



**2023 WINTER
NEWSLETTER**

LOVING PASSIONATE PURSUIT

By Drew Curiel, Tri-City City Life Director

There was a boy who used to regularly attend the Teen Center and seemed to always put a smile on everyone's face. He was a leader and participated in all the discussions about God. However, as he reached High School he slowly stopped coming to the Teen Center. Unfortunately, he started hanging out with the wrong crowd and got caught up doing things he never thought he would. After failed attempts to reach out, we lost track of him as he became wrapped up in his new world.

I don't want to be like this anymore.

But as you'll notice, YFC has a passionate pursuit and we are not quick to give up loving our kids. We continued to pray for him and believed he would come back to the Father. Then, about two years later, he walked into the Teen Center and asked for prayer for some personal situations that were going on in his life. He confessed to some of the bad habits he'd gotten himself into saying, "I don't want to be like this anymore."

Praise God, out of all the places he could've gone to, he came here, back to his YFC family. This story shows the beauty, trust, and love that happens when a student builds a relationship with a Christ-centered adult where they feel safe to be vulnerable and their real self. It's a beautiful example of the prodigal son returning to the love of his Father and the Father calling his children to return to Him.



Yes, I want to bring hope and impact more kids!

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LOVE DOES

By Karl Van Cura, Executive Director

In Bob Goff's book called "Love Does", one of the most popular highlighted quotes by readers states, "the kind of love that God created and demonstrated is a costly one because it involves sacrifice and presence." Did you catch that? Love has a cost involving sacrifice and presence.

Jesus said it best in Matthew 3, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son..." His Love has a cost, the sacrifice of His only son Jesus, crucified.

Goff explains that love is taking action, being more like Jesus, displaying compassion, love, and hope for the hurting. At Youth For Christ, it is our passion to pursue and love young people who are far from God. Like God's action, there is a cost and sacrifice involved.

We passionately desire to develop additional Christ-sharing relationships moving towards 2,400 every single year. These could lead to hundreds of young people making first-time decisions to follow the risen Christ annually. However, these relationships don't come easy. They involve our sacrifice, our presence, and our love. It pains a ministry leader's patience to continue pursuing teens when they leave these relationships. It challenges a ministry leader to continue encouraging when things don't come easy for a young person. That's what love does.

At YFC, we long for the Lord to add lost kids to His Kingdom every day. This is possible for the Lord, but we can't do this by ourselves. While reading our newsletter, I ask that you join us in prayer. Ask for others to join us in sacrificing, praying, resourcing, pursuing, loving, and being present with lost youth while joining God in His Kingdom work through His risen Son.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

JUSTIN SUNDT

Justin Sundt lives in Bronson, Iowa and is a Territory Sales Manager. He's been volunteering in Le Mars since July of 2017. Justin hangs out with the students Friday nights at the teen center and Thursday sports nights in the summer. He's even helped out in Sioux City with basketball as well (we think Justin might enjoy sports...) Although playing sports and hanging out with kids is a ton of fun, the main reason Justin volunteers is to be able to show God's love to the students and to spend time with them to show them that they matter. He comments that a lot of students yearn for someone to spend time with them and they don't always have a good example to look up to.

"I am not perfect by any means but I try to show Jesus' example the best I can."

One of Justin's favorite memories is during sports night watching some of the more athletically gifted students encourage the ones who might not be as athletically gifted. He also notes that trivia battles or knowledge battles with some of the students who really get into it are also a lot of fun.



HALEY GREEN

Haley Green lives in the South Dakota / Siouxland area and is a Kindergarten Paraeducator and Cosmetologist. She first started volunteering in Le Mars in 2015, often using her gifts to give students haircuts and help them get ready for school dances. In 2020, she started volunteering full-time in Sioux City at the Teen Center. Haley volunteers to show kids love, many of whom often don't know what that feels like. "They have nobody in their corner, nobody to show them what support or encouragement is.

I felt called by God to love the ones who don't feel loved."

