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Fall 2023

STORIES

NOTES FROM THE JOURNEY...



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

It's hard to believe, but summer is finished, peaches are done, in-school ministries are in full swing, and we are just weeks away from Concert for a Cause featuring Blanca.

God, love people. We will be held accountable for how we love those around us.

There is a war going on for the hearts and souls of our kids. I also believe that, in many ways, this culture war is a distraction, and it's purposeful. Satan's not stupid. I believe that it's designed to get us into an 'us and them mentality'... to look at people as the enemy, and if we're in a war and they are the enemy, it gets easy to dehumanize people, and if people are dehumanized, they become less than, and it's easier to disregard them and the things they are going through. It becomes easier for us to say that what they are going through isn't real, and it allows us to start justifying why we are less compassionate, uncaring, and unloving. And here is my fear. When that happens, we as Christians stop loving and reaching people who are far from God because we are more concerned with our safety, reputation, being right, you name it, than anything else. We may get the Bible right, but if we get love wrong, we're still wrong. Sorry, I'm preaching, but it means a lot to me and this team. We want to love the

kids we are called to minister to well.

November 17th is Concert for a Cause, and this year, it will feature Blanca. We are so excited to be able to share with you and give you a taste of what God is doing in the lives of our teens. Please mark it on your calendar and plan to attend. This is a great opportunity to invite your friends, especially younger people in your sphere of influence, and introduce them to YFC. The concert will be a lot of fun as well.

Thank you again for partnering with us through your prayers, time, and gifts. We can do this because of you, and know that you are making a difference in the lives of kids far from Jesus. Keep us in your prayers, and if God nudges your heart, please consider a financial gift to YFC. See you at Concert for a Cause!

You are so loved by this ministry. Thank you for being a part of it!



Greg Everett
Executive Director



FEATURING
Blanca

NOVEMBER 17, 2023
BETHEL CHURCH
DETAILS INSIDE

PRESENTED BY



Understanding, Loving, & Leading

The Next Generation Featuring Dr Kevin Leman

Thank you to everyone that came out to this event. We hope you left inspired and with nuggets of wisdom to apply with the young people in your life. Also, thank you to all the awesome local organizations that showed up to be resources to our community through this event.

"Sanctuary, golden streets, pink fluffy clouds, not here, angels singing, and unexplainable."

Answers given in a recent Bible study at the center when asked what youth pictured heaven to be like.

Coach Visitor

At Liberty last year I was known as "Mr. Visitor", by many of the sixth grade students because of the visitor nametag I wore. However this year I helped coach the seventh grade football team with many of those same students from lunch last year. In due time I was given the new nickname of "Coach Visitor" which still has carried on into the lunchroom as football has ended now. Many of the students have asked if I would coach them next year in eighth grade. I don't think it has much to do with the coaching, but with the consistency of showing up in their lives. ~William Lawyer

"It's my jail buddy"

A girl exclaimed loudly in the hallway of Dakota High School after recognizing Danielle (Staff) from the Juvenile Center.

Middle School Bible Study

On our first day leading Thursday morning Bible study at Liberty, I was amazed by a girl that showed up. We were discussing the parable of the sower and sharing about things in life that can steal or be a barrier to faith. This girl openly shared about some things in her life that she has experienced that have discouraged her faith. One of the other leaders then shared a specific verse to encourage her and mentioned that she could write the verse out for her. At the end of our time together I noticed the girl pull out her Bible and ask the leader where the verse could be found so she could bookmark it. The girl was being intentional and proactive in her pursuit to know what God had for her. My heart was smiling as I witnessed this 6th grader's dependence and hunger for the Word of God. I'm so excited to watch God work and move in the lives of the middle schoolers in this Bible study this year! ~Deb Napton



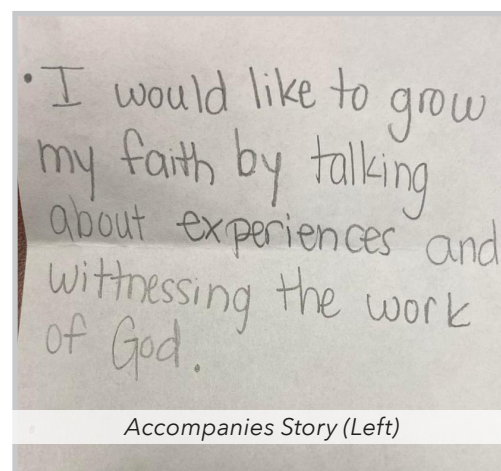
Understanding, Loving, & Leading



Will & his middle school football team.



