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Winter Newsletter

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Winter 2023

STORIES

NOTES FROM THE JOURNEY...

Partnering with our community
to come alongside at-risk teens
to bring hope.



Creates opportunities
to reach youth in the
juvenile detention
center and schools in
the FM area.



NEW THIS YEAR:



More Info Inside

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Have you ever felt that there was a full-on assault to attack, discourage and bring you down? I was saying to someone the other day that God must have some big things in store for YFC because Satan is trying to do everything he can, to do just that.

For myself, it started on December 20th when we received news that my wife's father had suddenly passed away. Because of circumstances, I left on the morning of Christmas Eve and drove to Naples, Florida, to pick up her sister and bring her back to Fargo. 4000 miles in 4.5 days. I got home and left a day and a half later to visit my family in Winnipeg and got home on January 1st. The following day my mom was rushed to the hospital and spent two weeks there trying to get well, and that's just in my life. During that same time, Deb's stepfather passed away. Carmen's (Williams's wife) grandfather passed away. Danielle and Paige's dad was rushed to the hospital. It has been a crazy few weeks! But let me tell you something. Amid the storm, God is blowing us away.

This past week a young lady in detention gave her life to Jesus. As she described it, she felt a physical

longing and ache for Jesus in her heart. She is 14, and we have the privilege of discipling her in the center until June.

Deb will be starting as the primary staff person in the Moorhead Alternative School this semester, and they have flung the door open for her. They are open to far more than we can do at this time. It's crazy. This week we also start Alpha with them, and we are so excited. The number of kids keeps increasing each week, and we see so much potential with Deb in the school regularly.

This week we finally started our mentor program at Liberty Middle School. Last period of the day, five days per week. What an open-door God has provided.

Our new program with the Clips kids at the detention center started last week. The CLIPS program is the Center's transition program, and this will allow us to help kids as they transition back into the community. We are praying it will lead to us being able to develop our aftercare program. Tim heads this on Tuesdays. Every pod in the Detention Center is now covered by YFC weekly!

What an incredible God we serve! Please pray for the kids we work with and us. I believe that as God continues to work, the attacks will increase, and we want to be ready. I am more excited right now for YFC than I have ever been. I can't wait to see what God does next.

Finally, February 9th is Giving Hearts Day. You'll find more information inside, but during those 24 hours, friends of YFC will match your donations up to \$20,200. Our Goal is \$60,000. Please join us that day in giving to YFC and watching what God does to further His Kingdom in the lives of the teens we work with. We can not accomplish this without you!

Thank you for loving this ministry through your prayers and support. You are making an impact that will reverberate through eternity.



Greg Everett
Executive Director

YFC Frequently Used Terms

- Reading a story and don't understand a word? Here are a list of terms we frequently use and what we're referring to.
- **The Center, Detention, West Central, Detention Center, or JDC:** All terms are in reference to the West Central Regional Juvenile Center in Moorhead, MN. The center for teens 11-19 years old services 11 counties in MN and ND and we spend 5ish days a week there.
 - **CLIPS:** (Community Living Independent Program & Services) A program at the detention center for select youth transitioning out.
 - **Secure, Treatment, & Non-Secure:** All reference different pods or sections of West Central. Secure is lockup for kids, treatment is for those incarcerated and enrolled in the treatment program, and non-secure is for youth transitioning out, emergency foster placement, or a variety of other reasons.

Please Note: Youth names are changed for privacy purposes.

A Change in Posture

When Tianna* first started coming to the non-secure Bible study, she would act like she just woke up. She often put her head down on the table and closed her eyes, shake her head instead of answer aloud, and talk really slow. Often times she did just wake up from a nap as she uses sleep as an escape. Most of the time it was rare for her to make it through a full Bible study session as she would ask to leave. Lately she has been staying the full 45ish minutes (even to staff's surprise), sitting up, keeping her eyes open, answering questions, and even bringing her Bible and following along. It's been fun to see her start to open up. I cannot wait to see what conversational doors God will open next.~*Danielle Beyer*

So What's the Deal?

One of the things I looked forward to coming on staff with YFC is new ministry opportunities. After a couple of conversations between YFC and Detention Center staff, we were given the open door to start meeting with the residence in the CLIPS Program (Community Living Independent Program and Services). This is a transitional program for select residents coming out of the Detention Center (More about this in future letters).