More importantly, she wants students to know in their hearts that God loves them and because God loves them "they belong and are a part of a family." Haley's favorite part of volunteering is building relationships with the students and watching them grow, getting to know both their strengths and weaknesses. She loves being a friend, listening, and letting them know they're not alone. When it comes to a favorite memory Haley says there are "way too many, but definitely anytime there's a dance or karaoke party." But another core memory was during a small group when her group of boys started to act out the story of David and Goliath. It was both funny and powerful, she says, "I pray that memory stays with them forever and that they see themselves like David the Shepherd who can overcome any giant with God in their lives!"



REBECCA SMIT

Rebecca Smit lives in Hawarden, IA. By day she is a Domestic Engineer and Home Educator, but on Thursday evenings, she spends her time at the Hawarden Teen Center where she's volunteered since 2020. Prior to volunteering with YFC City Life, she also volunteered for 6 years in Campus Life (2004-2010). When it comes to her "why," Rebecca says, "There are many reasons I volunteer. Some of the top reasons are...to share what Jesus has done for me with students,

also it brings me joy to invest my time into others, and it's fun to hang out with middle and high school students at the Teen Center."

Although there are many things she loves about volunteering with YFC, hearing students' stories and building friendships with them is her favorite. As far as her favorite memory, that might be even harder to pick. The week she volunteered after YFC camp this summer she notes as memorable. She says hearing how God worked in students' hearts and lives and even one student saying that Jesus was their favorite part of camp has been a core memory for Rebecca.



By giving me a second chance

Jeremy, 16

By taking care of me and my family

Oscar, 14

He gives me confidence that no matter what, I'll always be okay

Wendy, 15

Giving me food and health

Michelle, 12

He gives me the ability to make friends

Ian, 13

He takes care of me

Yareli, 12

By dying on the cross for me

Tristen, 14

He is always there to help me succeed

Jonathan, 17

We asked YFC Students,
"How does God show his love to you?"

Giving me shelter and food

Karsen, 13

He makes sure I get to The Teen Center

Wyatt, 12

By giving me the ability to do fun things

Jacob, 12

By helping you heal

Brylee, 13

He changed everything for me and provides food, water, and shelter.

Joe, 15

By helping me get through school

Raul, 17

By making me happy every day

Alan, 15

Que me cuida

Ruby, 16

He forgives my sins

Makenzye, 12



GOD IS MOVING IN AKRON... WE'RE TRYING TO KEEP UP!

By Jim Rahn, Plymouth County Area Director



After praying for the community of Akron and attempting to start ministry many times over the past 15+ years, Akron ministry is finally beginning!

In 2022, Siouxland YFC formed a local launch team and began studying the feasibility of ministry in this community which included prayer, one-on-one conversations, surveys, and a town hall meeting. We came to the conclusion that the Akron community is ready for an outreach ministry to middle and high school students, so we are excited to announce the start of a High School Campus Life Club this spring!

Our Be the Story event on January 15th provided information about YFC, our strategic plan, including future ministry in Akron, as well as opportunities for the community to partner with us in our mission as we prepare to launch ministry in Akron. We communicated the need for volunteers, prayer warriors, and a goal of \$20,000 per year in funding for the next three years (or \$60,000 total). We asked God to answer our prayers based on Ephesians 3:20-21 which says:

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

He provided far more abundantly, indeed. To date, the total impact of the event is over \$38,400 plus numerous volunteers and prayer partners! The community has been incredibly supportive and encouraging and for that we are so grateful.

The next steps to launching ministry in Akron include developing a Community Support Team, forming and training a Volunteer Team, identifying and equipping a Ministry site leader and then preparing to start High School Campus Life ministry. We are excited for this opportunity and asking God to begin working in the lives of kids, even now, for a harvest of souls in Akron-Westfield schools! Please pray with us for continued favor in the community of Akron as we prepare for the launch of ministry this spring.



Upcoming Events:

- Hawarden Be The Story, Feb. 2023
- Winter Retreat. Feb. 2023
- Champions Event, March 2023
- Akron ministry launching Spring 2023
- Sioux City Eastside
See The Story/Be The Story,
April/May 2023



click for events

Immediate Needs:

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or visit our website.

- Winter gear: stocking hats, gloves, coats, etc.
- Game Equipment: ping pong paddles/balls, pool sticks, air hockey sliders, pool table, pool ball set, chalk, AA batteries
- Notebooks
- Baked goods
- Large mop broom
- Vacuum



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