Accompanies Story (Bottom Left)



Accompanies Story (Left)

Love or Illusion

Our discussion with the girls on this topic started out a bit chaotic as many of our conversations with them do. There is always someone who isn't paying full attention, gets up and wanders, asks when the next meal is coming, etc. Goofing around and giggling are also common elements. However, as we continued to ask questions and invited the girls who were "just going to listen in because I usually don't do Bible stuff" to join our conversation, the girls really began to focus and share with us.

Their very deepest fears revolve around this very topic: that love is an illusion and it's something everyone is looking for but can't find. When asked how they would describe the love they are looking for, they agreed on "loyalty" as the best description. They told us that everyone is looking for it but can't find it. I asked why, if everyone is looking for the same thing, why wouldn't they give love and loyalty to other people they know are looking for it? The sad response: Everyone has been hurt by lack of loyalty, so everyone is afraid to give it. No one is willing to be the first person to be vulnerable. Three of the girls then shared what their lives are like, moving from relationship to relationship, looking for something they believe they will never find. The girls said their own mothers are doing the same thing. One girl said she had a different "stepdad" almost yearly. None of her mother's relationships would last longer than that. The girls feel hopeless that their lives will ever be any different. Sue and I left the girls feeling shattered ourselves by what they had shared. How to achieve hope in the midst of hopelessness is quite a burden for these young people. ~Kim Danielson

What Does that Mean?

Here are a list of words we commonly used and what they mean.

- **West Central-** The West Central Juvenile Detention Center, the only one in our area, which services 11 counties in ND & MN. (Also referred to as **the center, detention, the youth center, the detention center, JDC, the juvenile detention center, or Juvie.**) Contains the following programs: Secure, Treatment, Non-Secure, & CLIPS. behavior stabilization, transitioning out & evaluation.
- **CLIPS:** Community Living Independent Programs & Services
- **Child Protective Services Worker (CPS)-** investigates suspected abuse, neglect, works with the youth, the family, all services the kid is receiving, etc. (Also referred to as a **case manager, case worker, social worker, my worker, etc.**)
- **Pod:** a common area surrounded by individual rooms or cells at the detention center.
- **Secure-** The lock-down or secure jail pods at the center.
- **Treatment-** Pods similar to secure, but for kids in residential treatment programs.
- **Non-secure-** Emergency youth shelter, short-term corrections, Unaccompanied homeless youth. Includes youth living temporarily with family or friends. Often referred to as couch hopping.

Our Mission

YFC reaches young people everywhere, 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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Danielle Beyer
William Lawyer
Tim Brown
Deb Napton

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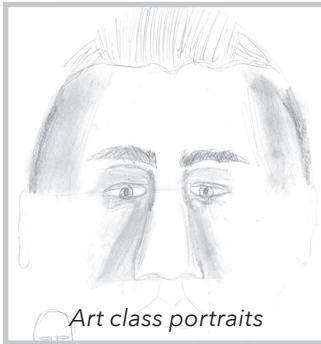
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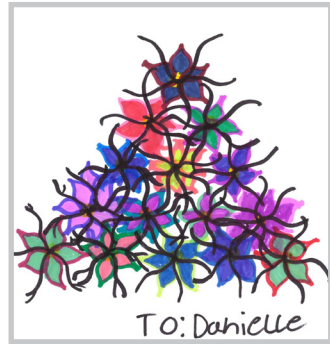
What Does that Mean?

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.

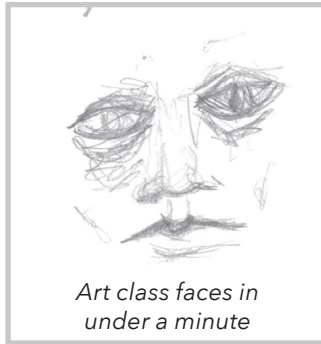
- **Tea:** Fresh gossip
- **Bet:** Being Ok, for sure, all right, or challenge accepted
- **Glow Up:** A physical or emotional makeover, a positive transformation
- **Reel:** An Insta (Instagram-social media app) feature used to create short videos to be shared on reels, stories, or feeds. (Ex: have you seen that reel about...)
- **Drip:** Clothing, shoes, accessories