To begin with I meet with the residents bringing in lunch on Tuesday afternoon. When I showed up for the first meeting, the residents were reluctant to come out and participate. After a few awkward minutes of silence one the older residents asked me, "so what's the deal, why are you here?" I told him that I was not a case worker or probation officer, I was someone that just wanted to be a cheerleader for them and wanted to be there to help and support them any way possible. I had no agenda other than wanting to be there. We shared a meal and great conversation and at the end of my time there was told that "they appreciated the meal and conversation, and they looked forward to the next meeting."

The second week was fantastic, the residents were already in the meeting area when I arrived and really opened up during the conversation time. Please be in prayer as I build trust and relationship with these young men and with staff at the Detention Center so we can find creative ways to be a part of their journey and better serve the Detention Center as well. ~*Tim Brown*



"When would be the best time to go swimming in the Sea of Galilee"

A girl asked, mentally planning her dream trip to Israel, wanting to be in all the places Jesus was.

The Opportunity Of Conversation

During free time at our Friday program at Bethel church there was a boy sitting by himself drawing in a sketch pad. I grabbed a coloring book and sat next to him which began a casual conversation. After showing me some of his sketches, he began to share some of his story. He had moved seven times in the past few years and explained how he didn't have many friends because of it. His dad is no longer in the picture and his stepdad has made no effort to connect with him. He shared how he struggles with anger, but is hoping to not be so angry anymore.

Sometimes I am amazed by how quickly kids are willing to share about their lives. Many of the students that attend our Friday program have no one they trust to share their concerns, fears, and struggles with. They don't have parents that take interest in what matters to them...their hobbies, dreams, and talents. Most do not believe they are even good enough to have dreams. We have been given such an opportunity to be a voice of encouragement, a listening ear, and a consistent presence in their lives. ~*Deb Napton*



"What kind of relationship does God want to have with His human creations?"

Genuinely asked a youth at the center during a church group.

Stay Connected

Email us at info@redriveryfc.com to be added to our Monthly E-News and Prayer Emails. Follow the blog on our website under Stories.

Our Mission

YFC radically loves and brings hope to teens by working together with the local church and other like-minded partners to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus who lead by their Godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the Word of God and prayer, passion for sharing the love of Christ and commitment to social involvement.

YFC provides a safe and friendly place to learn leadership skills, to think about important issues and to develop quality relationships with peers and with caring adults.

YFC's 5 Ministry Essentials:

-  WIDESPREAD PRAYER
-  FAITHFUL BIBLE TEACHING
-  LOVING RELATIONSHIPS
-  ADULTS WHO EMPOWER
-  COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

RRYFC Staff




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What Does that Mean?

Here are a list of popular words teens are using and how our teens explain them. We don't recommend using them, but hopefully this will help you better understand the teens in your life.

- **Rent Free:** (*Or lives in my head rent free*) Originally referring to resentment, it is now used more commonly as something you want to forget. Something that gets stuck in your head, captivating, or consuming. (*I.e. That video lives in my head rent free.*)
- **Gucci:** Generally an adjective meaning “fancy” or “very fashionable” or “great, awesome, cool.”
- **Nice Fit:** I like your outfit, it looks nice.
- **I’m Dead:** A phrase meaning something is so funny they died laughing. (*I.e. Did you hear what Ashley said? Hilarious! I’m Dead!*)
- **Ghosted:** To cut off all communication without explanation. Most often to happen with friends or significant others. Avoiding texts, phone calls, social media interactions, or in-person interactions with said person.

Concert for a Cause With Jonathan Traylor

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's night of worship, it was amazing! Thank you again to all of our sponsors, but especially our presenting sponsors Eid-Co Homes, Goldmark, Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home, and Life 97.9 for making this fundraiser possible. We are so thankful for you all!



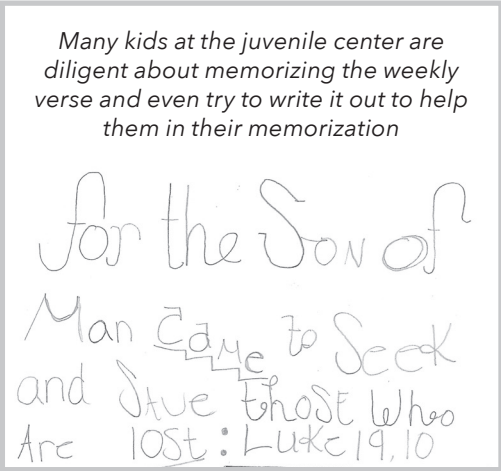
YFC Team with the Jonathan Traylor band at Concert For A Cause

Isn't He The Good Guy?

