



December 12, 2023

Dear Friends & Family,

The older I get the faster the years go. While I'm not very "old," the way the years fly by sometimes make me feel that way. Here are some highs, lows, and updates from this last year. In 2023, Cody and I went on our extended honeymoon and spent a week in Mexico in February. We attended a "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage" conference in March (*would highly recommend*). In April, at YFC we said see you later to part time staff and my favorite sister, Paige Rockensock, as she and Andrew moved to Park Rapids to start Northstar Construction. In May we put in a new hot water heater and hosted a prom dinner for some YFC girls at our home all in the same day in true "Hill Family" fashion. We also got a yellow lab puppy, Ruby, in May. Cody and I celebrated a year of marriage in June! Also in June, During Youth for Christ staff retreat I was attempting to "show a coworker how to waterski" and ended up swallowing my pride and pulling my hamstring. This put me hobbling on crutches for a few weeks. In August I celebrated 6 years with Youth for Christ. In September, YFC hosted a community resource event featuring Dr Kevin Leman about loving and leading youth in the next generation. In October, Cody and I rounded up 8 other friends and couples for a quick trip to explore Nashville. November was the Youth for Christ Concert for a Cause featuring Blanca and a trip to Nebraska for Thanksgiving. Cody also spent 12 weeks (or 3 months) out of town sporadically between March and the end of November for work with 3D Specialties where he has been for the last several years. And just like that December is here and 2024 is just around the corner.



YFC team & the prom dinner crew

Ministry hasn't been any less eventful this year. Will and Deb continue to be presented with growth opportunities in ministry at Liberty Middle School. Moorhead ALC has just exploded with opportunities, kids and staff hungry to hear about God, and kids being positive influences in the lives of their friends. Our very first program of this school year, a young man, who we also know from the detention center, shared his testimony in front of almost two dozen of his friends and peers. I mean talk about goosebumps. At Dakota High School we still run our weekly community lunch program, Christmas dinner, twice weekly gym time, and end of the school year graduation celebration. We also have continuous opportunities there and are praying about what our next steps will be. Thank you for making all these opportunities possible through your prayers and support.

The detention center ministry continues to grow year-round. We are now in all pods of the detention center on a regular basis. Every week we run two church services or youth groups so we're hitting the four major pods at least bi-weekly. We've had numerous kids say that the youth group at the detention center is the only "church" they've ever attended. We have Bible studies weekly in three pods and a lunch group with a fourth pod. Volunteers teach art classes and craft times, there's game days and movie days where we focus on relationships with youth and staff. Each year we are having more and more youth reach out to us after they get out and it's so amazing to maintain these relationships.

One of my favorite stories from the year was at West Central in the non-secure unit. There is a 13-year-old girl who was too shy to even give me her name the first time we met without lots of encouragement. I've come to understand she doesn't read well. After a couple weeks at Bible Study she asked to read the scripture passage, but "would need help." She sometimes stumbles over words, but I help guide and encourage her. It's so fun to see her improvement and I can't wait to continue to see her growth.

This summer I had a few young ladies who I challenged to memorize the books of the Bible. They kept asking where books were, if they were in the Old Testament or New, and if it was before or after such-and-such book. I encouraged them about how helpful it would be to memorize them and the order. I even shamelessly bribed

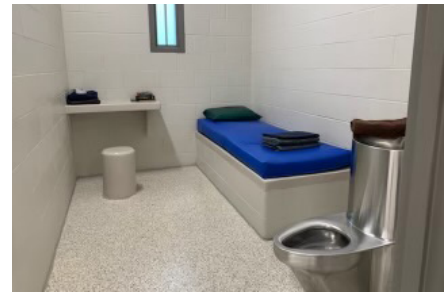
them with extra snacks if they could do it on top of their weekly verse. After memorizing the old and New Testament, they asked, "What's next?" I then challenged them to memorize Psalm 23. By the next week they had done that. I then encouraged them to find their own memory passages. Weekly they were accomplishing that. Some weeks were harder than others and we would make up actions to help them memorize. This went on for several weeks until two of the three girls left. The third girl has continued off and on throughout the fall to memorize the scripture sections. She has recently recruited a newer resident and friend to participate. This new friend just so happens to be our young friend from our last story who barely used to read. So here we have a 13-year-old-girl, who is practicing her reading using the Bible, and is now memorizing scripture passages with her friend. Only stories like this can come from God.

Recently at a church service at the detention center there was a couple of Muslim girls participating. One was becoming passionate about how she didn't agree with us as we were sharing the gospel. I said, "It seems like you have a lot of interesting points and questions." How about we sit down sometime one-on-one to visit?" She quieted, nodded, and we proceeded. Afterwards I walked up and asked her name. I again asked if she actually wanted me to visit sometime. She introduced herself and said she really did want to visit. A few days later I was able to meet with her and learned so much more about her. She was so kind and calm and asked a lot of questions. Knowing little about the Muslim faith, I asked lots of questions as well. She shared how fearful of Christians she was because of the persecution she and her family endured here in America. She shared she doesn't even wear the traditional head wrap because it's been pulled off her head numerous times and she fears people. She shared that not all Muslims are bad, to which I added, not all Christians are either. We had an excellent conversation and she thanked me repeatedly for coming to visit and asked again when I would be back. I'm often reminded of how we're called to love others (Matthew 22:34-40), not to share our opinions. I look forward to our continued conversations.

These are just a few of the stories and a glimpse of the many ways God is working though this ministry right in many of our backyards. Just yesterday while waiting to enter the Juvenile center, I visited with grandparents who traveled from Bemidji to pick up their grandchild being released. It is my joy to share with you just some of the ways that God is working through this ministry and offer an opportunity to engage whether that be through prayers or through the joy of giving. 2023 has been a good year, but financially tougher. The combination of giving being down, losing our Georgia peach crop putting us \$21,000 behind where we normally are, and losing our December orange fundraiser this year to the same late freeze that killed Georgia's peach crop, has limited extra opportunities. Since we are a non-profit, we rely on partners like you to help fund this ministry. Would you please prayerfully consider making a year-end financial gift or even becoming a monthly donor? Donations can be mailed in the enclosed envelope, or you can give online by going to www.redriveryfc.com and clicking the "Donate" button at the top of the page. All donations are tax-deductible and will be receipted if an email 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 love! Your thoughts, prayers, and support are truly a gift!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Danielle (Hill) Beyer



*West Central Regional
Juvenile Center Room or Cell*



*West Central Regional
Juvenile Center Pod*

