



Merry Christmas

&
HAPPY NEW YEAR

December 10, 2018

Dear Friends & Family,

It is hard to believe another year has come and gone! I have now lived in my little apartment in the windy city of Fargo North Dakota for three years and have been out of college for four years. Paige, has been my roommate for the last year and half, and I love living with her. We run different schedules and I hardly get to see her, but I love having her as a roommate when we happen to be home at the same time. I am also getting to know more people in the community and know my way around the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo area pretty well. Still not a fan of the wind, but it comes with the territory, and so we press on.



August marked a full year for me at Red River Youth for Christ, so now I am almost a year and a half in. I cannot believe how fast it has gone. Having a year of experience, I feel like I understand the workflow and seasonal changes. With office tasks, design and promotion, and events I spent a bit of time in the office. However, over the last year, I have spent an increasing amount of time in outreach. From serving lunch, to assisting with chapel services at the correctional facility, to board games at the local coffee shop, I get quite a variety of time with teens and I love it!

New this year, I have been going into the West Central Regional Juvenile Center with my coworker Mike. As a program, we have been in there two years Christmas Eve, and it will be one year for me in February. The Juvenile center has two floors, a 15 bed non-secure floor or shelter care, and a 32 bed secure floor. Shelter care is for emergency shelter, consequential programs, or evaluation and transition back into society, while the secure floor is for correctional residential programs. The facility services 13-18 year olds, but we have seen youth as young as 11. We are so blessed with the positive relationships built with youth, staff, and supervisors within the facility.



We run two chapel services every Sunday evening and have an open door for other activities as well. When I first began, I was a bit timid around the brick walls, heavy metal doors, cells, and groups of teens in matching uniforms. However, my anxieties quickly subsided as I grew to understand that the most frightening part of the whole experience was hearing the heartbreaking stories of these teens. A lot of them are great kids who have found themselves in a bit of trouble and are in need of some direction. I think one of the most exciting parts about chapel is that it is optional and we have overwhelming numbers attend. While some attend only for the fruit snacks, many listen intently and join in discussion. Being removed from the environments that got them into trouble in the first place often allows them time to evaluate their life. We

have the privilege to step in at these tough moments of their life and build relationships by listening to their stories, sharing our stories, and ultimately connecting them back to God's Story.



Diving deeper, one of the hardest moments since I have been on staff was the time I got a call from AJ. AJ is a girl who was new to the area, and I had been building a relationship with her over the summer. In October, our friendship hit a new level as I got a call from her requesting a ride to the local homeless shelter. I immediately went to pick her up and find out what was going on. As we were filling out paperwork at the shelter, I learned more about her story than the last several months of our friendship. After getting her settled, I went back to the office with tears in my eyes because I just dropped a teenager off at a homeless shelter. I knew that for that day, I had done everything I could. Our friendship continues to grow, and we remain in contact daily. She now lives with her Grandmother, is working on her GED, and has a job. While she says she believes in God, she is unsure exactly what she believes. I am excited to continue our friendship and continue to share the love of Christ with her.

AJ is just one of the many teens we work with experiencing difficult home lives. Many teens experience problems with abuse, neglect, abandonment, drugs, and alcohol. Would you please pray for our team and myself as we continue to befriend these teens, walk through life with them, and point them towards Christ? Please pray that God would continue to use us to impact the lives of teens for His Glory. Pray for open ears and eyes to God's love and forgiveness.

With the New Year right around the corner, many of us take time to reflect on previous years. Take a moment to think about where you are today. Would you be where you are at today without positive influences in your life? Many of us can say we can attribute those positive changes in our lives to people who cared about us while we were young or in later years. Your prayers and support allow us to be those positive influences for today's teens. Thank you for making this possible!

As we enter the Christmas Season, would you please consider supporting Red River Youth for Christ? Since we are a non-profit, we rely on partners like you to fund this ministry. Would you please prayerfully consider making a financial year-end gift and investing into the lives of teens? Gifts can be mailed in the enclosed envelope or you can give online by going to www.redriveryfc.com and clicking on the "Give to YFC" link at the top of the page. All donations are tax deductible and a receipt will be sent if you include your mailing address.

I am grateful for your prayers and support. On behalf of everyone here at Red River Youth for Christ and the students we work with, thank you!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Danielle Hill

