

CONNECTED

YOUTH FOR CHRIST of Northern Ohio - Newsletter

Connecting Teens To Jesus Christ And His Church

April 2020



Social Distance: Yes Spiritual Distance: No | Steve Pausch

¹²Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. ¹³You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.” Jeremiah 29:12-14 (ESV)

Over 75 years ago, a move of God started an organization called Youth For Christ with the mission of reaching young people and sharing Christ with them. While the mission remains, over the years, the way we have done that has changed. We have used large rallies, club meetings in homes, large youth gatherings in major cities, small groups, detention center gatherings, and one-on-one meetings, which have all been effective at leading teens to Jesus.

This month and the pandemic has created a new ministry model: Online ministry meetings. We have been able to transition to an exclusive online ministry currently and are meeting regularly with young people. Zoom is a video conferencing service that we have been using at YFC for many years to facilitate meetings across the US with many different programs. This service has been a great way to reach teens now in this time of social distancing. Here are some of the ways we are using the online community to connect with teens.

*We are hosting game nights on Zoom, connecting with teens, and having a fun time playing games like Pictionary and many other online games.

*Small groups are continuing online as leaders have been meeting with their teens.

* We are still doing our larger meeting formats online with a Bible talk, games, discussion, and a thought for the week. These are being held at the same times and days they were prior to the shutdown.

*Bible studies, prayer times, and countless quick messages and encouraging messages have been sent out to the teens we work with and we are seeing even more friends log in to be a part of the discussions.

As I write this, it is early in the morning and the sun is just beginning to rise and the birds seem oblivious to COVID 19 and the changes in the world as they flutter around the birdfeeder. I am reminded of God's Word....

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Matthew 6:26

We have a daily prayer list compiled of all our ministry partners. You and your family are prayed for on one day a week specifically. If you have any specific request please let us know and we will add that to the prayer list.

We are praying that God will meet you in powerful ways during these interesting times and that you will feel His presence closer than ever. May you have a blessed Easter!

In the Crisis | Laurie Beal

Wow! These last few weeks have been surreal. One of the unusual things about this craziness is that we are ALL affected. We all feel the burdens, the weight, the unknowns of this on varying levels, but we ALL feel it.

I regularly work with struggling teens, struggling people and struggling families. So, I see the struggles that many deal with all throughout the year, struggles that others have never thought like: Will I get a job? Will I have a job tomorrow? Will we have enough food for this week? Will my wallet take a hit today? Will I stay healthy? Will my loved ones? Now EVERYONE is at least thinking about these things. And empathy is kicking in and people are realizing that there are some that regularly feel this yuck. A compassion has showed up that I hope sticks long after this season.

Suddenly, we are all in the same boat and it's been amazing to look all around and see people, who even with social distancing, are actually working closer together than I've ever seen. Churches are working with other churches. People are sharing their food. People are finding their niche in areas they can help. People are making masks and even dropping them off to me to protect me with my asthma.

One need we decided to jump in on right away at the Garage, our Wadsworth ministry site, was providing food for our teens who normally receive breakfast and lunch on the free and reduced lunch program. We also immediately realized that we needed to try to feed their siblings and families, too. We didn't have the means or the supplies on hand so we reached out on Facebook on the Friday schools were last open and explained what we wanted to do. By Monday, our community and local churches and small businesses and God showed up in a big way. Huge stacks of supplies started showing up daily. People showed up to make lunches and breakfasts for all the schools Monday. By Tuesday the schools had their plan in place, and we are now one of 6 official pick up sites for the school lunches. And because of many job losses, many more kids have become eligible for this program. We are in this for the long haul and because of the generosity of the community and our supporters, we have also been able to provide lunches for the parents, toddlers,



and elderly in the neighborhood who have shown up. We have been able to give family meal bags, hygiene items, even toilet paper and bread to the families coming through the pick up line. We have heard many sad stories and have been able to provide hope, the love of Christ and prayer and support to these dear families. We have also been able to keep our onsite Give and Take Food pantry well stocked. Many in the community help with this. We are so blessed to be able to do our part and meet some amazing families. We are so thankful to all of you for helping make this happen! Romans 8:28: And we know for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

YOUTH FOR CHRIST

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