



315 N 4th St, Grand Forks, ND

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 14484, Grand Forks, ND 58208

## UPCOMING EVENTS

We are committed to growing relationships between caring adults and young people. We do this inside our club setting, outside during appointments or during a building time event as listed below. All youth are welcome to sign up for our activities. Just contact Chelsea or sign-up on line so we can plan on your participation.

- Aug 23 GF 10 MI Race Serving Activity, Grades 6–12, All Clubs
- Aug 27 Thompson Campus Life Club Start @ Thompson School
- Aug 29 Valley Middle School (VMS) Campus Life Start @ VMS
- Sept 3 Area Youth Ministry Leaders/Pastors Luncheon
- Sept 4 Red River High School (RRHS) Campus Life Start @ RRHS
- Sept 7 Camp Fundraiser TBD, Grades 6–12, All Clubs
- Sept 9 Area High School Campus Life Club Start @ Lighthouse
- Sept 15 Volunteer Training, 12:30 @ Lighthouse
- Sept 18 Fall Bash, Grades 6–12, All Clubs
- Oct TBA Fields of Faith, Grades 6–12, All Clubs
- Oct 18 Giant Clue, Grades 6–12, All Clubs
- Oct 20 Volunteer Training, 12:30 @ Lighthouse
- Nov 5 Area Youth Ministry Leaders/Pastors Luncheon
- Nov 11 PROJECT SERVE, Grades 6-12 and All Clubs
- Nov 18-25 OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD all Clubs
- Nov 17 Volunteer Training, 12:30 @ Lighthouse
- Dec 3 Area Youth Ministry Leaders/Pastors Luncheon
- Dec 2 & 4 Decorate & Package Cookies @ Lighthouse
- Dec 9–13 PROJECT GIVE, Grades 6-12 @ Campus Life Last Clubs
- Dec 15 Volunteer Christmas Party, 12:30 @ Lighthouse
- Jan 6 AHS Campus Life Club Restart
- Jan 7 Area Youth Ministry Leaders/Pastors Luncheon
- Jan 7 Thompson Campus Life Club Restart
- Jan 8 Red River Campus Life Club Restart
- Jan 9 VMS Campus Life Club Restart
- Jan 20 Ski Trip, Grades 6-12 and All Clubs

CONTACT: [chelsea@grandforksyfc.com](mailto:chelsea@grandforksyfc.com) | 701 203-1928 | [WWW.GFYFC.ORG](http://WWW.GFYFC.ORG)

Follow us on Instagram: [@grandforksareayouthforchrist](https://www.instagram.com/grandforksareayouthforchrist)



A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF GRAND FORKS AREA YOUTH FOR CHRIST

# THE WITNESS

September 2024

## Temptation into Trust

It was an ordinary Tuesday with the exception that it was Kara's first day in the Regional Youth Assessment Center. The plan was for Kara, our newest volunteer, to observe and become familiar with our Juvenile Justice Ministry. God was moving to make it a day three of us will never forget.

Upon entering the day room, Leroy\* scrambled to the bookshelf grabbing a few bibles so we could read. I had met with Leroy the day prior and knew he had tough questions and was seeking answers from every available source offered to him. We sat down at a round table where Kara introduced and shared a little about herself. He is very social, but very straight forward. Leroy reciprocated by telling a little about himself but was more eager to read and seek answers to his questions.

We opened up the bible and began reading from John Chapter 1. John points to Jesus always being part of the Godhead. He was the word, He was in the beginning, and in Him was life and light. In the process of reading this chapter, we shared the gospel. Leroy was absorbing all that we read and explained. His actions placed Jesus on the cross and he understood Jesus' sacrifice.

At the same time, he had a nagging question about temptation. Leroy wanted to know if God was tempting him. We opened up to James Chapter 1. God was speaking directly to Leroy as James wrote, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. The desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death." Leroy was living in the darkness and the evil one's temptation was the root of why he was incarcerated. Yet, the evil one placed the blame on God.

That day, Leroy heard the truth! His eyes were opened. He met Jesus and understood Jesus' great love for him. He also understood that Jesus never intended that kind of life for him. Leroy turned away from his sinful nature that day and declared Jesus as Lord and personal Savior of his life.

