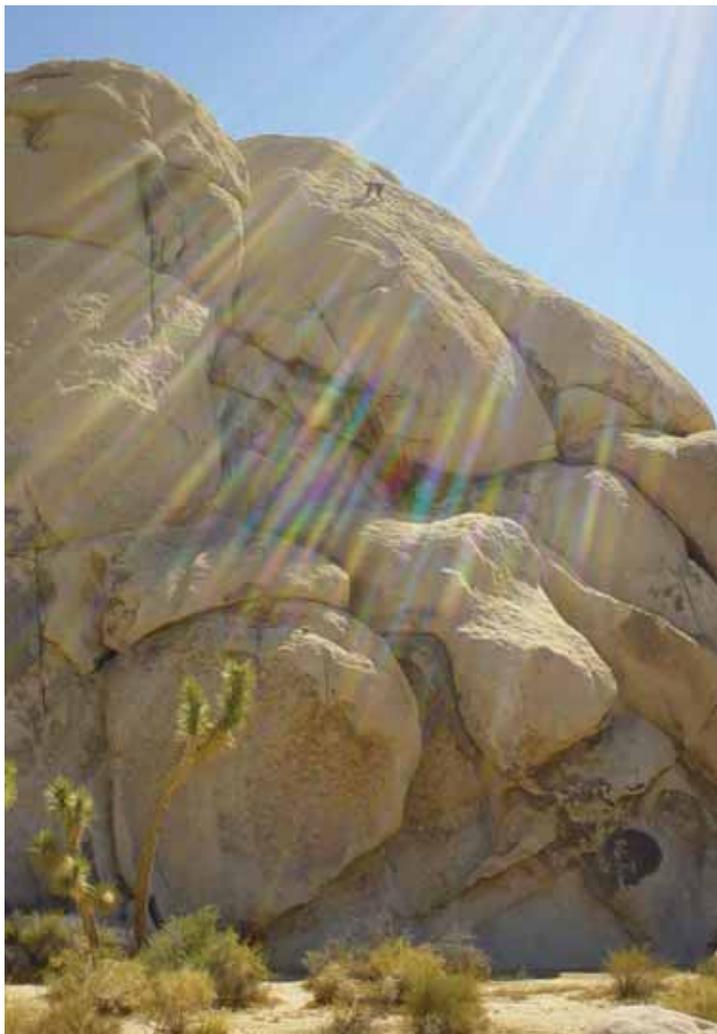


endary Camp 4. It's a great place to invite a climbing partner to go hang out for a week. That's what we'll be doing Feb. 16-22, 2009.

Climbing For Christ members are encouraged to convince a partner to join us for a week of sport climbing, bouldering, and hiking. It can be a Christian or a non-Christian partner. It'll be Gospel Lite as we seek to share our love for climbing and each other — the genuine love of Jesus — rather than beating people over the head with Bibles. We'll be about belaying and spotting, not thumping.✚



Climbing For Christ member Craig DeMartino of Loveland, Colo. working the Intersection. (Photo by Pastor Ed Blonski)



Heavenly light shines on Intersection Rock. (Photo by Irving Quam).

J-Tree climbing

Dates: Feb. 16-22, 2009.

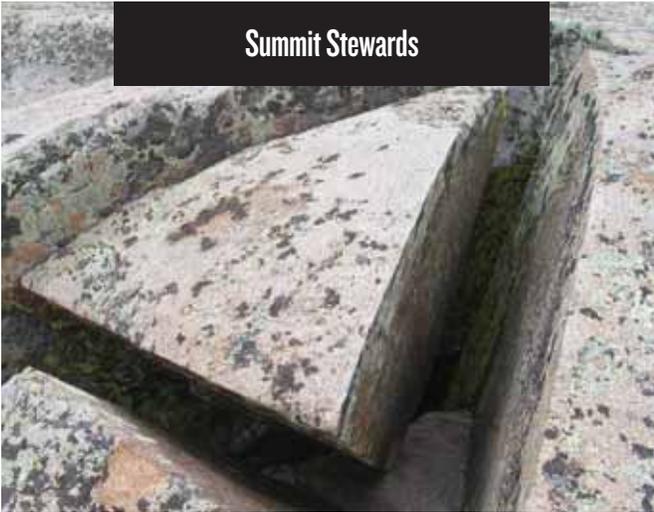
What: Climbing, bouldering, and hiking. The National Park Service says on its Web site, “Joshua Tree welcomes climbers and bouldering enthusiasts from around the world.” Those are words we don’t always hear or read. At J-Tree, there are more than 8,000 routes on more than 400 different formations. There are also numerous desert trails and “for peakbaggers, the park has 10 mountains greater than 5,000 feet (1,524 meters) in elevation.” There’s something for everyone, including those who want to stop and smell the wildflowers.

