

place in their eyes than in ours. 30 years ago there were certain “givens” we saw in our future. Everyone I knew planned to get married, had a career path, wanted lots of children, and a big house on a great street. Today’s teens seem to want to avoid marriage maybe because they have not seen a good family dynamic. Today’s teens live in the now. They don’t seem to plan far down the road. It’s almost as if they have no hope for a good future. Teens have seen a lot of pain in childhood. If not their own, they know enough friends who have struggles to not want a large family. We learned a lot that day and hope to be able to dig deeper as we play “The Game of Life” each week and minister to hurting teens. If life was only as simple as spinning a wheel, picking up a card, and moving your game piece we would all look at life different. Life is full of the unexpected, the unplanned, and the next surprise. Please pray for us as we seek to help the teens we work with find the Hope of Jesus and get to the end of the Game by securing the prize.... A life as a Christ Follower.

A young man recently asked me at one of our afterschool times, “When are you going to be open every day after school? I love it here” When he asked me that question, there were still so many questions about the virus, what would be allowed, and where things were going. We are looking forward to the days when we can be open up everyday after school, feeding teens, helping with homework, and engaging in conversations relevant to their lives, but not yet. Currently, we have guidelines and cleaning protocols in place that the health department saw as a really, really good standard. We have adult leaders only attending programming one day a week and an online sign up process for teens to keep numbers at a reasonable level.

We want to be open up every day and are moving toward that goal. We have so many opportunities to minister to teens in the Brunswick area and are planning many events to communicate the life changing message of Jesus to them. Please pray for our planning and for wisdom, as we look to be open and available to the teens in Brunswick. If you'd like to take a virtual tour, visit our web site: www.northernohioyfc.com. On the home page, see the info in the lower right corner for That Place for Teens.

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**March 2021**

We have begun playing old board games with students at our teen centers as a way to get them talking and find out a little more about their lives. Gone are the days when a family would sit and play a game together on a Friday night. Now, it seems teens are often holed up in their rooms all alone playing a video game or making a Tik Tok video. The games we remember from days gone by still have a great way of bringing people together. Monopoly, Clue, Battleship, Guess Who, Sorry, Trouble, Stratego are all great games.

Recently, we broke out the game of Life and sat down with our snacks to see what life had in store for us. I had no idea what insights I would gain into the lives of the young people as we played this simple game. As you may remember players move around the board by spinning a wheel and choosing a card which helps to direct their “Life” within the game. There are many decisions that come into play in the course of the game.

- The first big choice was **College or Career**.... None of the teens thought college was a good choice.
- **Marriage**...If given the option of living together I think they would have picked that.
- **Have Children**...It seemed no one was interested in having kids
- **Buy Insurance**...Seemed like a waste of money to the teens
- **Buy a House**...Not worth it, too much trouble
- **Change Careers** ... Always looked greener on the other side
- **Plan for retirement**... No such thing



We found out a lot about the teens we played the game with that afternoon. The world is a different

Continued on back page

God at Work | Laurie Beal

We recently received a message to our website with "thank you" as the subject that started, "I don't know if any of you will remember me...?" As ministry workers with teenagers, this is one of our favorite type of emails to get. For starters, we invest way more time and energy and worry and prayer into these young people than they would ever imagine, so that question always makes me smile. OF COURSE, we remember YOU is always what I think before I even get to the name. Then secondly, teenage ministry is a hard gig because you love these kids, watch them grow and learn and develop relationships with Christ, and then they move on as new ones come in the doors. Social media helps us keep in touch with some, but we always are wondering about past kids.

We are always eager to read a message that starts that way! The gal went on to explain that she had come to help at the teen moms group in 2012 and got to know what the Garage was about and fell in love with it. I immediately remembered that, back then this gal was staying with her aunt and uncle at the time, and they had asked if there was any way I could mentor her and get her involved in helping. I, of course, said yes and welcomed this gal in as a helper with the babies during group and with clean up and serving. She became part of the group quickly and also participated in the discussions as she helped. Her background was less than ideal and it took her a minute to trust. But then she DID! She had a big heart and was fun to be around. And she was a bit sassy, which I like and resonate with. Her letter went on to say how she was blessed that she had the opportunity to be part of the Garage and that she had received certificates in recovery and addiction counseling and will be graduating from college this spring!

She then shared "My goal is to someday be able to get a similar program going on here in Hollister, Missouri. Thank you for what you have inspired me to do. Thank You for helping other kids like me have a better shot at life. Thank You for being vulnerable and dedicating your life to something so amazing.... my first project will be setting something up for the youth especially the teen moms who have no support around here. Thank you for giving me a shot and believing in me. I learned more from you than you can believe."

I love when God let's us see fruit! So thankful! And I'm thankful we are now back in touch and catching up on life! And that I can be praying for specifics for her again! She explained that nine years later she still reads all the newsletters we send. I didn't even know she was on the email list! So, I'm guessing she'll be reading this article. So "C" ...yes, of course, I remember you, and I can't wait to be reading the newsletter from YOUR ministry!

Wednesday Night Update | Matt Mountjoy

What a difference a night makes, Wednesday to Thursday. Well rather, what a difference an individual group of kids make! While things are going well with the older established Thursday night Garage crew, I figured I'd give you another update on our Wednesday night group. I should first point out that the general format between the two nights is almost identical, just different lesson series but always aimed at sharing the gospel each week. The Wednesday night crew has grown to be about 12 core guys that we see a few times each month and generally around 8 on any given Wednesday. It's great to be able to see the same kids consistently and to be able to build an impactful relationship with them. So, please pray for this to continue with the consistency. However, on the other hand, please be praying for this group to branch out and bring more people in! While I love having a group of my football players to be able to spend time with, it's also a goal to share the gospel with as many kids as we can!

The group is a fun group that definitely enjoys goofing around, they have also clearly enjoyed getting to know Steve Pausch as he has become a regular fixture on Wednesday nights lately. While they are getting used to seeing me in a different role other than their coach, I think it's evident they enjoy having another adult regularly in the mix that they only see in the YFC capacity. I'm not sure who gets the better of the other though when it comes to teasing, Steve or the kids. At any rate it's entertaining! As a group they have definitely grown when it comes to settling in and listening for the discussions. While sometimes it can still take a minute to get their focus, I do believe they are listening. One major difference between them and the Thursday night crew is that they don't seem to be as willing to open up and be raw and real about their lives. I'm not sure if this is because they are still working on seeing me as more than a coach, or just the established open atmosphere on Thursday nights has been developed for a longer time and is part of the culture. The other exciting update is that a group of friends has begun providing meals for many of the Wednesday night meetings. While this is a huge answer to prayer, we still have vacant nights. Which brings me to my closing ask: first continue to pray for this group and its growth and that the kids grow to know God. Second, pray for opportunity to continue to share the Gospel with more students. Third, if you are looking for a way to get involved one easy way would be making frozen meals that we can heat up for dinner. If you are interested in doing that or getting involved in any other way, please contact us!

We're Back | Steve Pausch

Recently ,we were given the go-ahead by the administration at the Sandusky County Juvenile Detention Center to once again begin in-person ministry to the young men and women incarcerated there. Week-day meetings and Sunday services will resume, and these often misunderstood teens will have a chance to have caring adults share the love of Christ with them. Please pray for good times of connection even with a less than ideal environment due to poor choices.