\*Name Changed

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matthew Steien  
Billie Kellar  
Dan Olson  
Landon Stoner  
Riley Folson

### STAFF

Sean Patterson  
Chelsea McCreary

### Relational Ministry Actions

- Contacting Teens
- Building Times
- Appointments with Teens
- Campus Life Clubs
- Small Groups
- CORE - Student Leadership
- Trips
- Events
- Follow-Ups with Teens

YFC reaches young people everywhere, working together with the local church and other like-minded partners to raise up lifelong followers of Jesus who LEAD by their godliness in lifestyle, devotion to the Word of God and prayer, passion for sharing the love of Jesus, and commitment to social involvement.

DOWNLOAD THIS NEWSLETTER OR GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AT [WWW.GFYFC.ORG](http://WWW.GFYFC.ORG)



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Moses records how God crafted everything out of nothing. From speaking light into existence to breathing life into man, God created a perfect world. When God finished creating each day he said it was good. After all six days Genesis verse 31 states, "And God saw everything that he made, and behold, it was very good." God established a purpose for man; to be fruitful and multiply filling the earth and subduing it and caring for it. After six days of orderly and intelligent design, God rested. He rested not because he was tired, out of ideas, and creatively exhausted. No, he blessed the seventh day and declared it holy. A day set apart and special.

Our Youth For Christ chapter is designed and operates in a manner consistent with God's word. We usually spend six days engaging in our mission and reserving one day for spiritually recharging that helps us to continue to pour into the lives of lost teenagers. Our chapter has also put into place a policy that allows leaders to intentionally step away from day to day operations in order to repair, restore, and rejuvenate our relationship with God and tend to the branches that bind us to Jesus Christ so we can continue to produce fruit.

All this to say, the Board of Directors has approved my request to step away from the mission for a 13 week sabbatical starting in September. After 11 years my branches need pruning and my spiritual cup needs some attention. I will take time to tend to the tendrils that cling to Christ and repair a few leaks and remove any calcification, lime, and or rust in my cup that may have built up over the years. My prayer is to restore the cup back to its original shape. I desire my cup to once again overflow to reach more youth with the gospel and to continue to love them unconditionally as Jesus does for as long as God calls me to this mission.

I plan to use this time to spiritually recharge and reset my spiritual life. During my absence I plan to focus on reading several books and continue learning to minister well to our staff, volunteers, and youth. I will be learning to shepherd others like Jesus shepherds each of us. I plan on taking time to be in the moment with my family as this year is full of transitions and life changes.

Our chapter remains committed to God's mission and His youth in the Grand Forks Area. So I anticipate our team to continue to pursue 11-19 year olds sharing the gospel and engaging them in healthy and positive relationships. We have plenty of clubs, events, and activities planned. Pray our efforts to connect with teens will produce life to their story; an eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

- In Christ, Sean



**"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."**

**John 1:5**

## Earning the Right to be Heard

Recently, I listened to a podcast episode where the speaker was talking about the ministry of "reclining". If you are like me, you might be thinking, "I wonder where this is going". The speaker continued sharing the times Jesus is recorded to be reclining with others in the Bible: around the table at The Last Supper as well as when the woman poured perfume over His feet. The speaker went on to make a point that Jesus unhurriedly spent time with others as He ministered to them. There was no time limit or rushing to another appointment, but the simplicity of giving Himself away to care for those in His presence. It made me think how as Christians, we are challenged to do the same. Often for me this is difficult because I like to plan my day in the way I want it to go. However, I am learning the essentiality and beauty of patiently spending time with others as we minister to them, especially when it comes to youth.

In the fall of 2023, Grand Forks YFC added a new ministry site to our Campus Life Clubs-Red River High School. It was there we engaged a young man named Nick\*. Upon invitation to hang out with us, he told us he didn't believe in God. I responded, "That's all right, your welcome to come hangout and have a donut!" Nick consistently came to every club after that. At club, he had the freedom to express his thoughts, ask questions, and build relationships. He often made remarks like, "You are the only friends I have," and "Can we do this more than once a week?" Often times, I could come to club with prepared lessons and the youth that were there would dive deep into the topic and passionately share their perspectives. I learned I needed to surrender my idea of my plan for club and allow God to work His. I needed to recline with the youth, listen to them, and respond to their thoughts. By doing this, I would also earn the right to be heard by them.