Ratings: “The routes are shorter, but what they lack in length, they make up for in quality,” says Climbing For Christ member Craig DeMartino. “The granite is rough and abrades you pretty bad, but the routes follow perfect splitters and unlike Veedauwoo (Wyoming), they don’t end in off-width. The bolts are a bit spread out — and that can be a problem — but I felt like when you need them they’re there. The gear routes are great, and take good stuff from RP’s (tiny nuts) to the big stuff. The boulders were ‘thuggy’ (requiring brute strength) with lots of sloping handholds with technical feet. Not my forte, but, hey, you got to learn somewhere.”

Fees: The park charges \$15 for a seven-day vehicle permit and \$5 for a seven-day entry permit for each individual. There are nine campgrounds — three of which offer group sites accommodating 10 to 60 people. Members choosing to attend this outing may want to stay with the larger group or on their own. Camping fees vary by campground.

Climb on: Do you want to join us for this trip? E-mail info@ClimbingForChrist.org. Each climber will be responsible for his or her own transportation, food and gear. We’ll meet at the park at a designated location and see where the Spirit leads.

FYI: To learn more about J-Tree, visit www.nps.gov/jotr/index.htm



Jim Doenges hid in this cleft rock in Rocky Mountain National Park to seek shelter during a wind-whipped rain squall. As the hymn says: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me; Let me hide myself in Thee." (Photo by Jim Doenges)

Rock of Ages

By Jim Doenges

What adjectives come to mind when you stand before a favorite boulder, crag, cliff, or big wall? How might you describe the rock before you? Words like solid, immovable, unshakable, steadfast, and everlasting come to mind. Those are words that also describe just a few of the attributes of God.

If you enjoy climbing, perhaps these verses hold special meaning to you:

"He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand."
(Psalm 40:2)

"I call as my heart grows faint, lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For you are my refuge, a strong tower against the foe." (Psalm 61:2-3)

It should be no surprise that He is often described as the Rock in the Bible. The words the Apostle Paul wrote to the early church in Corinth describe the fellowship of believers in every chapter of Climbing For Christ around the world today:

"They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ."
(1 Corinthians 10:3-4)

Our Lord is not only The Rock, He is the Creator who formed the three basic types of rock: igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic.

- **Igneous rocks:** God formed these from the solidification of molten rock material. Igneous rocks like granite arise by the consolidation of molten magma at high temperatures and great pressures below the earth's surface. Slow cooling allows the large mineral crystals in granite to form. The smaller crystals of basalt and rhyolite form when rapid cooling and solidification occur at or above the Earth's surface. El Capitan, the big wall in Yosemite National Park is the largest monolith of granite in the world. Veedauwoo in

southern Wyoming and Joshua Tree National Park in southern California also have granite to climb. Many climbing destinations are volcanoes made of igneous rock: Rainier in Washington, Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Elbrus in Russia, Orizaba in Mexico, and Chimborazo in Ecuador.

