

## Forget Me Not Ministries Outreach Summary:

Hello, my name is Job Hale. My wife Bethany and I are church planting missionaries in Napakiak, Alaska. I've been working in the village since 2011, and Bethany joined me when we married in 2020. The population in Napakiak is 300 people - 300 souls who desperately need the love of Christ. The church we are planting will be called the Armory of God Baptist Church, so named because the church building is the community's old National Guard Armory headquarters. Our desire is that this church be a lighthouse amongst the people, eventually led by a qualified Native Alaskan pastor and deacons. The Yukon-Kuskokwim region is made up of primarily Central Yup'ik Eskimos, and is the most remote and unreached in Alaska - there are only two other churches in this whole area of fifty-six villages. The people are very open to the gospel and ready for the truth to be spoken into their lives - it is a field truly white unto harvest but the laborers are few.

The long-term goal of our ministry is to plant independent Baptist churches in as many area villages as possible and turn them over to qualified Native pastors. For this we will need fellow-laborers - people who are led by the Lord to come and join us in these church-planting efforts. We would love to partner with others who are willing to be used of God in this way, and we're happy to provide as much support and resources as possible to assist those who get involved.

Our current project (2023) is that of adding onto the building that we are living in / using for a church. This rear addition is for permanent living quarters for our family, so that there's more room at the front for church functions.

We also have a goal of putting at least one KJV Bible in every house within the 56 villages around us. Two and a half villages have already been completed, and we estimate that we will need 15,000 more KJV Bibles to finish the distribution.

My wife and I are both private pilots and we have a four-seater Cessna 182 airplane that the Lord provided for us, which in bush Alaska is like a pickup truck. With no roads between villages, the only way to get to the villages in this area is by air, or sometimes by boat in the summer. The plane provides transportation as we do ministry work, including helping missionaries and laymen in our area get to the villages and settled in when they first come out. One example is my wife's sister and brother-in-law, Israel and Rebecca Warren. They live in a village about 100 miles away from us called St Marys, where they started an independent Baptist church. As the Lord allows we go over there to help the church with various things, fly their family in and out as needed, or simply for fellowship - ministry life in rural Alaska can be difficult at times and getting together with others who know the challenges is very encouraging.

In 2013 the Lord directed us to start a potato garden in Napakiak to help the villagers with agriculture learning and to keep an in-road there to teach them the Gospel. This is something we plan to continue in the years to come.

In bush Alaska everyone lives a subsistence lifestyle - there are many different food-gathering activities depending on the season. For example: moose hunting, bird hunting (ptarmigan, grouse, geese, many kinds of duck), berry picking, fishing for salmon by gill net or rod and reel during summer, ice fishing (called manaq'ing) in the winter; and then preserving all this food - packaging and freezing meat or making smoked dry strips from fish, etc. It's a big part of life and being able to help others with these things is a means of sharing Christ with them. We usually proxy hunt for several Napakiak elders each winter, and take villagers along on these hunts to build relationships.

Here's a little bit of our backstory:

Shortly after I got saved at age 14, the Lord put a burden on my heart for the Alaska Native people. Through the next several years, I took every opportunity to reach out and minister the gospel to anyone I could. I often organized outreach groups, even at a young age - street preaching, handing out gospel tracts, or whatever thing that the Lord wanted. In this, I was seeking to fulfill the call that the Lord had for me. But I did not find fulfillment, because the Lord was calling me to very specific ministry that I didn't yet know at that time.

I've been in Alaska since 1998, when my father moved our family here. The Lord prepared me for village ministry by the way I was raised in a primitive, simple manner in the wilderness of New Mexico's Sangre de Cristo Mountains. In 2016 the Lord led me to move from Palmer, Alaska where I had lived for the past several years, to Bethel, Alaska. I had been doing Bible studies and VBS in the nearby village of Napakiak since May of 2011 (when I first went out there for a construction job), and felt the Lord's will that I continue this work. The reason I moved to Bethel then and not to Napakiak is because I was single at that time and it was not advisable for me to live in the village as an unmarried man. Instead, I lived in Bethel and started a construction company to support myself while traveling to Napakiak every week to do a discipleship Bible study with the believers that I had baptized in 2016. I joined the local Baptist church in Bethel and the pastor there provided oversight in establishing the Napakiak ministry.

In 2018 the village of Napakiak gave me an old building that was going to fall into the river because of bank erosion problems. We moved this building uptown and placed it on a piece of property that was given to us on a 35-year renewable lease for one dollar per year, and in 2019 I began renovating the interior.

December 2018 was when I met Bethany McGraw. Bethany is the youngest daughter of Joel McGraw, who pastored Crestview Independent Baptist Church - now our sending church - from 1994 until 2023 when he retired. Saved at the age of 8, in her teen years Bethany felt a strong desire to become a first responder in her community. After pursuing this for several years, she realized in the fall of 2018 that God had closed that door and had other plans for her. What those plans were she didn't know yet, but she was determined to live for the Lord. She booked a trip to visit her sister in St Marys, Alaska so that she could see what Alaska is like in the winter (she had been to the state twice already during summer). She went thinking that she wouldn't like it but to her surprise, ended up falling in love with the snow and the village pace of life. I spent Christmas that year with the Warrens (who by that time were like family to me, as I had been some help to them when they first moved out in 2016) and the weather turned bad, making it so that I couldn't fly my plane back home as I had intended. Bethany came in on a commercial flight that evening - God worked it out for us to meet! She and I were able to get to know each other a bit while in St Marys, and three months later I went down to Florida (having previously been invited by her brother-in-law) and I asked her father's permission to begin a courtship with her. Receiving his blessing, Bethany and I began writing snail mail letters back and forth as our main form of communication, and I travelled down every other month for a visit. Well I'm not trying make this really long... we are very blessed by how we did our relationship and all the ways God worked for us. Eight months after we started courting, I asked Bethany to marry me, and she said yes!

We were married March 20, 2020, and Bethany moved from Crestview, Florida to Alaska to join in with me in the ministry. Summer of 2021 we were blessed to move from Bethel to Napakiak and officially start our full-time work establishing a church in this village. The Native Tribe of Napakiak gave us a letter of approval, officially allowing us to live there, since non-Natives cannot reside in a village unless they've received permission from the local tribal council. This was a miracle that the Lord worked on our behalf.

Now we both know that we are in the center of God's will for us, doing exactly what he wants us to do. Honestly, we could not be happier with where we're at!

Thank you so much for reading and may God bless you... please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions about coming to help with a project or event, joining the ministry, pledging support, or just to say hi! Our contact information can be found in the "Contact Us" tab on this website.

In Christ,

Job Hale