

Lunch with Jake | Scott Hulet

My family and I recently went out to lunch to a local Subway. One of our former Garage students, Jake, works at the adjacent Drug Mart. Jake is 19 years old now, so he no longer attends our activities, but a few of us have continued to stay in touch with him. We have also sponsored Jake in recent years so he could join us at an annual weekend men's retreat held by one of our local churches. Jake stood in line with my family and me as we waited and ordered at Subway. It was great to see him again and catch-up. As we reached the register, I noticed that Jake had not paid yet, and was waiting for us. I discovered that he had asked the cashier to wait because he wanted to treat our family. I was shocked, of course, and told Jake that we appreciated his gracious offer, but that it was not necessary (I knew he already used part of his paycheck to help his family on a regular basis). I tried to insist that we would pay. Jake placed his hand on my shoulder, looked into my eyes, and simply said, "*Scott, I can never repay 'you guys' for all that you have done for me and all of the other kids; please let me do this?'*". By 'you guys', Jake was referring to all those who have ministered to him at YFC. I graciously conceded as many amazing relational & ministry moments with Jake flashed before my mind. I hugged him and thanked him and told him I'd let the other ministers at the Garage know as well. I was reminded that we rarely get to see all of the ways that God is using us to impact the lives and thoughts of others as we minister in Christ's name (and Spirit/Love)! May we all continue to press on in our call to be ambassadors for Christ in our communities and world. We can know that God is ever-faithful to be working behind the scenes in every heart/mind!

Please pray for Jake and his girlfriend Katie (who we continue to see). They both are still seeking with regard to faith in Christ; pray for continued opportunities to be part of their faith journey!

SPECIAL THANKS

A big thank you to **Grace Church in Bath** and one of their small groups for collecting a car full of needed supplies for the GARAGE! Thank you for your generous hearts!

Thank you to the **Saal family from Freshwater Church** that brought a meal that fed our teen parents and kiddos and the Middle school crew! Plus they helped with babysitting! Thanks for loving on our kids!

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Happy Groundhog Day! | Steve Pausch

February 2 is Groundhog Day. The fate of winter is decided by a rodent and his shadow. Or so the story goes! Many of us are familiar with the movie "Groundhog Day", where a newscaster who has been assigned to cover Punxsutawney Phil and his shadow, awakens again and again to the same day.

I feel a bit like that this month with regards to this newsletter article! This marks my 27th year on staff with Youth for Christ. That's 27 years of newsletter articles that attempt to connect you with what is happening in the life of our ministry! Some months there have been exciting events to report or great stories about kids and changed lives to share. Yet, for most of the months of those 27 years, I have been telling you how relationships are our model for ministry..... How we spend a lot of time with kids.... In a lot of different ways—weekly club-type events, trips, retreats, one-on-one dinner appointments, lock-ins, rafting trips, juvenile justice ministry in detention centers, service projects, and the like. And this month the story is no different. You will see a re-cap of ministry activity in Fremont, a divinely appointed lunch with a student, plans for an upcoming whitewater rafting trip, a story about a lot of new, young faces in Wadsworth and a call to pray for us as we minister to teens. Everything we do is intended to build relationships with teens, showing them we care, and earning the right to hear their story and to share the life-changing story of Jesus, the Savior who goes after those who are lost. Our story has not changed for years!! So, Happy Groundhog Day! It's in the every day relationship-building that God enters in, shows His grace, convicts us of truth and draws us and teens to Jesus—even when it seems like the same deal over and over! Thank you for hearing our story, praying for our work, and supporting us in so many ways!

Trials and Excitement of Youth | Matt Mountjoy

“O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds ” – Proverbs 71:17

The book of Psalms is filled with acknowledgment of the struggles of life and trials, even those of believers. Psalmists also reflect back on their foundation and strength of their faith coming from youth. It's also no secret that the Bible often references youth in its time period of excitement and having vigor. Excitement, youthful vigor, and trials are things we certainly see a great deal of at The Garage (the Wadsworth ministry site) with our students. The exciting thing is that we have the opportunity to share with them the teachings of their Father and Creator! It is our hope and prayer that not only can we impact and change their lives now, but we can also help provide them with a foundation on which they can build their faith that can guide them through their lives.

