



December 7, 2021

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas! I am so thankful for all of you and the impact that you have had on this ministry. You are helping to bring hope to so many teens. Christmas is a fantastic time of year, but amid all the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season, let's not forget what Christmas is all about. Jesus coming to earth, so lives like yours, mine, and the many kids we work with could be changed.

This past year has continued to be tough on teens. A study of 3,300 high school students found that nearly 1/3 reported feeling unhappy or depressed in the last year and a half. Another study I read said one in three adolescents (31.9 percent) will meet the criteria for an anxiety disorder by the age of 18. This one scared me...from the CDC...during February 21-March 20, 2021, suspected suicide attempt Emergency Department visits were 50.6% higher among girls aged 12-17 than during the same period in 2019. More than one-quarter of those kids in that first study said they did not feel connected to teachers, classmates, and their school community. Now that may seem counterintuitive for a generation used to bonding with friends by texts, Tok-Tok, Snapchat, and Instagram, but way too many feel disconnected.

Now more than ever, teens need the connection of loving adults to come alongside them, get to know their story and connect them to God's story. This is why **I am so thankful for the prayers and support of so many of you** that allow our staff and volunteers the opportunity to minister to the kids we do.

I was so excited this past week as we led our treatment boys in the detention center through the Christmas Story and listened to and answered their questions. As we came to the end of the evening, we asked them for prayer requests, and almost all of them asked for prayer for their families, their attitudes, and the pain in their lives but even more impressive was listening to them pray for each other and pour their hearts out to God. It was a Holy moment, and we have been privileged to many of them. Many of you heard Bre share her story at our recent Concert for a Cause and were touched by her courage. You also got to listen to the secure girls worshiping through song. Moments like that remind me again of how transformative the power of God can be in a life.



We have been once again blessed to be back full-time in both of our alternative schools this year. After a year and a half of being out of the schools, it has been so good to be building those relationships again every week. The meals at Dakota High School have been going strong, and the program with the Moorhead Alternative School at Bethel Church on Fridays has been growing again. Each week we have young men and women hungry to get into God's word through Bible Studies at the juvenile detention center. Two chapel services run every Wednesday, one-on-ones happen five days a week, and when we can, staff pick up kids on Sunday to take them to church. God is so good and **YOU, through your prayers and support, help make that happen. Thank you.**

We lost a long-time staff member just before summer, and being short-staffed has been a stretch, but God has kept us and this ministry going strong. I am excited to tell you that we are walking through the process of hiring a replacement and possibly even more. December 1-3, we had a young man and his fiancé from South Carolina here for a final visit to see if this truly is a fit for both of us. The visit went

very well, and we are currently waiting for their answer. I continue to ask for your prayers and wisdom as we consider others as well. We are excited about what God is doing but also want the right people for this team to make the most significant impact, so we ask for your prayers and support.

When I think about all of you who help make the many aspects of this ministry happen, I am overwhelmed. We are blessed to have faithful partners like you who help us reach kids like Bre through your support and prayers. Who makes it possible to bring hot meals to kids who need them. Who makes it possible to go into the detention center every week and walk alongside kids whose only hope is Jesus and who help us get God's word into the hands of kids who are desperate for it. **Thank you, thank you, thank you!**



As this year comes to an end and we get ready to start a new one, I ask you to consider making a special year-end gift to Red River Youth for Christ. We cannot accomplish this fantastic task without your help. Your donations will help staff and volunteers continue to walk alongside kids and show up for them. Your generosity will provide safe places for students to ask their tough questions, get connected to God's story, and allows them to be radically loved. Your investment in their lives will pay off, not only today but can pay dividends for eternity. You can mail your gift in the enclosed envelope or give it online by going to [www.redriveryfc.com](http://www.redriveryfc.com) and clicking on the "Donate" link at the top of the page.

We are grateful for your dedication to sharing the true Gift of Christmas with this generation. As a partner in the ministries of RRYFC, you are a vital part of this ministry's success in reaching young people and their families. We hope that your Christmas season is a rich and meaningful celebration of the birth of our Savior.

On behalf of all of us here at Red River Youth for Christ and each student, we work with...**Thank you for your generosity.**

**Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

Greg Everett  
Executive Director

