

WKYC Welcomes Tyler Wunderlich as New Summer Session Director

“It comes back to the kids.”

When asked why he served more than two decades as Teen Week Director, Alan Bush never hesitated in his answer. For him, the kids were his purpose:

“How do I answer that but look at how many young people I’ve had go through camp in the times I’ve been associated with it... why do you do it and what is the purpose of it? It comes back to the kids. What better reason to know that you’re trying to be an influence to so many great, wonderful kids? I can name hundreds of kids that have meant the world to me who are continuing that lineage, that tradition.”

After 23 years of service as Teen Week Director and nearly 34 as a volunteer in some capacity at WKYC, Bush is stepping down from the Directorship. With his transition brings a familiar face to the role, and a new torchbearer of the Teen Week tradition: Tyler Wunderlich.

A life-long camper with 29 summers at WKYC in his repertoire, Tyler credits WKYC for so much of what he has in his life: “It’s the reason I’m literally here.” Tyler’s parents, George and Andrea Wunderlich, met at WKYC and continue to serve in a variety of Board and volunteer capacities. Tyler followed in his parents’ footsteps in more ways than one: not only has he served as a lifeguard, on the WKYC Board of Directors, on staff for Chip Palmer’s All-Ages Week, David Salisbury’s 8–10-Year-Old Week, Alan Bush’s Teen Week, and as the Teen Retreat Co-Director with Patrick Marble; he even met his wife Nancy there. Tyler dated Nancy during their high school and college years when Nancy’s parents, David and Joan Maclin, were Caretakers of the property, giving him a behind-the-scenes look at how the camp operates on a day-to-day basis.

“I think that camp is my favorite place in the world! It is the most effective and necessary ministry that we have available to us in Western KY. It’s my favorite way to do ministry and my favorite place to be with my favorite people. The best memories and the strongest relationships in my life are tied one way or another to church camp... It’s the reason I’m married. The reason I’m as strong a Christian as I am. I hope I get to be a part of sharing that experience with others,” reflected Wunderlich.

Like Bush, Wunderlich is committed to strengthening both the tradition of Teen Week, and the spiritual lives of the campers who attend:

“The tradition of Teen Week is very important to me. I believe it is such a good week. I believe Alan has done such a good job, and Gary Knuckles before him... the fact that we have people coming back to serve on staff as far back as we do means we’re doing something right. My continued goal is to make it even more of a ministry through the staff we’re bringing in. Ultimately, if I can give kids the experience I had at Teen Week, I will have been successful.”

Wunderlich operates by a set of core and unchanging values in his ministry work, and extends that to the WKYC sphere, including personal sacrifice and relationships. For Tyler, doing what

he can to make sure that people feel like they are having a meaningful experience and are benefitting from whatever is going on is paramount.

The Associate Minister for Northside Church of Christ in Mayfield, KY and a graduate of Freed-Hardeman University with a degree in Biblical studies, relational ministry is his primary objective: “Christianity was not intended to be done by yourself. The Lord gave us the church so that we would use it and be used by it and be a part of it. There is no better facilitation of that than church camp.”

In addition to cultivating an atmosphere that helps campers feel safe to develop and strengthen their spiritual life and social relationships, Wunderlich also plans to put into practice what he’s learned from Bush over the years. “I grew up with Alan as my youth minister. He was the director of this week. I have been able to watch and learn from him for a long time. I think there is an appreciation from me for what he has done for this camp and for me as an individual... I appreciate the learning I’ve received from him, and I am going to put that to use.”

For Wunderlich, being a Christian and enjoying the benefits of church and parachurch ministries like WKYC has given him a full life:

“I resent the idea that anything that is Christian has to be lesser. A Christian camp doesn’t have to be a lesser camp and a Christian friendship doesn’t have to be a lesser one just because it’s Christian. The world suggests if it’s Christian then it’s lesser, but I believe that in my life everything I’ve had Christ tied to is better. Christ doesn’t make things a sacrifice in life; he fulfills them and makes them MORE in life. I feel bad for my friends who didn’t have WKYC growing up and did whatever else with their lives. I believe I had a fuller life and an enriched summer and relationships compared to those outside of the church.”

Do you have questions about Teen Week or the WKYC experience? You can reach Tyler at youthociate@gmail.com or visit wkyc.org/dates-and-fees for additional information. Teen Week will take place June 18-24, 2023.