



Love Wins

Reflecting the glow of recovery from Starlight at Tamassee

By Jon Holland, CEO of Tamassee DAR School



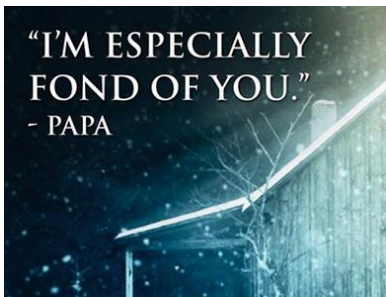
A few years ago, “Love Wins” bumper stickers were a fad. A simple black bumper sticker with those two words in bold, white font. I’ve never been a bumper sticker guy, but if I were, I’d pick that one. While love is relational not competitive, there is so much hate and death in our world, and I truly believe love can and will overcome its foes. And Love has a name.

When I share that Starlight at Tamassee is a faith-infused and Jesus-centered community, I get two responses. Some smile because they know the transforming power of Jesus’ love, and they rejoice his grace is offered to mothers and children in some of life’s darkest places. Others frown – maybe they may have experienced spiritual abuse, judgement, and rejection from those who claim Jesus’ name. Or maybe their worldview affirms all religions or no religion at all. But religion and institutions aren’t what we encourage. We offer a relationship with the God who is love.



We believe we are all God's beloved children, and the Triune God of love has the power to heal our deepest wounds and failures. We have experienced how a dynamic relationship with Father, Son, and Spirit frees us from shame, guilt, and fear. We know God's truth shatters the lies of our trauma and addiction. We have seen him restore broken relationships. We have lived inside a community of acceptance and accountability, of affection and consequences. We walk day by day in the power of the One who lives inside us to make us our true and best selves. We have enjoyed the transformation of healthy coping skills like two-way prayer, Scripture meditation, worship, communion, and friendship. Slowly over time, love heals us from the inside out.

The night before his murder, Jesus said these words to his apprentices. "I've loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. ... Love one another the way I loved you" (John 15:9-12, *The Message*). Breathtaking and beautiful! Jesus loves us the exact same way and with the exact same intensity of the Father's love for him. As William Paul Young wrote in *The Shack*, "God is especially fond of you!" When we live inside that love, then we are forgiven, healed, and restored. Love wins! Then we can love one another with fierce, tender, caring, compassionate, wise, generous love. As we live in relationships of true love, everything else falls into place. How could I know this love, and withhold it from others? From the mothers and children we serve? It simply must be shared.



At Starlight at Tamasee, we believe love is the most powerful force for change in the world. Love works miracles, and we work to see love win the hearts and lives of mothers and children in recovery. To learn more about Starlight, visit www.starlight.tdarschool.org, or contact us at 864-944-1390 or starlight@tdarschool.org. If your church or civic group is interested in a presentation on recovery, contact Jon Holland at jholland@tdarschool.org.