



Dear Family and Friends of the White Sulphur Springs EXSEL ministry,
Greetings from the beautiful Allegheny Mountains of Pennsylvania!



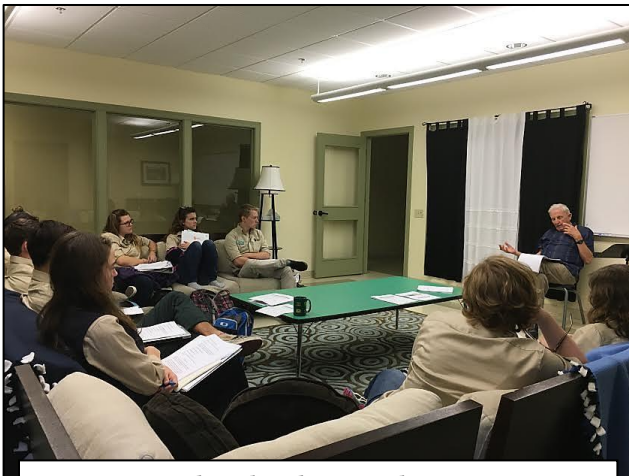
Thank you for your prayers and interest in the well-being of this year's amazing group of EXSEL interns! By God's amazing grace, we are having a great semester:

- **Experiencing** the goodness and presence of the Lord in this beautiful place and with all these interesting people,
- **Serving** diligently in various ways ranging from small tasks to major undertakings,
- **Leading** in various areas of this ministry.

Since the group arrived in late August, we have read and discussed the Gospel of John, Colossians, Philippians, James, I and II Peter, and Proverbs (we are currently in the middle of this book).

In the past seven weeks the EXSEL brothers and sisters have had the privilege of ministering to 18 groups plus several B&B guests for a total of 1,030 individuals. These folks come to White Sulphur Springs for a variety of reasons including: refreshment, renewal, restoration of families and marriages, healing after long stressful deployments and times of separation from loved ones, or simply just to enjoy the excellent food, fellowship, and environment. White Sulphur Springs is truly an amazing place that God has blessed.

Every day we are writing in our journals five things for which we are thankful and recording personal insights from our scripture reading. Thoughtful consideration of our studies is being expressed in our weekly Response Papers. The day usually begins well before 7:00 am and sometimes goes on until after 10:00 pm. Every week we have one day off to catch up on homework and laundry or to take a trip into town to run errands. Tuesdays we gather in the EXSEL classroom to study or read together and have group discussions. Many times, these Tuesdays involve a hike in the woods or up the mountain for a time of constructive solitude and silence to read, pray, write, and worship.



Major General Buckingham speaking to our group

Recently, we drove to *Sight & Sound Theater* in Lancaster, PA to hear Ray Vander Laan speak about the relevance of understanding scripture within the context of the culture in which it was first written. What a fascinating teacher!

Earlier, we had the privilege of learning from Major General (ret.) Clay Buckingham who shared his personal testimony and gave an inspiring lesson on holding fast to a Christ-centered worldview based in scripture.

On another occasion, Dr. Don Snider taught class and led a discussion on personal development and discipleship. Personal development is achieved through challenge, support (including resources and advice), variety (including a broad range of situations and demands), and assessment

(including constructive feedback, both formal and informal), as well as times of reflection and constructive solitude. White Sulphur Springs is the kind of setting that both requires and provides all such aspects of personal growth and development in Christ.



Stewards of the beauty of this lovely place for the glory of God and for the edification of all who visit!

We want to thank everyone who hosted the EXSEL interns for the progressive dinner earlier in the semester! Our thanks go out also to those friends of the ministry who have been hosting dinners and/or leading the weekly OCF Bible Studies! For you parents who have been praying and who have worked hard to give your son/daughter a firm foundation, our thanks go out to you! We and the entire ministry are benefitting from your diligence and faithfulness. For all the guests who have come to White Sulphur Springs and have interacted with the EXSEL interns and continue to pray for and be interested in their well-being, thank you!! For the volunteers who worked side-by-side with the interns and mentored them a few weeks ago, thank you!! For you Ministry Directors and spouses who are actively teaching and mentoring these young people in new areas of vocational and leadership experience, thank you!!

As you're praying, please keep your eyes and ears open for areas of need and open doors of opportunity for these young men and women for the remainder of this and next year. It is not too soon to be thinking of such things. At the rate they're going, their résumés will be rich. They will be valuable assets to any ministry or business or company that is looking for a responsible young person with good character, common sense, strong work ethic, enthusiasm, teachable spirit, and skills in a variety of areas. Also, please pray for the right choice of school and for scholarships for the interns who hope to attend college next year.

We survived our technology fast the first month of the semester! Actually, it wasn't at all like a restriction but more of an invitation to set aside social media and all the bombarding influences of the culture around us. It was worthwhile, and we believe this contributed greatly to the bonding and camaraderie we see in this group.



Outing to the historic Jean Bonnet Tavern



Interns planned a surprise birthday party for Rachel!

**“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” Romans 15:13**

Please keep these precious ones in your prayers:

**Andrew, Emma, Sarah, Eric
Isa, Emily, Andrew, Lucy, AnnaBeth, Rachel**

In the Steadfast Love and Faithfulness of Jesus Christ,
Jim & Claudia Marrs

