



Merry Christmas!

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas! As another year draws to a close, we look back with grateful hearts at the incredible things God has done through your partnership with Youth for Christ. For over 45 years, we've been here in the Fargo-Moorhead area, focused on one simple, powerful mission: We want every kid to be seen, heard, and known—and to experience the life-changing love of Jesus.

We serve students ages 11 to 19 in middle and high schools and at the juvenile detention center. Every single week, our staff and dedicated volunteers connect with around 150 kids across multiple sites—places like Liberty Middle School, Moorhead ALC, Dakota High, and the West Central Regional Juvenile Center. These students are walking through pivotal, often difficult moments: parental divorce, anxiety, addiction, identity struggles, mental health challenges, or just deep loneliness.

At YFC, we don't just show up to preach at kids. We show up to walk with them. Our ministry is built on what we call Authentic Christ-Sharing Relationships. We take the time to learn their story, share our own, and invite them into God's story. We take our cue from Jesus, who taught that the greatest commandments are to "Love God" and "Love people." He later said that our love for one another will prove to the world that we are His followers. That's our job. We're not here to condemn kids; we're here to love them—patiently, consistently, and with grace.

Think about it: if God had waited for any of us to have our act together before showing us grace, none of us would be here today. The Bible reminds us that it is God's kindness that is meant to lead us to change. That kindness, patience, and unwavering love is exactly how we approach ministry.

Just before Easter, one Thursday morning at our ALC program at Bethel, I was speaking to students about the big question, "How good is good enough?" We talked about the beautiful, profound truth that Jesus is the only way—and that this is the fairest way, because everyone is welcome, everyone can meet the requirements, and everyone gets in the same way.

Immediately after, a young woman approached me with questions. She challenged me, saying I shouldn't be so "emphatic" about Jesus being the only way, especially since students of other faiths attend our program. I told her, "It's because we love you guys so much that we tell you the truth. But that's also why we tell you that we love questions and pushback! You don't have to believe what we believe to be here, but we want you to wrestle with what you do believe because it's very important."

As the conversation went on, I heard some of her story. She knew some things about Christianity from her family, but when she started to struggle with feelings of same-sex attraction, she said, "it all went downhill from there." She shrugged and said, "Ya, they told me I was going to hell for it." "I am so sorry you were treated that way," I told her. "Christians can be so harsh. The Bible says that people will go to hell for rejecting Jesus, not because they struggle."

She had to leave for the bus, but she thanked me as she went.

Later, my team members told me what happened next: She bounded onto the bus all excited! When her friend asked what she had been talking about, she replied, "I'm going to hell because I am a sinner, not because I struggle." (I was a little floored when I heard that because that never came up in our conversation.) Then she said, "No Christian has ever talked to me like that before."

That final statement broke my heart, but it also reinforced why we are here. Every week, these kids—who have every reason not to trust or ever want to walk through the door of a church—keep coming back. Why? Because they feel safe, loved, seen, heard, and known. And because of that, they come face-to-face with Jesus.

We've seen God on the move in incredible ways this year:

- 181 youth are in conversational relationships with our leaders.
- 92 youth are in deep Christ-sharing relationships.
- 10 made a first-time decision to follow Jesus.
- Over 130 students asked for and were given Bibles!
- We even welcomed 3 new full-time staff to our team!

**God is moving and we
need your help!**

Your support makes an eternal difference. We have more opportunities now than ever before! Doors are opening that only God could open—like being invited into schools during class hours to mentor kids, or being given full access to all pods in the detention center.

But opportunities like that come with challenges—staffing, transportation, meals, curriculum, and Bibles all take funding. It costs about \$900 per day to keep this ministry running, and that is made possible by partners like you. While about one-third of our budget comes from our annual fruit sales, the rest comes from God's people—individuals, churches, and businesses who believe in what we're doing.

Our Year-End Challenge: Would you prayerfully consider a year-end gift to help us finish the year strong?

Here's what your generosity can do:

- \$900 covers an entire day of ministry
- \$125-\$150 feeds 50+ kids at Dakota High's Community Lunch
- \$50 covers resources for Bible Studies and Club Programs
- \$15 buys a Bible for a student
- Or consider a gift of \$100, or \$25/month, or whatever God puts on your heart

When you give to YFC, you're not just supporting a program—you're helping a young person know they are valued, loved, and never too far for God's grace to reach them. Your gift today could change a teen's eternity.

We are so grateful for your commitment to sharing the true Gift of Christmas with this generation. As a partner in Red River Youth for Christ's ministry, you play a vital role in reaching teens and their families. We hope your Christmas season is filled with peace, joy, and the hope only Jesus brings. On behalf of the entire YFC team—and every student we work with—thank you.

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Greg Everett
Executive Director

P.S. Would you take just a moment and pray, "God, how do You want me to be part of what You're doing through Youth for Christ?" Your "yes" could change a teen's life forever.

You can give securely online at
www.redriveryfc.com/give or use the enclosed envelope.

*Merry Christmas from the students
and staff of Youth for Christ!*