While leading a bible study on jealousy with some of the boys in a secure pod, we discussed the story of David and Bathsheba. While explaining David slept with another man’s wife, tried to hide her getting pregnant by having the husband sleep with her and had Uriah carry his own death letter to the command officers...One of the boys cut me off and mumbled out, “Wait, isn’t David like, known for being this really good guy?” I laughingly nodded my head yes then told them how David is referred to as “a man after God’s own heart” and how a few choices don’t define who you are as a person. After the study was over and we were about to play games, two of the boys ask if we can do a study on David (his whole life) because they can relate to the bad decisions, but not the rest of his life. ~William Lawyer

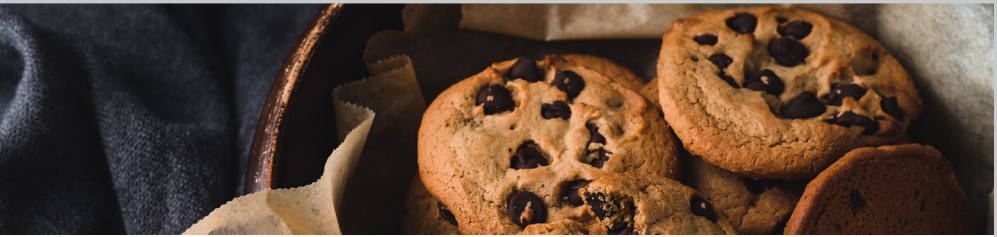
"Keep your prayers tight & your hopes high."

A word of encouragement overheard among youth at the juvenile center.



"Boi, you not invited next time, you talk to much."

One young man jokingly said to another after a church event where he asked lots of questions.



Practical Needs

Here are some practical things we frequently use. Are you able to help supply these items?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ○ Baked goods for Friday's program (Contact Deb) | ○ Art Supplies (artist pencils, paper, color pencils, acrylic paints, plastic table cloths, stickers, cardstock, yarn, plastic crochet hooks, yarn looms, glue, & tape) |
| ○ Paper products (Plates- 10 inch, bowls, napkins) | ○ Have questions? Give us a call at (701)237-6682 |
| ○ Cases of bottled water | |
| ○ Cases of juice boxes, bottled juice, or sports drink | |

A Struggle for Words

She was new and seemed like she wasn’t really paying attention. As our bible study time with the secure girls pod at the detention center was coming to a close, she quietly turned and said to me, “I’m going to be here for a while because I’m in treatment so... could you... I want... could you show me... I want this”. She struggled to get out the words as tears filled her eyes. She was pointing at a verse in her bible... John 3:16. I immediately knew what she was asking for... she wanted Jesus! Right as I was answering her, I heard her name called to leave for group therapy. I quickly asked her if she wanted to meet one on one to talk more and she agreed.

The next day I arrived at the detention center with a bible for her. I learned that she was an orphan and had been moved around in different foster placements. Her mom had died of an overdose when she was six years old and two years later, her dad died of cancer. She shared how her desire for a father figure had led her to do just about anything... with older men. As we sat in the visitor room, she shared how she had been angry at God and had wanted nothing to do with Him up until this point.

She knew she wanted Jesus, but wasn’t fully ready to invite Him into her life. I could visibly see the battle going on inside of her. “My heart physically aches as we talk about God”, she said pointing to her chest. I knew God was moving in her heart.

The following week we talked more in depth and I shared some verses in the bible with her about God knowing us. I knew God was working in her heart as she exclaimed, “I feel cleansed!”, after reading some of the verses. As she read Proverbs 31:25, her eyes lit up and she said to me, “I want to be like this”. When I asked her how she thought she might become a woman who is clothed with dignity and can laugh at the future, without hesitation she looked at me and replied, “Give my life to Jesus”. She paused and then expressed that she was ready to invite Jesus into her life! We prayed together and she joined the family of God. We will be meeting every Tuesday until she leaves the detention center in June... God is so good! ~Deb Napton

Opportunities at Moorhead ALC

I had the opportunity to meet with the teachers at Moorhead Area Learning Center last week. I was invited to share about what we are doing through our Friday program at Bethel Church with the students. The teachers’ faces lit up and excitement filled the room as we began to discuss ways we can partner together to have a positive impact on their students. One of the teachers mentioned serving the students breakfast at their school on Fridays. For some of the kids it is the only meal they will eat that day. Another teacher mentioned doing more events with students that are “sober and adult supervised”. She said that this was a great need in the students’ lives as they are not used to experiencing that. We are excited for this year and the ways that we can join together to provide for the physical, educational, and spiritual needs of these students. ~Deb Napton

Thank You Bethel Women's Group

The Tuesday morning women's Bible study group donated a cartload of snacks, paper goods, and craft supplies. We are so thankful for everyone who comes alongside this ministry providing for tangible needs. Thank you!