- **Sedimentary rocks:** God formed these in layers as the result of moderate pressure on accumulated sediments. Sedimentary rocks include sandstone, limestone, dolomite, and conglomerate. Mountains made primarily of sedimentary rocks include the Catskills of New York and the Blue Mountains of Australia.
- **Metamorphic rocks:** God formed these from parent rock (either igneous or sedimentary) under intense heat, pressure, and/or chemical processes, usually at depths beneath the earth's surface. These rocks include many of the older rocks in the world and include mica schist, quartzite, and gneiss. The banded layers within gneiss, usually distorted and bent, indicate its sedimentary origins. Mountain ranges made mostly of metamorphic rock include the coastal mountains of British Columbia and the Appalachian Mountains of the U.S.

As mentioned above, our Lord is referred to as a Rock throughout the Bible. He is the One we need to keep at the center of our lives. As Jesus taught in Matthew 7:24, "a wise man... built his house on the rock." His Word needs to be written on our hearts. In his book, *Strengthening Your Grip*, Charles Swindoll wrote:

"A firm grip is crucial, whether scaling a mountain or climbing the craggy cliffs of the spiritual life. Our survival depends on how well we hang on — and what we hang on to. There are some, however, that are slipping. They are losing their grip on what the Bible has to say.... In our 'anything goes' society, our hold on the Rock needs to be stronger than ever...."



A typical off-width crack in the wonderful granite rock at Veedauwoo in Wyoming. (Photo by Jim Doenges)

Amy Carmichael was known as a missionary rather than a climber. After hearing Hudson Taylor speak, she was inspired to serve in India for 45 years and authored many books about her work for the Lord. Consider this poem she wrote, and how our Lord was at the center of her life:

*Make me to be Thy happy mountaineer;
Oh God, most high.
My climbing soul would welcome the austere;
Oh crucify
On rock or scree, ice-cliff or field of snow,
The softness that would sink to things below.
Thou art my Guide, where Thy sure feet have trod
Shall mine be set;
Thy lightest word, my law of life, O God,
lest I forget,
And slip and fall, teach me to do Thy will;
Thy mountaineer upon Thy holy hill.*

Climb on. Jesus is your Belayer, and your Rock. †



Mountaineering

A fool for Mount Fuji

By Joe Costello

A weather station is located on the summit of 12,388-foot Fuji, overlooking the mountain's unclimbable North Face.

Chapter 4, Verse 7 of Paul's letter to the Galatians: "So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."

"... no longer ..."

These two words kept ringing through my head as we hiked.

My friend and I were climbing Mount Fuji in Japan, following the original Yoshida Guchi Trail. Our plan was to climb up to 8.5 Station, rest until two hours before sunrise, and complete the climb to the top of Fuji-san. We would then walk around the crater and climb down to 5th Station.

We were currently stuck in traffic on the final ascent before the top, where the observation area sat awaiting the rising sun. LED flashlights and winter jackets dominated the trail, and the sound was a mix of heavy breathing and clanging portable oxygen tanks. The climbing was orderly with little shoving or passing, like most of the Japanese culture I had experienced.

More than 500 years ago, pilgrims prayed at the Fuji Sengen Shrine and began the climb up their sacred mountain. Originally, the climb was performed by monks to appease the active volcano. Fuji has now been dormant since 1708. Many others climbed for religious reasons, specifically as a spiritual discipline or form of asceticism.

Today, many Japanese make it a goal to climb Fuji-san once during their lifetimes. A common Japanese proverb says: "You are a fool to never climb Fuji-san, and a bigger fool to climb more than once."

I had a good idea why I was climbing Fuji. As George Mallory once said, "Because it's there." However, why was the path I followed at 2:30 a.m. on a Wednesday morning packed three lines across as far as I could see up and down the last 300 vertical feet of this mountain? I could tell by the backpacks and gear that for most of the people around me, this was their one and only climb. So, what was the reason for all this traffic? Did duty and obligation grip these people this hard?

To understand this, you must understand the people and what they follow. There are two major religious traditions in Japan: Shinto and Buddhism.

Shinto means the way of the gods. It is the native religion of Japan. Shintoists worship many gods, called kami, which are found in all parts of nature, including the mountains. Shinto also involves ancestor worship. State Shinto was a government-established religion for about 80 years, but was abolished after World War II when the emperor declared he was not divine.

