

The Hickinbotham Journey

Merry Christmas!

Greetings, loved ones & friends!

We now enter the season of snow... or at least we should be! Instead, we've been soaking up unexpected 60-degree days and reflecting on the people who make this season meaningful to us: you. As we write, we're thinking of each of you and hoping this letter meets you in a season of encouragement, health, and hope. We're grateful for the way God has connected our lives with yours and for the chance to share a small window into what this year has held.

Our last Hickinbotham Journey update was in August, and somehow the months have flown by. As fall turned into winter, the kids have really found their rhythm with school.

Luca is in kindergarten and is, unsurprisingly, just being Luca. He's making lots of friends, is adored by the older kids, and attends a small public Montessori school with fewer than 20 students total. His classroom is a K–2 mix, and he especially loves learning letters and math.

Zara has truly come out of her shell this year, and it's been such a joy to watch her confidence grow. First grade suits her well, and her class is pen pals with Aunt Audrey Hickinbotham's 1st grade class at Mansfield Christian School in Ohio! Zara's making great friends, losing teeth at an impressive rate, and also loves math.

The holiday season brings a mix of emotions. We miss family and friends back in Ohio, and the kids feel it especially when cousins celebrate birthdays or special moments without them. At the same time, they are building deep friendships here in Montana and growing in confidence and independence. It's been sweet to watch them put down roots while still holding their people close in their hearts.

At the end of November, we were able to travel back to Ohio to celebrate Thanksgiving with family. It was especially meaningful as it was our first holiday back since we moved to Montana, and Mr. Alex's first Thanksgiving without work responsibilities! Sharing the holiday with both sides of the family, along with an evening of friends and games, was a true gift and a highlight of the season.

There have been several meaningful milestones worth celebrating as we head into this season. This fall, Mr. Alex sat for his licensing examination and is now an Official Worker with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. This affirms his calling and role in vocational ministry and allows him to serve more fully within the denomination through leadership, preaching, and ministry development; something we're deeply grateful for.

Mrs. Alex has continued offering family photography sessions for friends and new clients through word of mouth, and finally admitted this fall that she truly missed doing it more than she realized. With that clarity, she's begun laying the groundwork for a fuller relaunch in 2026. She's also started volunteering at our church, helping with social media, an enjoyable way to serve and stay creatively engaged.

Looking ahead, the next few months will be full. Mr. Alex will be traveling frequently for summer staff recruiting, building partnerships with churches, speaking engagements, conferences, and ongoing relationship development. At home, Luca will begin attending school four days a week instead of three, and the kids are slowly acquiring ski gear; an important rite of passage for Montana life! Winter also means plenty of tubing events at camp, which never fails to be a highlight for all of us.

As we turn the page, we're excited to share a bit more about what God has been building here at camp, both through the Ascend Campaign and the ministry that continues to unfold daily. Thank you for walking alongside us in this season.

PHOTOS

1. Luca took a tumble and Mr. Alex fixed him up and when asked if he felt like Lazarus he responded "Well I have absolutely no idea what he felt like..."
2. Zara's "Great Birthday Bake-Off" 7th birthday party with all the girls from her class.
3. Happy Thanksgiving!
4. A photo sent to Mrs. Alex that her friend snapped of her while she was capturing Harvest Market.
5. Mr. Alex sharing about camp at a church in Ohio this fall.





Looking Ahead at Camp

Since August, the upper area of camp has transformed in ways that still stop us in our tracks. The cabins are truly beginning to look like cabins, and the lake has been dug and is now being filled. Watching this space come to life has been so fun, and it continues to remind us of the care and vision behind every detail. We can't wait to share the finished project with you by the end of February. What excites us most isn't just the progress, it's imagining the people who will gather here. Maybe even yours! ?!?

This summer, we're hosting GO WEST Family Camp, July 19–25, with featured speaker John Stumbo, former C&MA National President. Family Camp is designed to give families space to rest, reconnect, laugh, worship, and grow together. We would genuinely love to see friends experience the refreshment, adventure, and encouragement packed into that week. If that sounds like something your family might enjoy, we'd love to tell you more.

How This Ministry Continues

Living and working at Yellowstone Alliance Adventures means we get to witness lives changed, families restored, and leaders formed, and we have the absolute privilege of being a part of it. At the same time, we're constantly reminded that none of this happens in isolation. This ministry is sustained by people who choose to partner with it through prayer and generosity.

Many have asked how support works for our family. When you give, your support goes directly to YAA's mission and operating budget—helping fund programs, equip staff, and steward this place God has entrusted to us.

Each year, we seek to raise \$20,000 through our personal support team, and we're deeply grateful for those who already give and pray faithfully. As we close out the year, we wanted to extend a heartfelt invitation: if you've ever considered partnering with us, through prayer or a financial gift, this season is a meaningful time to do so.

To give, you can scan the QR code to visit our personal donation page. Yellowstone Alliance Adventures is a registered nonprofit, and all gifts are tax-deductible.

We don't take this partnership lightly. Your generosity allows ministry to happen here every day, and we are deeply thankful for the ways you walk alongside us.

From our family to yours, thank you, and *Merry Christmas!*



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LUCA

Love zara

Have a blessed new year!
♥ Alex



PLAN A TRIP

Whether you sign up to join us at Go West Family Camp, or you are already planning a trip to YNP, please come visit us! We LOVE to host our friends and share camp with you!
Jan - March | Cosmic Tubing Hill Open
March 27th | Annual Fundraising Gala
July 19-25th | Go West Family camp

PHOTOS

1. Current progress for the Ascend Campaign cabin village & lake.
2. Splitting firewood for camp during a serve week.
3. Mimi came to visit at the end of October!
4. Fall photos of the kids with the Bridger Mountains behind.
5. Celebrating our 10th Annual Hickum-Something Christmas.
6. In May, Mrs. Alex put a bird feeder outside her kitchen window and FINALLY this fall a bird came and it's a beautiful Stellar's Jay! A highlight for her this fall!