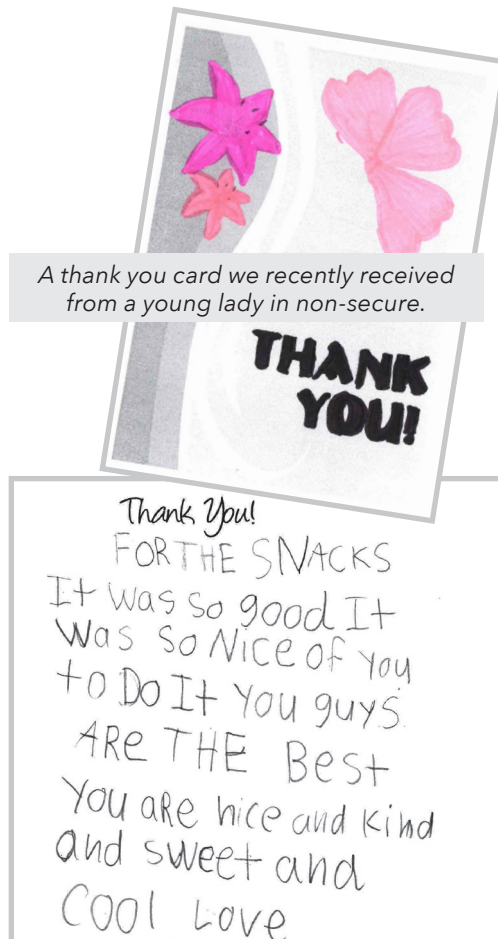
Art class portraits



T.O: Danielle



Art class faces in under a minute



A thank you card we recently received from a young lady in non-secure.



Practical Needs

- Cases of bottled water
- Cases of juice boxes, bottled juice, or sports drink
- Paper Products (napkins, plates, bowls, utensils)
- Have questions? Give us a call at (701)237-6682

We also take gift cards to Walmart, Sam's, Costco, & Target if you would rather save the shopping for us.



These two donated 3 tubs worth of craft supplies for our youth programming

Donations Thanks

Thank you to all those who donate craft supplies, meals, snacks, baked goods, and so much more. We are so thankful for all of your continued and practical support!

Clean Paint Water

We've now done several craft days with the girls' pod and typically have 10-13 girls at a time. On paint days, it's always a bit of a challenge because there are certain things we wouldn't normally have to consider if we were outside of the center. Not only do we have to count how many paints, paintbrushes, pencils, and water containers we bring in (and count them before leaving), but something as simple as water for cleaning paintbrushes can be a challenge. The only faucets and sinks are in the rooms (which remain locked when not in use), there is a water fountain (but only with a drip tray), so we have to empty the used water down the communal shower drain. Then we go out to the water fountain to get water to rinse, pour the rinse water down the shower drain, then back to the fountain to refill the container. We get creative not only on the canvas, but to overcome simple challenges like clean paint water. The beautiful artwork they create, and time together is definitely worth the obstacles! ~Kim Danielson

William (to a boys pod at the center): "What's the best magic trick or illusion you've seen?"

(Without hesitation) Young Man: "My dad's disappearing act. He went to the store for milk one day & never came back."

Many of the stories of youth we encounter are riddled with instability. Thank you for your support and providing us with opportunities to be consistent adults in the lives of young people like this young man.

Scripture Comprehension

I am constantly amazed by the scripture memorization of the youth at the center. Some weeks I wonder if having a memory verse is even worth it, and other weeks kids will rattle off scripture word for word with such accomplishment on their face. I have one young lady in particular who memorizes chunks of scripture for extra treats. It started as memorizing different shorter Psalms (6-8 verse long), because the 1-2 verse memory verse wasn't challenging enough for her. She would do the weekly memory verse as well as another longer passage. She ran out of shorter Psalms, so I gave her free reign to memorize other scripture chunks (5-10 verses long). One week she rattled off the verse, the reference, and the treat she wanted without stopping in between. Curious if she even understood what she was memorizing, I asked, "And what does that mean?" She went on to summarize the passage so well I was blown away. When I'm with these kids, I often think of when Jesus talked about the faith of a child. I get so inspired when I see these light-bulb moments of when kids get it. ~Danielle Beyer

Like Picasso

I recently read an article that had a quote by Pablo Picasso that said, **"The world today doesn't make sense, so why should I paint pictures that do?"**

His question resonates with me because I have asked myself a similar question many times over the years. The question I've asked is more along the lines of, **"The world today doesn't make sense, so why should I preach about a God who does?"** I'm sure that everyone in ministry has asked themselves this question at least once (*Most likely many times*). While circumstances vary, I usually find myself asking this question when ministry hopes, dreams, and expectations don't line up. (*Spoiler alert, they rarely do*) I believe the answer to Picasso's question is found in his work—he continued to paint. I believe the reason he continued is because he had hope that his paintings could possibly help make sense of this world.

