

YOUTH
FOR SIOUXLAND
CHRIST

THE MESSAGE

SPRING 2022

Are you the ONE?

By Karl Van Cura, Executive Director

In John 5, Jesus approached a lame man by the pool. He had been an invalid for years and believed if he rolled in the pool at the right time, he'd be healed. When Jesus saw him lying there, he knew he had been in this condition for decades. Then Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get well?" At YFC, our hearts are burdened because so many young people are lame (if you will) in the pit of despair, isolation, trauma, anxiety, or depression. They are literally lying in front of us on their mats.

Just like the lame man, young people we serve at our ministry sites come with their superstitions that just hanging out with friends and Christians will make them well. But like the lame man, when asked if he wanted to get well, many young people share, "I have no one to help me."

Coming alongside today's youth in their pivotal moments, sharing the Gospel, advocating and mentoring, and offering discipleship or life skills in the Bible is what YFC does best. As you will read in this newsletter edition, it only takes ONE consistent relationship with a lost kid to make an eternal difference. ONE loving adult sharing the Gospel about Jesus, the one who heals and makes them well. We cannot let them miss Jesus!

Are you the ONE? Well, yes you are! We need more ONES praying for lost youth to come to know Jesus. We need more ONES walking alongside young people in juvenile detention, our neighborhoods, or schools. We need more ONES sending workers into the field. So whether you can pray, volunteer or give, make a decision today to be the ONE. Please look for the QR codes embedded in this newsletter that take you directly to forms for more information about taking your next step to be the ONE.

GROWING UP EMERGENT LEADERS INTO LEADERS OF YOUTH

By Hailey Rice, Communications Coordinator

We continue to grow with staff changes and additions. We are pleased to announce that Abraham Curiel has moved to full-time as our Plymouth County Campus Life Director, and Drew Curiel has joined us part-time as our Tri-City City Life Director. You have more likely seen Abe and Drew's familiar faces around YFC at one point or another.

Abe and Drew began their journey at YFC during their teenage years. "The first time I remember YFC, my family and I were walking around the neighborhood one summer and we saw a free summer meal program," said Drew. That meal program happened to be at YFC. While the meal is what got them in the doors, the siblings then became connected to the Teen Center. But it was more than just the fun and games that kept them coming back. "I stayed because it was a positive place to hang out with my friends," Drew added, and Abe agreed, "I liked the leaders and eventually connected with some at church."

What started as a couple of kids stopping by for a free meal, grew into young people who developed relationships with trusted adults and most importantly, a relationship with Jesus.

Abe and Drew are examples of how YFC strives to connect kids with the church and raise up emergent leaders. What started as a couple of kids stopping by for a free meal, grew into young people who developed relationships with trusted adults and most



importantly, a relationship with Jesus. Now, Abe and Drew are giving back and pouring into the lives of kids just like them through YFC programs, sharing the hope of Jesus.

Executive Director, Karl Van Cura, has known Abe and Drew since Drew was about 12 years old. He comments on witnessing their growth and addition to the staff, "I said to myself when I first met Drew, 'that girl will be in youth ministry one day.' So I chose to invest several years into both Drew and Abe through YFC and my church youth programs, hoping one day they would become the leaders I saw them as. I can now say investing in them has paid off."

YFC seeks out loving adults to support and uplift young people in our communities and raise a new generation of leaders like Abe and Drew. If you are interested in giving life to young people's stories, connect with us at yfc@siouxlandyfc.org or by calling 712-255-9599 or scan the volunteer QR code.

volunteer >



YOUTH LIVING THROUGH TRAUMA NEED LOVING ADULTS

By Rachele "Shelli" Rawson, JJM Director

In our Juvenile Justice Ministry, we are blessed with many outstanding volunteers and would not be able to spread the Gospel to as many young people without them. Within the JJM programs, struggling youth are paired with trustworthy, loving adults, like Advocate Charley, who was paired with her mentee Madison. Their relationship serves as a testament to the success and growth that these young people often experience.

Madison grew up through much trauma, leaving her feeling unloved by those around her. She frequently transferred between emergency shelters and different group homes. Charley first met Madison in Juvenile Detention, and soon Madison was transferred to a treatment facility. However, she ran away from the facility and could not be located.