Right now is an exciting time at The Garage where we are seeing high numbers of young students. On any given night this year probably 80% of our high school students are freshmen or sophomore. This in itself provides wonderful challenges and fun at the same time. With a group of young students you find less maturity and more silliness at times when you're trying to get serious with them. On the flip side you see a lot of excitement to participate and openness to engage. This atmosphere along with the great task of sharing God's word and teaching them about Jesus leads to unpredictable nights that are rarely dull and a time where you can be frustrated one minute, but then see incredible breakthroughs with students the next.

It's encouraging for the future to see a good base of young students seemingly growing. Please be praying for them to hear the Word of God and that they, too, may one day look back and reflect on how the teachings of God have guided them from their youth. Also be praying for our older students that they can find this and grow in maturity and be positive influences for the younger students!

Widespread Prayer | John Roush

One of the remarkable aspects of being part of the Youth for Christ movement is to know that five essentials for a fruit and sustainable ministry have been identified and are followed. Those five essentials are 1. Widespread Prayer, 2. Loving Relationships, 3. Faithful Bible Teaching, 4. Collaborative Strategy and 5. Adults Who Empower. It is appropriate that Prayer is number one. Widespread Prayer is truly an essential part of our ministry at Youth for Christ of Northern Ohio (YFCNO). Each week we email a prayer list email to faithful individuals to guide their prayers for our ministry. The list is also used by the YFCNO Board members who pray on a teleconference each Saturday morning. If you would like to join the praying recipients of this weekly email prayer list, please contact Barb Pfeiffer at info@northernohioyfc.com and ask her to add your name to the recipient list. Don't forget the Lord hears and answers our prayer.

2017 Re-cap of Fremont/Tiffin | Doug Bryant

2017 was an amazing year. We started 4 brand new programs, continued our annual Lock-in reaching 200 teens in one night, and continued to grow our longstanding programs in the area such as YFC Core Fremont and Tiffin, and Juvenile Justice Ministry visitation.

The new programs are as follows:

CityLife: CityLife reaches teens "right where they are" with their hurts, habits, and hang-ups. They are a great community to get to know and share Jesus with.

Campus Life High School: Hosted at Fremont High School, this program gives teens a place to play crazy games, invite friends, and have a discussion on life skills with gospel presentation.

Campus Life Tiffin High School: CL Tiffin is a brand new offshoot of the YFC Core Tiffin kids that is offering a different time and more evangelistic message .

Juvenile Justice Ministry Aftercare: JJM AfterCare is geared to connect trained mentors with teens who are either in probation or in the JJM.

We are looking forward to what each of these programs has to offer in 2018 as these programs are enhanced and continue to grow. Thank you to all donors and volunteers of 2017. We could not have done it without you!

Whitewater Rafting in the Works | Roger Seward

Winter is only half over and we're already starting to look forward to summer. Summer means warmer weather and our annual WHITEWATER RAFTING TRIP! It's going to be bigger this year than last year. We'll have at least three ministry sites participating, and estimate about 800 teens. (Just kidding on the "800" part, but it'll be a larger group than last year.) The trip takes place on June 7-9! Thursday will include time in the water park, dinner, and an evening get-together in one of the camp pavilions. Friday is our big day. We'll have a buffet breakfast courtesy of ACE Adventure resort, followed by a full day trip on the New river. We'll wrap up Friday with activities and an evening program. Then, on Saturday morning we'll drag our tired bodies out of bed, pack up, and head back to Ohio. Is it a great time? Is it scary at times? Is it more than just an adventure? Ask any of the teens who've been there. God is good.