Joe Costello, left, and his friend Richard Roncal in the darkness on Mount Fuji.

Buddhism was brought to Japan from India. It has a more elaborate set of beliefs than Shinto, and it offers a more complicated view of humanity, the gods, and life and death. Generally, Buddhists believe that a person can obtain perfect peace and happiness by leading a life of virtue and wisdom.

Buddhism stresses the unimportance of worldly things. Within Buddhism, Zen emphasizes a close relationship between a master and his disciples. Their belief is also that present and future Buddhas are able to save people through grace and compassion. However, Zen has developed distinctive practices that are designed to lead to a state of spiritual enlightenment called satori, which can come suddenly or through a long process of self-discipline, meditation, and instruction.

Many Japanese people say they aren't devout worshipers and do not have strong religious beliefs. However, nearly everyone in Japanese society engages in some religious practices or rituals. Older homes in Japan can be seen with shrines built on the property to ward off evil spirits. Many people visit Shinto shrines to make offerings to the gods. In return, they may ask the gods for favors, such as the safe birth of a child, success on examinations, or good health. Japanese people typically invite Shinto priests to preside at weddings and to offer blessings for the New Year or for the construction of new buildings. Many Japanese turn to Buddhist priests to preside at funerals and other occasions when they commemorate the dead.

The Japanese people live in a culture with a strict code of ritual and order. Although aspects of western life have



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For more information on Climbing For Christ, go online at: www.ClimbingForChrist.org

WARNING! Activities described in this publication and on ClimbingForChrist.org carry a significant risk of personal injury or death. Do not participate in mountaineering, rock climbing, ice climbing, bouldering, and hiking and trekking unless you are an expert, have sought and obtained qualified professional instruction or guidance, are knowledgeable about the risks involved, and are willing to assume personal responsibility for all risks associated with these activities.

Climbing For Christ

Our purpose is to take the Gospel to those visiting or living in mountainous areas of the world where other missionaries cannot or will not go.

Mission Statement

Members of Climbing For Christ agree that we are called to:

- Bring praise, honor and glory to God — the Creator of all things, including the mountains we love — and to our Redeemer, His beloved Son.
- Inspire believers to achieve greater spiritual and physical heights in this world.
- Introduce the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, to those living in or visiting mountainous areas who don't know Him personally in a new, exciting and everlasting way.

To join Climbing For Christ, visit www.climbingforchrist.org/Default.aspx?tabid=146

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THE CLIMBING WAY

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You can go, too

God couldn't make it any clearer to believers. He says our job is simply "Go!"

Climbing For Christ is going, with Jesus pointing the way. He's making it possible for us to reach out with His help to people in high places. He is taking us where other missionaries will not or cannot go.

Even if you're not a skilled mountaineer, or can't physically join us on an Evangelic Expedition, you can go on the adventure. How? By praying and giving.

Your financial gift to Climbing For Christ makes you an active member of His mission team and an imitator of Christ's humility:

"... in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:3-5)

It's about having a servant's heart and being a cheerful giver. Your tax-deductible gift is a faith commitment to the Lord. It can be a monthly pledge, an annual offering, or a one-time sharing of your blessings. Please use the enclosed envelope to join us in bringing the Gospel to the world's mountain people.

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FAMILY MINISTRY, from page 12

South Africa minister Andrew Murray wrote in his classic book *With Christ in the School of Prayer*: “The eye is receptive to light, the ear to sound. The person who truly wants to worship God — to find, know, possess, and enjoy God — must be in harmony with Him and must have the capacity for receiving Him.”

How do we do this?

Again from Richard Foster: “We begin praying by first quieting our fleshly activity and listening to the silent thunder of the Lord of hosts. . . . Listening to the Lord is the first thing, the second thing, and the third thing necessary for successful intercession. Soren Kierkegaard once observed: ‘A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end he realized that prayer is listening.’”

We often are not good at listening. We often are not good at quieting ourselves and being still.

That’s why maintaining an effective and consistent prayer life can be so difficult. What’s the first thing that goes when you get busy? Probably quiet time, devotion time, prayer time.