When summer was nearing, Nick let us know that he was very interested in coming to YFC Camp. We spent 104.5 hours with Nick that week pouring into him and showing him that he can be himself around us. At the end of the week, after the Gospel presentation and response, a medical event occurred with a youth (she is okay). This specific circumstance triggered a traumatic memory for Nick and he began to panic. I addressed Nick and tried to walk him through what was going on. Nick felt safe to share his memories that were scarred with violence and the loss of life. He confessed that it was those memories that keep him from believing in God and being able to show his true self. I felt the importance of listening with patience and asked him if had shared these thoughts before. He responded, "I've kept it in for two years, but sharing feels like such a relief." After I listened to him, he was more willing to hear God-centered responses to his story. I then encouraged him to open up with his male counselor and other male leaders here as they could connect with him even more deeply than I was able to.

Later that evening, Nick had connected with Sean who continued spiritually pouring into him. He expressed interest in wanting to return to camp and maybe someday being a counselor at a YFC camp. Sean asked, "Looking back at September, did you think you would be here right now?" Nick jokingly responded, "No... basically, donuts saved my life!"



We hope, pray, and trust someday Nick will let Jesus save his life. We spent all year reclining with Nick and all week at camp to earn the right to hear his story so we can continue to minister to his heart personally. Thank you for your support so we can continue going to Nick and other kids like him who so desperately want to be heard, know they're cared for, and crave to know truth. We know God has not given up on Nick and your support enables and proves that we have not either.

\*Name changed

-Chelsea McCreary



# Prayer and Financial Support Is Always Needed

LIKE TREES PLANTED ALONG THE RIVERBANK; BEARING FRUIT EACH SEASON. PSALM 1:3

As David wrote, those who meditate on the Lord day and night are like trees planted along the riverbank; bearing fruit each season. Likewise, we are planted in this community to bear fruit each season. This is done through the power of prayer, God's will and plan, and obedient followers.

Since October 1993, our chapter has consistently been sharing the Gospel and seeing young people's lives changed for the better. You can assist us as we continue to make an impact with youth in our community. Contact us to be a prayer warrior and to have your email added to our prayer chain.

Additionally, you can become a financial partner with us in many ways. You can pledge a monthly gift, support our fundraising campaigns, or give a one-time gift. NOTE: Unfortunately, Amazon has ended AmazonSmile program. Therefore, you will no longer be able to make purchases through smile.amazon.com and support us at the same time! To those who have supported us in the past using this method, thank you!

YFC USA's goal is to reach 1 million lost kids with the gospel annually. We want to be an integral part in reaching this goal. Our potential pool of teens is not as large as a major city across the United States. However, we want to maximize the number of teens in our area that will hear the gospel. Last year we worked with over 200 different teens. However, this is only 2-3% of the total number of teens that live in Grand Forks and the surrounding area. How can you help? Please consider using your talents, time, or treasure to increase our number of staff and volunteers, open up the Lighthouse more days of the week, and engage more teens in the coming year.

SEE HOW YOU CAN HELP GIVE LIFE TO YOUR STORY, [WWW.GFYFC.ORG/GET INVOLVED OR DONATE](http://WWW.GFYFC.ORG/GET INVOLVED OR DONATE)

## MINISTRY NEEDS

### WAYS TO GIVE AND SERVE

Have you ever thought about volunteering at a Campus Life Club or an upcoming One-Time event? How about baking cookies or making snacks that can be shared during club time? If so, contact Chelsea for details on how YFC needs help in those areas below.

- **Full Time Campus Life Director**
- Campus Life Volunteers
- Building Time Volunteers
- After School Volunteers

- Donated Drinks and Snacks for club and open hours

- **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**  
Sending 8 Boxes

Girls (4)/Boys (4) Items (Ages: 5—9, 10—14)

Acceptable Items to Package per Samaritan's Purse

Drop off Items @ Lighthouse by Nov 8th

Go on-line to our website to join our team!

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# YFC SUMMER FUN "Big Three Events"

## 4 Grand Forks Teens New to the Kingdom

YFC SUMMER CAMP— 185 students from across North Dakota attended camp this summer. Camp is a special place found on earth where teens are removed from the world and all its distractions for a week to focus on and be surrounded by God in every activity. This year, we partnered with Gospel Outreach sending a total of 19 boys and girls from Grand Forks to camp. The theme was Bedrock Faith. During the invitation, 8 youth repented of their sin and asked Jesus to be their Lord and personal Savior. What is even more exciting is that 4 of 8 were from Grand Forks. Additionally, 135 youth responded to the invitation in other ways that night, including two Grand Forks girls who recommitted their lives to Christ. The Holy Spirit was moving so strongly that for two hours after the invitation, the students just sang worship songs in the chapel and all the evenings activities were canceled.



