A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF GRAND FORKS AREA YOUTH FOR CHIST

THE WITNESS

December 2026

A Story Still Being Written

Sometimes, the most important thing we can offer a young person is someone who cares enough to keep showing up.

I first met this young man at the Regional Youth Assessment Center in Grand Forks. At the time, he was a troubled youth trying to find his way through some difficult circumstances. Eventually, his mother made the decision to move their family out of North Dakota, believing it was the best thing for him.

But life in their new city brought challenges of its own. While there, he witnessed something no young person should ever have to experience: a close friend being murdered. That traumatic event became a turning point in his life. It was the catalyst for his return to North Dakota, where he eventually settled in Jamestown.

Today, he is connected with Jamestown Youth for Christ.

This summer, while traveling to the Black Hills with the Jamestown YFC group, our paths crossed again. It was good to reconnect and see him once more. His story reminded me just how much a young person's circumstances can change, and how important it is to have caring adults who are willing to walk alongside them.

He has been through more than most young people his age should ever have to face. As he continues to navigate life in Jamestown, having Youth for Christ involved in his life matters. YFC provides positive relationships, encouragement, guidance, and opportunities to make good decisions. It gives him a place to belong and caring adults who can help him stay on a better path rather than getting pulled back into trouble.

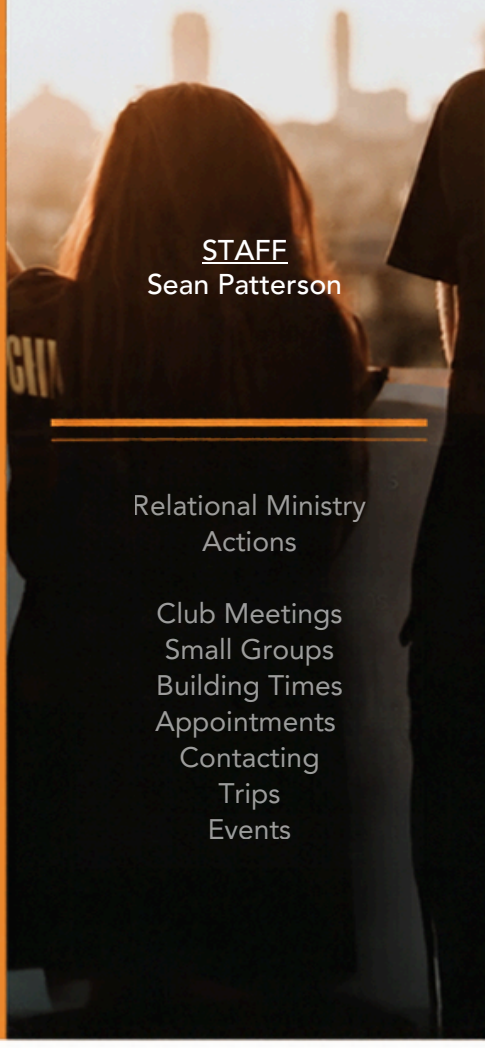
But more than anything, we want him to know Jesus.

We want him to have the opportunity to discover that his past does not have to define his future, that there is hope beyond his circumstances, and that Jesus Christ offers him something this world cannot: forgiveness, purpose, and eternal life. Our prayer is that he will one day make Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of his life.

His story is still being written. And we're grateful that Youth for Christ can be part of it. More Gospel. More Hope. That's what showing up for young people looks like.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Steien
Landon Stoner
Riley Folson



STAFF
Sean Patterson

Relational Ministry Actions

Club Meetings
Small Groups
Building Times
Appointments
Contacting
Trips
Events

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 a commitment to social involvement.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Generation Alpha: A Generation Full of Gospel Potential

What if the next generation isn't as far from God as we think? For years, we've heard plenty of discouraging reports about young people and faith. Fewer attending church. Less connection to Christian values. More distractions, more technology, and more competing voices shaping their understanding of the world. It's easy to look at today's teenagers and wonder if they are interested in hearing about Jesus.

But what if we're looking at this generation all wrong? The Fuller Youth Institute recently conducted a national study involving nearly 3,000 teenagers, ages 13–17, to better understand Generation Alpha—the generation born in 2010 and later. What they discovered should give every other Christian across generations an enormous reason for hope.