Martin Luther said, “I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.”

John Hyde, a missionary to India who became known as “Praying Hyde,” raised up scores of native workers through his impassioned prayers. Let me share a story about Praying Hyde to demonstrate his life:

He awoke one morning with one of his worst headaches; so painful he could not lift his head off the pillow. Yet he looked up to our Father in heaven and thanked Him for the love that had permitted that headache. He had been awakened to serve the Lord another day. “How,” we might ask, “was it physically possible for him to serve that day?”



Sign of autumn:
fallen leaves.

MOUNTAINEERING, from page 9

started popping up in Japanese culture, and many have been embraced by the younger generations, the Japanese culture is still very different.

The Japanese seem to embrace new technologies yet also desire to preserve their historic and distinct culture. People will often say, “We Japanese” to insinuate that all Japanese think and act the same. But it is fascinating to see the individuality — not just the commonality — that resides within each Japanese person, young and old.

So, in modern Japan, there exists a culture that is recovering from a long recession and clamoring for new technologies all while being dominated by religions that require rituals and self-denial. No wonder God has put the Far East on the hearts of His followers!

The people of Japan need to know that NO LONGER do they have to be slaves to ritual sacrifice and self-denial to



Don Busse, right, with his family (clockwise: daughter Anna, niece Hayley Fallesen, son Nick, and wife Nancy) praying during walk in Michigan in August.

Listen: Some of those working with him carried him and his bed to a shady place and then went to do his preaching. Praying Hyde had introduced those men to Jesus, but their wives did not know the Lord. Those women heard that he was ill and went to see him. He spoke to them about Christ. The Spirit filled them and they confessed He was Lord. John Hyde saw why the headache had been sent. He was enabled to thank God then with understanding. He always declared this experience was a valuable lesson to him and enabled him to thank God “for all things” “at all times.”

John Hyde didn’t just pray — he breathed prayer.

That is our hope for you: that you will breathe in the air He created for you and that you will breathe prayer. Breathe His desires, His love, His will for your life. Listen. Quiet yourself as you walk. Commune — not with nature, but with the One who created nature.

Pray on. †

attain a higher state of being. They do not need to climb Mount Fuji out of a sense of duty or obligation, but rather because it’s there. They can do it simply for the love of it.

God has come to earth in the person of Jesus Christ to set us free from bondage, and to make people of faith heirs to the promises of Abraham. Those redeemed by the blood of Christ can stand before the throne of God and claim victory in Jesus! Praise be to God Almighty!

To quote again from Paul: “Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (Galatians 1:3-5) †

Joe Costello of Rochester, N.Y., has been a member of Climbing For Christ since February 2008.



Family Ministry

“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray ...’”
– Luke 11:1 (NIV)

Chris, left, and Myrna Owens reflect on His creation during a Climbing For Christ prayer walk last September in New York’s Letchworth State Park.

Take a prayer hike

By Gary Fallesen

“The point of prayer is not to get answers from God, but to have perfect and complete oneness with Him.”

– Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

What better place to seek that complete oneness with God than in His big backyard? By taking a prayer walk with the Creator in His creation we can draw nearer to Him.

Jesus often hiked up mountainsides to be alone with the Father.

Prayer hikes provide opportunities to practice spiritual disciplines such as prayer and meditation; foster an awareness of, an appreciation for, and stewardship of God’s creation; and allow us to have a mountaintop experience — even if we aren’t in the mountains.

I have led prayer walks in parks in Western New York and southern Michigan. Elevation change was not the order of the day in either case. Elevating our awareness of our Father’s presence was the goal. It was not about vertical gain in a physical sense, but vertical gain on the spiritual level.

Instruction

Richard Foster, in his book *Celebration of Discipline*, stated: “In prayer, real prayer, we begin to think God’s thoughts after Him: to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves, to will the things He wills.”

It is our hope that you will improve on these three areas. That His desires will be your desires. That the things He loves (you, your neighbor, His beautiful creation) will be the things you love. That His will be done in and through you.

Continued on page 11

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