## Newfound Sense of Self, Community, & God

YFC SUMMER BACKPACK— June of 2024 brought a great deal of rain across the plains and into MN. Due to the rain, we received news that some campsites at George H. Crosby Manitou State Park had been flooded out and were no longer usable. Thankfully, we had accidentally reserved a campsite (divine planning by God) on a hilltop for our trip. Four teens boys and two leaders accepted the challenge of the hilltop with



perseverance and grace as they trekked up and down every evening to retrieve water for camp. At the beginning of the trip, the boys were either strangers or acquaintances with each other as they came from each Campus Life Ministry site. However, by the end they were friends as they encouraged one another and worked as a team. These young men learned survival skills and also grew in confidence. Zane\*, in particular, began the trip unsure of himself and his potential, but by the end he had a new sense of self and what he could do. As he began to trust his community, Zane felt comfortable to ask questions about God during the daily devotionals. This trip was full of spiritual seed-plantings, and we cannot wait to see how God continues to grow them this fall.

## Jesus' Compassion is Life-Changing

YFC SUMMER BASH— 22 young people from Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, and Thompson responded to God's invitation to Summer Bash at the end of July. This event was covered in prayer requesting God to bring who He wanted to hear Jonnie Sharp's (current Red River Campus Life Volunteer) story. The morning of Summer Bash, we unexpectedly met 4 new young people and saw 8 we hadn't seen all summer long! The day was filled with authentic-Christ-sharing relationships between leaders and youth. These are essential to reach young people with the Gospel. James\*, a teen who is at a pivotal point in his life as he is soon to be starting his freshman year of high school, made an important decision that day that he wanted a friend in Jesus in high school and he needed Him for his salvation. James had heard the Gospel presented to him several times in the 2023-2024 school year as he was a regular attender of Campus Life Clubs at Valley, but he was never ready to take the step to follow Jesus. As Jonnie shared at Summer Bash and James related to the darkness and despair in the beginning, he was better able to see the light and hope of the compassion of Jesus when Jonnie and his father encountered Him. James decided he wanted that for himself upon hearing the invitation that the compassion of Jesus is for anyone who wants it. The remainder of the day God held off the rain and we continued to live out what Jonnie spoke of Jesus with these teens!



\*Name Changed



# Ministry Volunteer Highlights



We would love for you to get to know our newest member of the Board of Directors.

NAME: Riley Folson

OCCUPATION: Community Banker with First International Bank & Trust

WHY YFC?: YFC is playing a key role in our community by spreading God's word to kids who are consistently influenced by the world and its secular ideas.

FUN FACTS: I was born and raised in Grand Forks and graduated from the University of North Dakota in 2021 with a business management degree. I'm recently engaged and am getting married this fall.

## BOARD OF DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Determines and Stewards the Mission and Purpose of YFC
2. Selects the Executive Director
3. Supports and Evaluates the Executive Director
4. Ensures Effective Planning
5. Monitors and Strengthens Ministry Programs and Services
6. Defines the Board's Role in Development and Ensures Adequate Financial Resources
7. Protects Assets and Provides Financial Oversight
8. Builds and Maintains a Healthy, Christ-Centered Board
9. Ensures Legal and Ethical Integrity
10. Enhances YFC's Public Standing

If you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact Matt Steien at [matt@grandforksyfc.com](mailto:matt@grandforksyfc.com).

**"And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience."**

**-Luke 8:14-15 ESV**



# PRAYER REQUESTS

For financial resources and partners who give faithfully especially in this time of inflation and financial uncertainty

For the spiritual protection of the ministry and all activities and specific ministry sites:

- Valley Middle School
- Thompson School
- Red River HS
- The Lighthouse
- Grand Forks Youth Assessment Center

For God to raise up new leadership and our hearts on staff to be receptive to see how He is working (Matthew 9: 37 - 38)

For our staff, volunteers and their continued availability

For the Juvenile Justice Ministry/Shelter Care Ministry, the staff, and the kids that will be touched by this ministry

For our teens and all the challenges, hurdles, and distractions they face. May they keep their eyes focused on activities that are wholesome and good