Most teenagers are still open to faith.

In fact, only 12% of the teenagers surveyed said they weren't interested in faith or religion at all. Even among teenagers who identified as having no religious affiliation, 41% said they weren't interested. That means more than half of those without a religious affiliation may still be open to spiritual conversations. Think about that for a moment.

These are young people who may not attend church, may not know much about the Bible, and may never have had someone personally explain the Gospel to them. Yet many are not opposed to faith. They are curious. They are searching. They have questions about life, identity, belonging, and purpose. They may be more ready to have a conversation about Jesus than we realize.

The Fuller Youth Institute also discovered something important about what teenagers want from adults. They want someone who listens without judging them, respects their questions, and follows through on what they say. Forty percent indicated that having a mentor, guide, or older adult they could talk with regularly would help them grow in faith. This is where Youth for Christ has an incredible opportunity.

We don't have to compete with every digital distraction or create the next big youth program to reach this generation. We need to be present. We need caring adults who are willing to build genuine relationships, listen to their stories, earn their trust, and consistently point them toward Jesus.

Imagine what could happen if every teenager in our community had a caring adult who believed in them, invested in their future, and wasn't afraid to talk about Jesus. Imagine the conversations. The questions. The opportunities to open God's Word. The moments when a teenager who has never considered a relationship with Christ begins to understand just how much Jesus loves them.

Generation Alpha isn't a lost cause. It is a generation full of potential, and we have a tremendous opportunity to reach them while they are still forming their understanding of the world and their place in it.

At Grand Forks Area Youth for Christ, we believe the time to reach this generation is now. We want to meet young people where they are, build relationships that matter, and introduce them to the One who can give their lives lasting hope and purpose. The research gives us reason to be encouraged. The Gospel gives us our message. And the opportunity to make an eternal difference is right in front of us. Let's not assume this generation isn't interested in Jesus. Let's make sure they have the opportunity to meet Him.

More Gospel. More Hope.

- In Christ, Sean

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

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. There have been some abundant years and some lean years in both ministry and financial support. The interesting thing is that this year we are experiencing abundant ministry yet the **economy is driving down financial giving making it tough for growth and a consistent and increased presence in our teen community**.

We ask you to prayerfully consider becoming a financial partner with us. There are several ways to partner with us; become a monthly Gospel Giver, support our end of year fundraising campaign or perhaps give a one-time gift. No matter the amount, your gift will ensure More Gospel and More Hope is given to our teens. As always, we love when you pray for the ministry, the staff and volunteers, and those who have yet heard the good news and will soon find a place in our YFC family.

YFC US.A'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 over 497 youth attended our clubs, activities, and events. 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.GYFC.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 Sean for details on how YFC needs help in those areas below.

- Board Members
- Campus Life Director
- Campus Life Ministry Leaders
- Building Time Ministry Leaders
- After School Ministry Leaders
- Donated Drinks and Snacks for club and open hours
- Hot Chocolate or Keurig Cups

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

YFC FALL FUN

NERF BATTLES, ROOT BEER FLOATS, AND A LITTLE WISDOM

What teen doesn't enjoy a good Nerf battle and root beer floats? On their day off from school, the Lighthouse turned into a full-blown battleground!

After rearranging the furniture and adding some light and sound effects, we had everything needed for an afternoon of friendly competition. Teams put their strategy and teamwork to the test as they tried to outsmart, outshoot, and outlast their opponents. Let's just say diplomacy wasn't exactly the order of the day!

After all that action, everyone was ready for some refreshment. We gathered around root beer floats, shared some laughs about our victories (and defeats), and went around the room sharing our highs, lows, and "buffaloes"—those random thoughts that don't quite fit anywhere else.

But the afternoon wasn't all fun and games. We also took time to explore some of the timeless wisdom King Solomon recorded in the book of Proverbs. It was a chance to think about how God's wisdom applies to the choices we make and the way we live each day.

Then, of course, it was back to a few more friendly battles! At YFC, we love creating opportunities like this. Fun brings teens together, relationships grow through shared experiences, and those relationships open the door to meaningful conversations about life, faith, and Jesus. Sometimes it starts with a Nerf dart, a root beer float, and a place where teens know they're welcome..