For months, Charley and many others searched for her mentee. During this time,

Charley sat and wrote her letters so she would know just how loved and missed she was. Months later, Madison was found after overdosing and Charley rushed to her side. The letters were shared with Madison at this time, and something was noticeably different between them.

After seeing how Charley never gave up on her, Madison felt loved and their bond became stronger.

Without advocates like Charley, many of these high-risk, traumatized youth would be struggling alone, however, YFC intentionally reaches out to them in the most pivotal moments in their lives.



If you are interested in becoming an advocate or want to learn more about how the JJM programming supports youth in institutions, please contact Rachele "Shelli" Rawson at Rachele@siouxlandyfc or call (712-255-9599) or scan the volunteer QR code.

CONNECTING WITH SIOUX CITY HIGH SCHOOLS

By Jim Cole, Tri-City Area Director

The opportunities and doors continue to open for Siouxland Youth For Christ. Last fall, prayers were answered and YFC was given an opportunity to enter into all three Sioux City High Schools. In February, we began providing three full time positions, locating one staff at each high school during the school year. While each school has a slightly different job description, the overall goal is to help students be successful at school.

In the first 2 months, we've been available to break up a few fights, provide a shoulder to cry on, pray with staff and students, and share the Gospel. At North High, we secured a room and cultivated a couple of volunteers for an after school small group, where we talk more freely about life and faith with students. Calee Ewing, our Campus Life Director, has temporarily taken on this new position at North High school.

Tony Dunnick is located at East High School. Outside of YFC, he is a Worship

and Creative Arts Pastor at Sioux City First Church. He is a singer, songwriter, and guitar teacher.

Tony also works as an on-site news videographer and Home Health aide. He is married with four children and enjoys spending time with family and seeing people restored by God.



Tony Dunnick

We are excited to welcome Tony Dunnick and Jeremy Robertson to the YFC staff!

Jeremy Robertson, is located at West High School. Jeremy, a native of Jackson, MS, has served the Siouxland community

as a pastor at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church since October 2017. He is a man who wears many hats, but most of all a servant. He studied at Kingdom Theological Seminary and holds a Masters in Theology. He and his wife Keiona have two children. Jeremy lives by the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"

We are excited to have Tony and Jeremy join our YFC staff, and for Calee's transition. We're looking forward to the continual work God is doing in the lives of students in our high schools. As we navigate through this new partnership, please be praying over Jeremy, Tony, Calee, and the students they are serving.



Jeremy Robertson

WHAT IS SEE THE STORY /BE THE STORY?

By Grace Nordquist, Community Engagement Coordinator

The "See The Story" and "Be The Story" process was developed at Youth For Christ USA as a three step relational way to invite people to learn more about the mission and purpose of our organization. The goal would be to find like-minded people who also have a heart for our mission. This method has been recently implemented in Sioux City, specifically the Northside area, from March through May.

Step 1 - See The Story

The See The Story ministry tour is like a "first date". Over a few months we invite and encourage people to "meet" YFC for the first time or get "reacquainted" with us through a 50-minute ministry tour. During the tour, guests learn about the mission and passion of YFC to transform the lives of youth, their families, and our community. This is done through engaging stories of staff, volunteers, and kids whose lives have been impacted by our mission, and sharing about our ministry models and goals.

Step 2 - Following Up

Do you remember a time you went on a first date? After a first date there are often questions like, "How did it go? What did the other person think? Will there be another date?" Similar to this, we make sure to follow up with each person who attends a See The Story to answer questions they have about YFC. Then after the "second date", if someone is interested, we invite them to a third date.

Step 3 - Be The Story

The "third date" is our Be The Story one-hour program. During the program, we share impactful volunteer and student stories through both videos and live testimonies while guests enjoy a complimentary dinner. At this point, the goal is that many of the guests would have attended a See The Story tour and been followed up by a team member. So now we're ready to invite them to take the next step in partnering in our mission through financial, volunteer, or prayer support.



Instead of jumping to the third date, at YFC we decided we wanted to give people the opportunity to learn about us before committing to partnering with us. We understand that giving of your time, talents and treasure is important and we want you to sow where you are called. If YFC is that place, we want to thank you for helping us reach 2,400 young people with the hope of Jesus every year.