- Like Picasso, I/we need to continue to preach, teach, and reach people with the truth of the gospel in hopes that it brings others closer to God and helps make sense of this crazy world.
- Like Picasso, we need to continue following Jesus in hopes that our lives are a testimony that will draw others to Jesus.
- Remember we are God's masterpiece (Eph.2:10) So we need to keep preaching, teaching, and reaching people because the world needs our art.
- "So, let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up" (Gal.6:9).

Live Free ~Tim Brown



YOUTH FOR CHRIST RED RIVER
Concert for a Cause

FEATURING
Blanca

Friday, November 17, 2023
Bethel Church, Fargo
2702 30TH AVE S, FARGO, ND 58103
Doors Open at 6:00 PM
Event begins at 7:00 PM
General Admission \$10

PURCHASE TICKETS



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Honest Opinion?

At church one Wednesday night we were watching an episode in the "Shattered" series. This lesson was about lies, standards in relationships, and some of the miracles Jesus performed. However, the lesson quickly turned very deep. I normally ask them, "what did you guys think of the video?" One of the boys raised his hand and asked "Do you want my honest opinion...?" I happily said yes. He said, "I think it was kinda BS." He went into how some of the stuff Jesus did was believable, but if miracles were true, why does He allow pain and cancer. I shared as sin entered the world all that pain was brought with it. This led into a back-and-forth discussion for thirty minutes about sin, what hell really is like, and who goes to hell. One boy chimed in saying he believes in science because there is proof. This brought up how there is scientific proof that Jesus existed, and things God did are backed by science. There was so much conversation and open and honest depth that we had to pause to go to the next pod. Some of the boys want continued conversation, and I told them Monday when I'm in for Bible study.

At the end of the day the kids were seeking visible proof that Jesus existed. I told them that's where faith comes in. Everyone has faith in something from yourself, to money, to drugs, to other people, to even another "higher power." If I am wrong about Jesus, I'm not out anything. If they were wrong about God, they go to hell forever with torture, solitude, and no relief from the torment. It's not something I would want to gamble on, but you guys have to make that choice for yourself.
~William Lawyer

Kids Showing Kindness

Recently, I was dealing with a health issue so I was unable to attend the first couple of gatherings at Moorhead ALC. The kids were asking about me and decided to make handmade get-well cards for me. As you can see, they are beautiful and I was blown away by their creativity! I was amazed they had so much concern and wanted to do something to cheer me up when they have so much drama they are dealing with. ~Kim Danielson



February 8 Giving Hearts Day

24-hours of online giving fun! Save the date for Giving Hearts Day, Thursday, February 8, 2024. More information to come.

Newfound Excitement

Last week in Bible study at West Central, one of the girls could not settle in to listen because she was too excited to share all the verses she had landed on and written down in the past week. I stepped aside and Kim took over so I could let her share her verses with me. Each one had a special meaning for her. This is special in many ways, but mainly because she has been experimenting with many different religions since we have met her but seems to keep coming back to the Bible. Please pray that she keeps on the path to Jesus. ~Sue Kressin

Disgusted?

One day I was visiting some of the girls at their school for lunch and was taken back by a question asked of me. During our conversation all together, a girl sitting next to me asked, "Deb, are you disgusted by us?" I couldn't believe those words came out of her mouth. I asked her to explain, and she said, "we are so hood". I didn't allow a pause before I interjected my feelings of the complete opposite sentiment. As we talked further, her words opened up an opportunity to seed into her the truth that her identity is not in her surroundings, circumstances, or even family background. Tears welled up in her eyes and I embraced her.

I was so thankful for that moment God had given us. I knew that she had been projecting on to me what she had been feeling about herself... that she was disgusting. I'm looking forward to more conversations of being able to speak the truth into her about her identity and watching God heal her in this area. ~Deb Napton



Peaches

Peaches are done! Thank you for your understanding, patience, and support as we adjusted to the many things that were out of our control this year. Thank you to Scheels Home & Hardware and Magnum Transportation for making this possible. Despite the constant craziness that was the year, we are so thankful for the lives that are able to be impacted as a result of this fundraiser. Thank You!



Thankful for all our wonderful volunteers!