PROJECT SERVE: BRIDGING GENERATIONS THROUGH SERVICE

For the past ten years, Veteran's Day has marked the beginning of one of our favorite traditions at YFC: PROJECT SERVE. It's an opportunity for our teens to step outside their everyday routines and intentionally serve others throughout our community.

This year, we spent time with the residents of Tufte Manor at Valley Senior Living. Through an interactive game of bingo, teens and residents had the chance to learn more about one another, share a few laughs, and discover that meaningful connections can happen across generations. It was a special time of conversation, connection, and getting to know people we might not otherwise have met.

After our time at Tufte Manor, we headed back to the Lighthouse for pizza, games, and more time together. It was a simple but meaningful way to wrap up a mornning centered on serving others and enjoying one another's company.

PROJECT SERVE reminds us that serving others isn't just about what we do; it's about how we see and value people. Our teens demonstrated that kindness, compassion, and genuine care have no age limits. Even when the world may underestimate young people, they continue to show us their capacity to make a difference.

We're grateful for the residents and staff who welcomed us and gave our teens the opportunity to serve. It's one more reminder that when young people are given the opportunity, they can make a meaningful difference in their community.

SHOEBOXES FILLED WITH LOVE AND HOPE

Our heart at YFC is to share the gospel with young people who have never heard it and with those who have heard it but haven't yet responded. Operation Christmas Child gives us another opportunity to do just that while teaching our teens what it means to love and serve others.

This year, each of our clubs had the opportunity to participate by packing shoeboxes, writing personal notes, and praying over each box. We prayed that the children who receive them would be excited to open their gifts and, more importantly, begin to understand the greatest gift of all—God's gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

There was plenty of laughter and excitement as teens carefully selected items, packed each box, and added their notes. It was a simple activity, but it offered an important reminder: love isn't just something we talk about; it's something we put into action.

We want our teens to understand that following Jesus means looking beyond ourselves and finding ways to show His love to others. Through something as simple as a shoebox, they had an opportunity to serve, give, and pray for children they'll likely never meet.

A shoebox may be small, but the love and message of Jesus it carries can have an eternal impact.

Ministry Leader
Highlights

From serving on the Board of Directors to playing games at Campus Life or praying with a youth at the Regional Youth Assessment Center, our leaders aim to make a difference. They truly are the hands and feet of Jesus as they contact new youth, actively listen, and share the gospel through Authentic Christ Sharing Relationships.



We love celebrating our Ministry Leaders! Here are our current volunteers and the number of years they have dedicated to reaching 11-19 years old teens.

Michael Steien, 5yrs
Landon Stoner, 3yrs
Riley Folson, 2yrs

Kara Buchner, 3yrs
Michelle Hahn, 3yrs
Deborah Haugstad, 3yrs
Einer Langelett, 3yrs
Brenda Zunich, 3yrs











"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
- Regional 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

YOUTH FOR CHRIST

GRAND FORKS AREA | GIVE LIFE TO YOUR STORY

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 duringappointmentsor during a building time event as listedbelow. All youtharewel-come to sign up for our activities. Just contact Chelsea or sign-up on line so we can plan on your participation.

Nov 11	PROJECT SERVE, Grades 6-12 and All Clubs
Nov 16-19	OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD All Clubs
Nov 26	Thanksgiving
Dec 1	Giving Tuesday; Start End of Year Giving, Goal:$20,000
Dec 14-17	Christmas Parties/Last Clubs for 2026
Dec 21 - Jan 3	Christmas Vacation, No clubs
Dec 29	Ministry Leader Christmas Party, 6:00pm @ Lighthouse
Jan 4 - 8	Campus Life Clubs Restart
Jan 18	Ski Trip/Game Day, Grades 6-12, All Clubs
Feb 15	Ski Trip/Game Day, Grades 6-12, All Clubs
Mar 22-29	GF Schools Out, No Clubs
Mar 28	Easter
Apr 12	Impact Celebration Banquet
May 10-13	Last Clubs for 2026/2027 School Year







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|WWW.GFYFC.ORG