

CONNECTED

YOUTH FOR CHRIST of Northern Ohio - Newsletter

Connecting Teens To Jesus Christ And His Church

January 2023



Out With the Old.... I Hope Not! | Steve Pausch

The New Year is here and time to make resolutions and look ahead to what is in store for the year. It happened again this year, people gathered on TV in very large crowds, singing in unison a song that has never made sense to me....

Should auld acquaintance be forgot

And never brought to mind?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot

And the days of auld lang syne?

Do I really want to forget my old friends, start new again with others and then repeat the process again next year? This old song is not saying that and we are definitely not moving on from old relationships at YFC. We have spent the fall getting to know teens and their situations, digging into their thoughts and beliefs and sharing the love of Christ with them in ways they can see and understand. We have begun new relationships with local school personnel and administrators and churches in communities, maybe unlike ever before. There seems to be a new sense of community cooperation in the areas where we are currently doing ministry and an openness in a few communities that are interested in getting ministry started. We are looking forward to what God is going to do in the lives of young people this year.

I started my career full time at YFC in December of 1989, and I sure hope that old things are not forgotten. I feel as if I have entered a new phase in ministry that maybe only happens after many years. Our oldest son and his wife are expecting in early April, and we will be grandparents for the first time. It is hard to believe that time has passed so quickly, but with that time there seems to be a different perspective of my work. In the places I have been involved for many years, I am looked at not as a "churchy" person but someone who cares about young people and their future. Non-believers in schools and communities still may not understand

why we do what we do, but we have “earned” a place to be in the lives of young people. The conversations and questions have changed with other leaders as we seek to help kids navigate life. I am looking forward to this “new” role and seeing how God will give us a voice in the wilderness.

I am so thankful for your faithful and unwavering support that has given us a place in the lives of young people and the time to share the never ending love of Jesus!

2nd Generation Mentor | Matt Mountjoy

Great ministries thrive when there is a team of people that God has called, and they faithfully serve. We have been blessed over the years to have many outstanding mentors on our ministry team. This year has been exciting, as we have added a few new ones to the mix. They have been committed to being around week in and week out for the kids and have been able to share of themselves greatly whether through knowledge and wisdom or building meaningful relationships.

I'd like to take the time to highlight one of these new leaders and the neat situation with them! Many of you either have the luxury of knowing Scott Hulet personally, and many more have probably heard of him. Scott is our Juvenile Justice Ministry Coordinator and has been serving in that capacity for a long time. He also goes into the schools with me for lunches during the week. On top of these roles he officially plays, he also is someone who for me personally is able to inspire, challenge, and entertain. He is fun loving and wise and the kids LOVE him. So naturally, I was excited when he told me that his son Nathan was interested in coming to check the ministry out and was interested in volunteering.

Fast-forward to later that night when I completely had forgotten about that conversation, and in walks Nathan to the leaders meeting. Fortunately, we didn't scare him away because, as I had forgotten about the conversation Nathan also looks young enough to potentially be a kid and he also looks like a young adult from a different religion that had showed up a few weeks prior. All this leads to poor Nathan walking into a room and the rest of us looking puzzled at him trying to figure out who he was. I was mortified when I realized I should have expected him, and I'm sure he was able to tell we seemed confused when he walked in!

Luckily, he stayed around and ever since has been a great addition to the team. It not only is neat to have a second-generation leader in the ministry, but he brings many cool things to the table. He is great at just being able to merge in with a group of kids and start natural conversations. Trust me when I say that I've been doing this for awhile now and it's not always easy. He is not only consistent in being there but also willing to do anything that needs help. This includes sometimes just going to stand out in the cold for crowd control when there are groups outside and the weather isn't the best. We are very grateful to have a young man that we know has a great background and has shown maturity, wisdom, and compassion for the kids we work with!

Happy New Year | Laurie Beal

Happy New Year! It's our American custom to greet people with those three words for at least the first week of the new year. I honestly hadn't given much thought to the sentiment until our Teen Parents group started discussing the new year, our hopes for the year, the idea of making resolutions and then our desire as a group, instead, to each come up with ONE word to summarize our goals for the year.

The words "happy new year" are pretty much a blessing we are bestowing on those we engage with. We know in the back of our head it's gonna be up and down like every other year, but we have HOPE for others and ourselves that God will bless us with a lot of happiness. We discussed in our group that we wanted our word for the year to reflect the happiness we hope for and wish to others...but there will also be the valleys, the hard stuff, the unhappiness. We talked about being thankful that God is there in ALL of it and steadfast in his love and care for each of us. I loved the creativity and thought involved in each of the "words" that were selected by our young parents, expecting parents and our mentors.

Here were some of our picks ...

"R" picked ENDURE. "I love this word because everyone in this world will go through struggles,pain, and hardship but to endure shows strength. We must go on to live and with that we must endure some of the hardest times but that makes us the strong parents we are."

"A" came up with ACCOMPLISH.. "I'm choosing this word because in 2023 I have so many things I want to accomplish. I am going to finish nursing school, I want to work toward a new car and we are trying to move to a bigger place. Having two kids is a lot different than one and it's a lot more responsibility. Not only do I want to accomplish these goals for myself but for my family."

"M" decided on the word POWERFUL..."I like this word because I am me! I do what's right for my child and I protect her and no one will get thru that power of me protecting her. I am powerful in the word of God. Everything I do is for my daughter and what I have done in the past year or just amazing. Being a mother is powerful knowing that you are protecting and doing everything you can for your child/children."

"H" picked "DISCIPLINE - be consistent in things I want to accomplish and build healthy habits and routines that will help me accomplish my goal."

"T" chose "Trust.....because we all face trials of varying degrees or will face trials....life is a series of mountaintop and valley experiences.

We have to trust that nothing will happen to us that isn't filtered through God's loving hands & heart. And no matter what happens to us during these trials we MUST trust that God will walk through the trials, He will constantly love us and He allows the trials for our good and so He can be glorified through them."

My word is STRENGTH. I've felt battered and weak over the last 2 years by a major surgery, a car accident, a subsequent hip replacement, physical therapy, covid, fostering my 7 year old great nephew for an entire year then saying good bye, bumping shoulders with so many hurting people. Ugh. My goals for the year revolve around getting to a space I feel strong and fit physically, in my walk with Christ, my relationships and in all areas of my life. Thankful to have the strength of Christ walking with me every year.

SoHappy New Year! What's your word?

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