Since this process began we've had 33 people pledge to volunteer or pray, and raised over \$23,000 the night of the Be The Story event, which is being matched dollar for dollar up to \$25,000 with an additional \$22,000 pledged each year over the next 3 years, all committed to grow our northside community ministry. Check out our website for upcoming opportunities or connect with Grace at grace@siouxlandyfc.org.

HELLO YFC CAMP, OUR DEAR OLD FRIEND!

By Tom Cook, Siouxland Camp Coordinator

We are excited to announce Siouxland YFC is going back to YFC camp!

We will be taking students from all three communities (Hawarden, Le Mars, Sioux City) back to camp this summer! We will be traveling to Detroit Lakes, Minnesota for High School Camp from June 19-24. Then we will be in Ogden, Iowa for Middle School Camp from July 26-30. The students can't wait for these camps which they've described as fun and memorable, helping them become "a better person and developing their relationship with God."

YFC Camp exists to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus by creating a transformational environment for young people through authentic relationships, shared experiences, outdoor challenges, and times of solitude that draw students

to the heart of God.

You can be a part of a student's journey to camp! Consider partnering with us by helping to send a kid to camp through your financial gift. \$500 will send one kid to camp for an entire week, so they can have the opportunity to hear about the love of Jesus.

If you are interested in sending your kid or volunteering to be part of this year's summer camp, contact Tom Cook in Hawarden at tom@siouxlandyfc.org, Abe Curiel in Le Mars at abraham@siouxlandyfc.org, or Drew Curiel in Sioux City at drew@siouxlandyfc.org. Thank you for helping make a difference in the life of a young person.



give >

GOD'S ANSWER TO ADDRESSING TRAUMA

By Roxie Rahn, Plymouth County City Life Director

It's no surprise that young people are experiencing stress and trauma like never before. So what's the answer to help them deal with the stress and trauma? Is it counseling? Medication? While those things can be helpful in some situations, that is not the ONE solution that we've found at YFC to be successful.

Trauma is a buzzword much talked about in our society today, and for good reason. Trauma or Toxic Stress can become hard-wired into a young person's brain. Toxic Stress can be anything from abuse (physical, sexual, emotional), neglect (physical or emotional), loss of a close relative, homelessness, divorce of parents, or violence in the home.

For a child living with Toxic Stress for long periods of time, the brain rewires for survival and is almost always in fight or flight mode. Toxic Stress in early childhood manifests in behaviors of edginess, emotional detachment, short-fused or explosive tempers, impulsiveness, and hypervigilance.

When these youth enter the school setting, they are required to sit still and focus for long periods of time. Here lies their challenge, because their brains don't allow them to rest. They quite literally are not capable of resting, resulting in behavioral issues and truancy.

While much is being done to intercept and diagnose trauma at earlier ages in the health field, many young people often get misdiagnosed as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD.) Another common diagnosis is Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). These diagnoses place students on medication to help with these behaviors. While the

medication may cool the temper and the energy may lessen, this does not address the root of the trauma.

One study¹ has been done across the country with tens of thousands of youth over the last 20 years. One intervention has consistently proven to help youth deal with trauma and regain health (physically, emotionally and mentally). What is this intervention? Having ONE consistent, trustworthy adult to walk with them through life. Just ONE! This could be a teacher, youth pastor, mentor/advocate, or relative.

YFC has many ONES who have decided to invest their time and love into young people experiencing trauma. We are so thankful for each ONE who prays for our youth, opening God's healing power. For each ONE who gives of your resources to keep this ministry operating. And for each ONE who gives time and love to young people in our community who need someone to walk with them on the path to healing.

We are humbled and thankful for each ONE of you. ONE person with one young person at a time, we can impact our entire community with the hope of Jesus. If you're interested in becoming the ONE and giving of your resources, time, or prayer please reach out to us at roxie@siouxlandyfc.org.

¹ACE Study in 1994 by the Department of Preventive Medicine in San Diego, funded by the CDC in partnership with Kaiser Health Insurance



AN AFTERNOON OF GOLF TO SEND AT-RISK TEENS TO YFC CAMP



YOUTH FOR CHRIST
GOLF CLASSIC
July 11, 2022
Whispering Creek
Golf Course
11AM shotgun start

Scan the QR code to register for golf or make a donation to send a kid to camp.



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