



FIRST QUARTER 2023

[www.yfclondon.com](http://www.yfclondon.com) | [info@yfclondon.com](mailto:info@yfclondon.com) | 519-686-0093

## ANSWERED PRAYERS, OPENED DOORS

Ring-ring, ring-ring. It was December 19 - the last week before Christmas, a Monday night, around 4 PM. We didn't have any programs that day, as we were refreshing the building and taking the final week before the holidays to plan for the upcoming season in 2023.

Ring-ring, ring-ring. It was the youth entrance door. On the video monitor we could see a youth peering into the camera, wondering where we were.

We quickly ran back and let him know that there was no programming that night, but we'd look forward to seeing him in the new year. He understood - and fortunately, we caught his parents in time!

20 minutes later, it happened again. Another quick conversation, another understanding youth. And then, again!

I haven't been able to get that image of the youth peering into the camera out of my mind. Throughout the fall, we were praying for God to

bring us young people to connect with, to care for, to walk alongside through the ongoing challenges of the pandemic recovery zone we all continue to navigate.

We've prayed for open doors - for the ability to connect in person, and God has answered.

We've prayed for increased connections - for the ability to reach more young people, and God has answered.

We've prayed for the strength and the resources needed to hold those doors open - for the ability to share the love of Jesus with each young person who connects with YFC London, and we believe God will answer that prayer too.

Eugene Peterson liked to say he wanted to "follow the scent of the Holy Spirit," like a hound that catches the scent of a rabbit. We are aspiring to the same, to seek out the Holy Spirit and participate in God's story, inviting youth to join us.

Your support to YFC London provides young people with a place to be vulnerable, authentic, and be known. I hope you enjoy reading these stories and hearing about the good things that God is doing here at YFC London, as we see the hope and potential in each young person.

**Joel Timmerman**  
Executive Director, YFC London



### WHAT'S INSIDE

YFC PROGRAMS

REGIONAL RETREAT

INTRODUCING MARY UPCOMING EVENTS





# HELLO MARY

Originally from the suburban outskirts of Chicago, Mary Helen joined the London YFC team in the summer of 2022. She loves how her role as a Youth Worker brought together her two biggest passions: working with youth and growing in faith.

Several years ago, Mary hung up her skates after 15 years of figure skating because she felt it was time to make room for what else the Lord had in store for her. During this time of change, Mary truly stepped into her faith and allowed the Lord to guide her steps. Over the winter, she used her skills and passion for skating to lead a group of young women in a “learn to skate” program.

Mary feels fulfilled walking alongside the youth at YFC as they discover their own potential. She is grateful to be a part of YFC and to build relationships with London youth.



“When I began working at YFC, my coworkers and I visited Glen Cairn communities to spend time with the local youth and learn about the needs **of** the community, **from** the community. While visiting one neighbourhood—a local subsidized housing division, filled with children—I witnessed the wide gap that exists between the resources provided to children on opposite ends of our city.

A mother shared with me that the city had demolished this community’s only playground and stated that they planned to build a new one. This was several years ago. The playground hasn’t been rebuilt, and all that is left is an empty grass lot and a broken concrete sidewalk. To stay entertained, the kids find whatever is available to play with—including mounds of trash.

We spent time with these children and were amazed by their openness to accept us into their backyard. When we returned two weeks after this first visit, they came running towards us with open arms. The ease with which they accepted us into their community, as friends rather than guests, demonstrates that a simple act of kinship leaves an imprint on each of us.”

*Mary*



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Have you been wondering how you can join our mission here at YFC London? We continue to see the ongoing impacts of the extended isolation caused by the pandemic as we work to provide spaces and opportunities for youth to connect in person.

**We are looking for volunteers.** If you have an interest in helping with sports, activities, or lending an ear to young people who need someone to talk to, we need you! For more information or to fill out a volunteer application, please contact us at [info@yfclondon.com](mailto:info@yfclondon.com), or call at 519-686-0093. We would love to chat with you!



We have seen a huge surge of interest in our weeknight programming here at YFC London over the late fall and into the winter (or whatever we are calling this mild spring-winter weather we are having in February!) We have been excited to open throughout the winter, with the opportunity to connect in-person again!

Though our attempts to have a backyard ice rink left us with more of a wading pool this year, we were still able to have a learn-to-skate program which has resulted in increased connections with a specific group of youth who are excited to be in a small group setting together. They are learning activities such as baking, art, and reconnecting in community together.

Our gym continues to be a draw to youth looking for opportunities to be active, to stretch their muscles and engage in teamwork as we've connected with more and more kids every week through Wednesday night programming or our monthly Friday events.

We are so excited to see the impact that the ability to reconnect in person has been having on young people as they gather and rebuild relationships. We can't wait to see what we can do together as we look forward to warmer weather and the ability to be outside enjoying creation!





# THANKS TO OUR EARLY 2023 SPONSORS



Thank You!

## TEAM TIME OUT

Most of our team was able to attend the Eastern Regional Retreat where we connected with other YFC chapters around the country and cheered on Dorothy as she received her 5 year pin!

A particularly impactful Scripture that was shared with our team was Colossians 4:2-6: *"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*

As we enjoyed learning and connecting together, we are excited to continue to pray for open doors to serve our community and share the love of Jesus with everyone we meet. We aspire to do so in a winsome way, full of grace, seasoned with salt, as we see the image of God in each person we meet, and desire to share that with them in new and exciting ways.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT YFC LONDON

Our goal in 2023 is to open our doors as much as we can, and your partnership makes that possible. In addition to events at our Youth Centre, we are thrilled to be welcomed into other spaces, and partner with other organizations.

Tweens and teens love connecting in our gym for organized sports or recreational fun while our Café and Hub allow for personal connection and relationship building. We are seeing the difference these make in young lives.

Just like the rest of us, young people are desperate for relationship after a long season of isolation and loneliness. We want to be there with open arms and an open door to meet that need intentionally.

You can help us reach even more young people as we share the hope of Christ that draws out and encourages the potential in every young person. Please partner with us to be a transforming presence in our community, one young person at a time.

**NEXT STEP CHALLENGE** - May 6, 2023

**GOLF TOURNAMENT** - June 8, 2023

**IRONMAN OF GOLF** - September 25, 2023

**ANNUAL BANQUET** - October 30, 2023

