

Dear Friends & Family,

As you're reading this letter, it's hard to believe that my second year with Youth for Christ is coming to a close! WHERE HAS THE TIME GONE?! I'm beyond excited to see God continue to work amongst our chapter and the kids we work with! This "Winter" has been a complete 180 from last year. Instead of being bundled up from head to toe due to the weather last year, I've found myself wearing shorts and having the windows down as I drive from site to site. Carmen and I have gone on some more adventures since the last letter! We decided to use her two-day Spring break to visit Duluth, Minnesota, for the first time. There is so much to see/do in Duluth, and I felt like I needed a vacation from our vacation. We drove around the city, toured the historic Glensheen mansion, and drove up and down the North Shore. Where we got to see Iona's pink beach, the Black Beach, Gooseberry Falls, as well as Split Rock Lighthouse. As great as it was to see all of the amazing sights, what's a Lawyer trip without food? (Can I get an amen?!) The famous "Betty's Pies" was along the North Shore, where Carmen and I tore some of that pie up for breakfast. The closer we got to the trip, the more people told us we had to go to Betty's... HOWEVER, when we visited the visitor center, we were told by a local that Betty's is no longer the best; she claimed that the "Rustic Inn" has better pie, so of course, we added that to our list of stops. After having the pie at the Rustic Inn, we both agreed that Betty's was, in fact, better. But it was an excuse to try another restaurant! The night before going to Duluth, Carmen snuck in going to see Disney on the ice, where, of course, we had to get souvenirs. I got the Hei-Hei shirt on our Honeymoon, so when I saw the hat, you KNOW I had to snag it to go with it. The show was a great time and was a great kickoff to our long weekend! It also added to the number of times we have been inside the Fargodome for something other than a football game.



Enough about Carmen and me, and onto the real reason you are reading this letter... THE KIDS! My relationship with the kids at the detention center is continuing to grow. I'm up to multiple one-on-ones a week with kids, as well as the regular group times on Mondays and Wednesdays. With that being said, we could use lots of prayers to find more male volunteers to properly mentor and love these kids well. I have had to start telling kids not yet or saying yes and stretching myself too thin in other areas. There is a huge amount of kids that have been released and come back within a few months (if not sooner). Another prayer request for the Center is for kids to contact us when they get out so that we can continue our aftercare program with the individuals. The kids in the center always keep us on our toes and, at times, fill us up with laughter. This past Wednesday, the topic of where Jesus was born came up, and I shared where it was in Bethlehem. One boy said, "So Israel", and another adult said at the time it wasn't Israel, but now it is. He perked up with a grin and said, "I don't know why people don't believe in Jesus. If Jesus is from Israel, then he "Is-real". I couldn't help but laugh and agree with him. These kids are so bright; they just need a chance to shine their light on others.



Liberty Middle School has definitely had its ups and downs this year. The behavior of the kids has definitely increased in a negative manner from last year. Lots of prayer for the administration, teachers, and any adult that is dealing with them on a daily basis. However, the relationships I have built with the students in our Check and Connect program have increased my trust with them. I have kids enthusiastically asking if we're meeting when I see them in the

hallway. Our meetings are also getting more in-depth, and the kids are growing as better students and people all together. This past quarter, I sat with each of the boys I meet with, and we made a goal for them to try and reach by the end of the quarter. If they achieved the goal, I told them I would reward them with a prize. Some kids have achieved it, others came SO close but didn't quite make it, and a few still weren't even in the same time zone... However, I have seen the progress of each student and the desire to not settle for "average" and strive for more. That's the whole reason we're even doing goals. These students have been told or have been exemplified to them that it's okay to shoot for average. I think that's the worst thing for them because if they aim small and miss, they'll flutter to below average, and I usually see them in the detention center; it's a vicious cycle they're trapped in.

The other week, one of Carmen's students asked what class I teach because he wanted me to be a teacher. I share that because it shows that trust is being made, and that's the root of being able to really learn their stories!

Relationships with other kids in the school have blossomed as well. I coached 8th-grade basketball this year, and at the 8th-grade lunch, I have a group of about ten kids (some who were on my team and others who are their friends) either stand by me the whole lunch period and talk to me or ask me to sit at their table and show them new magic tricks or play cards with them. I've also continued to meet with a boy who was in our program last year and is now at Sheyenne High School. Carmen and I went to his choir concert he invited me to, and we also still meet a few times a month to catch up and talk about life. It's such a blessing to be able to keep that relationship going.



After the Choir Concert with last year's Liberty mentee



A day at lunch a few weeks ago, a 6th-grade girl came up to me and asked where I got my hat because she liked it. As most of you know, I almost always wear a hat, so I had to take it off and see which one it was that day. It was my black Youth for Christ hat. I laughed and said, "This is where I work; what makes you like it so much?" She smiled really big and said I really like Jesus and think it's cool. So, I surprised her the next day with one of our hats, and she grinned from ear to ear. She was so excited she put the hat on and wore it with the tag still dangling around! I can't wait to see how God uses this next quarter for continued growth!

Here are some ways you can pray for our chapter: For us to be able to find a female staff member to replace Deb and fill those shoes!

For more male volunteers in the detention center and female volunteers for Liberty. For our peach growers, as peach season is just a few months away! For an artist, as we start to prepare for our concert in November.

Thank you so much to every one of you who prays and supports the YFC ministry. It humbles me to know how much you believe in me and this ministry. I invite you to consider investing in this ministry if you currently don't. We can't do this without you! Every gift has the potential to change a life for eternity. You can donate at <https://redriveryouthforchrist.givingfuel.com/giving> and choose WL in "the fund" or through the enclosed envelope.

We are so blessed by everyone who reads these update letters! We can't wait to fill you in on the next couple of months of our journey in the next letter.

Until next time,

William Lawyer
Youth for Christ Ministry Staff



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