Giving Hearts Day

Help someone.

Your gift to Red River Youth for Christ on **Giving Hearts Day, Thursday, February 9th**, creates opportunities to reach youth in the juvenile detention center and schools in the FM area.

Would you please consider partnering with us and our community in reaching youth? You can go online to **givingheartsday.org** and choose **Red River Youth for Christ** to make your secure online donation. **You can either do this on Thursday, February 9th, or by scheduling a gift anytime between now and February 7th.** Checks dated and delivered by 5 PM on February 9th will also be accepted. The most exciting part, **friends of RRYFC will match your donation of \$10 or more up to \$20,200!**



New This Year: Red River YFC is offering lunch on Giving Hearts Day for a suggested donation of \$5. Stop by our office (2345 Meadow Ridge Pkwy, West Fargo) for a delicious smoked pulled pork lunch (includes bun, chips, beans, and a cookie) with our staff or take it to go for your whole team. Suggested donation \$5. Available 10:30 AM-1:30 PM or until sold out.

NEW THIS YEAR:



Introducing Deb

Hi all!

My name is Deb Napton. Two years ago, God began stirring in my heart a desire to go back into full time ministry. I was working in the interior design field and trusting that God would lead me to what He had for me next. I am newly married and my husband works as a middle school counselor in the Fargo area.

My husband had been sharing with me over the past couple years how broken and lost the students at his school are... and we had been praying for them together. One night a huge fight broke out where gun shots were fired that involved one of his students. I asked the women

in my bible study to pray for the students and one of them mentioned that I should connect with YFC to see if they could help. Little did I know that God would lead me to YFC to join their team!

I am so excited by how I see God working through our amazing team and this ministry. I am also looking forward to partnering with our community, schools, and ministry partners to reach teenagers for Jesus. He has opened door after door and the harvest is truly plentiful! God is answering prayers and changing lives and I am grateful to be a part of it all! ~Deb Napton

The Prayer Room

God works in ways we ourselves could have never thought of. After a long period of communication, planning, and waiting, we were finally able to start our mentor program at Liberty Middle School. On our first day, we were waiting for the kids to arrive when Will informed us that the room we were meeting in is the school's "Prayer Room." The one room in the entire school that they have us meeting in is the room where kids can go to pray. I literally got goosebumps as I thought about how the room had already been covered in prayer. It was something I had never even thought of, but God certainly had. ~Paige Rockensock

"I thought His name was Emanuel?"

One young person asked when we were reading through the Christmas story and naming Jesus.

A Halfway Open Door

I have begun meeting with a boy one-on-one in the detention center. The first time we met I just went in with nothing other than to try and get to know him better but also see what he was wanting to get out of our meetings. He was very upset I didn't have a Bible with me because he wanted to learn more about Jesus and this "whole religion thing." The next week I made sure to have a Bible and notepad and he lit up when he saw it. We decided we are going to read a chapter, school session, and unpack it to how it applies to our lives, and what we think the chapter is teaching us.

While reading the book of John, and he threw out "isn't he the guy who baptizes people?" As I'm nodding my head yes, before I can even say a word, he follows that with "I want to be baptized." In my heart I was almost taken back by that comment. So, I asked him what he thinks being baptized means. He said "well it forgives me of all my sins, and I want that." Pausing for a second, I told him that being baptized actually doesn't do anything. It's a public sign that you've accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior. I flipped to Romans and we read and unpacked Roman's 6:23 and 3:23. After reading those I asked him, "imagine Jesus is outside this door. He could kick it down if he wanted to, but He doesn't want that. He wants you to open the door and invite Him into your life. Where would you say you're at in that process? He quietly responded "I think it's about halfway open" I asked him why is it stuck in the middle? With a sad almost defeating look he says "because I don't feel good enough to be able to have Jesus come in." I looked at him and told him based on Roman's 6:23 and 3:23 none of us are good enough, and our sins have rewarded us hell. There is nothing that we can do to make Jesus not love us the exact same as he does before our mistakes. We will always make messes in our lives but what we can do differently is let Jesus clean up the mess for us, instead of trying to hide it. You could see a sigh of relief from him. As he was getting up to go back to his room, he said he was thankful for different ways to be able to hear the same story, so he could paint his own picture. ~William Lawyer



Dakota High School Christmas Lunch

Dakota HS students enjoying Christmas dinner



YFC Staff (Left to Right): Paige, William, Tim, Deb, & Sue serving Christmas dinner

