



MERRY
Christmas
— and —
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

December 10, 2018

Dear Friends & Family,

Greetings from Fargo North Dakota. It is crazy to reflect on how fast time goes. I have now lived in Fargo for 4 years and have been on staff with Red River Youth for Christ for almost two and a half years. The longer I am on staff the more I assure myself it will get easier. The thing about working in ministry though is in some ways it never does. How does your heart not break while driving a teen to a homeless shelter, or listening to a youth in the local detention center share their story? How do you not get frustrated with a teen that constantly self-destructs and cannot take steps to move forward in life? I don't know that it will get easier, actually I'm quite certain it won't. This is why we rely on the Lord for our strength and peace and so we press on.

I have now been going into the West Central Regional Juvenile Center every week for almost two years with my coworker, Mike. As a program, we have been in the facility three years this Christmas. The center, which was a 15-bed non-secure floor and a 32-bed secure-floor, is in the middle of a major renovation. They hope to complete this project in 2020, which will double to triple the amount of you they can accommodate at this facility. We have had the opportunity to run two weekly church services consistently since entering the center. We have church on Wednesday evenings, one-on-one ministry as requested or a minimum of one day a week, and new this fall we host two separate Bible studies on Monday evenings. The access we have to the facility is unreal and the relationships we have built with students and staff is even more amazing. Good portions of the students that attend these optional activities really do want to learn about God, the Bible, and Christ's love for us. Many ask for Bibles of their own and read them throughout the week. In fact, we have given out 150+ Bibles in this last year alone! The questions they come with often make my head spin, my soul break, and my heart smile. Common questions are, "Is God really real?" "How do I know God is real?" "If



God is so loving, why do bad things happen?" "Who created God?" "I'm reading in my Bible and started at the beginning, but when does that Jesus guy come in?" and everything in between! Its one thing to be able to share the Gospel with the next generation, but it is a completely different experience to share it with kids who are so hungry to learn. We have been told by staff that we are the most consistent program they have within the facility. What a blessing and opportunity this ministry has been.

We also are involved with two of the alternative schools in the FM area. We have release time with one where we take the students off campus to Bethel Church. We feed them snacks, share the gospel, and have free time or opportunity for intentional relationship building time. At the other school we focus on meeting the immediate needs and celebrating the students. This is done through our weekly meal program, Christmas dinner party, and graduation celebration to name a few. We are so blessed with our relationships with community schools and facilities and it is reflected in the longevity of our programs.

The first student to get out of the West Central Regional Juvenile Center and contact us we will call Jada. We have known Jada for quite a while now. She is frequently kicked out of housing, spent time in and out of West Central, has family she communicates with but are busy caring for themselves,

and has never had a real job. Most recently, she has aged out of the system, has been couch hopping for several months, and discovered she is pregnant. We spend a lot of time together and she is a great helper. I challenge her in many ways because I love her, but together we are working on finding her a job, permanent housing, medical insurance, and I'm encouraging her to finish high school. During a time when she did not have service on her phone we communicated through messenger when she had WIFI. She has my phone number memorized and always knew she could find a way to get a hold of me. I often give her rides and take her to appointments. We have both experienced some firsts together from ultrasounds to discussions about whether to keep and parent or choose adoption. These are just a few topics I never imagined my 25-year-old-self discussing with teenagers. God has a sense of humor that way I think. It doesn't matter your age, financial or marital status, or size of your home, these kids are truly just looking for love and consistency and it is our job to be there for them while pointing them to Christ.



Jada is just one of the many teens we work with experiencing life's difficulties. One of the many that list YFC staff as their emergency contact on everything because we are the most reliable people available to them. Many of the teens we work with experience any one or more of the following difficulties. We work with teens dealing with anything from abuse, neglect, and abandonment to drugs, alcohol, and addictions to homelessness, anxiety, and depression and everything in between and then some. Would you please pray for our team

and myself as we continue to befriend these teens, get to know their story, share our story, and ultimately connect them to God's story? Please pray that God would continue to use us as vessels to impact the lives of teens for eternity.

As we enter the Christmas Season, and you consider year-end giving, would you please consider supporting Red River Youth for Christ? Since we are a non-profit, we rely on partners like you to help 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 will be receipted if a mailing address is included.

I am so thankful for your prayers and support! Thank you from everyone here at Red River Youth for Christ and the students we work with! Your thoughts, prayers, and support are truly a gift!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Danielle Hill

