

MOMENTUM

CHRISTMAS
2020

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Guy Freeman

Executive Director

Friends and partners, what a year this has been. As I reflect over the past year, I am in awe of how much things have changed in the world and also here at Kawartha Youth For Christ / Youth Unlimited. Working with youth, we were quite used to adjusting our plans and being flexible, but the adjustments we needed to make during this pandemic we certainly could not have ever anticipated. But, through it is all God has been so incredibly faithful to our mission.

This issue of our Momentum Newsletter, although a little smaller than usual, is still filled with big stories of God's faithfulness. We hope and pray that you will find what is shared here encouraging and inspiring. Our team has been honest, that there have been

many challenges and times of frustration, but there is also much to celebrate. We want you to know that ministry has not stopped and the gospel has continued to be shared with the youth in our communities. The work, preparation and perseverance has been worth it and we eagerly await all that God has in store for our mission in the coming months and years!

Thank-you for the part you have played in helping us to sustain this mission throughout the pandemic. Your thoughts, prayers, encouragement and financial support have kept us strong in this season.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year, and we pray this Christmas season will be filled with much love, laughter and the presence of Christ in each of your homes!



KAWARTHA LAKES

BREAKING GROUND - TIME TO CULTIVATE

Martin Chipp-Smith

Kawartha Lakes Satellite Director

"A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"

The Kawartha Lakes Satellite is in a season of Breaking Ground. Jesus made reference to different soil types in this parable found in Matthew 13. Three of these soils made growth difficult after the seeds had been planted. One soil was ready.

There are 6 elementary schools which feed into the Fenelon Falls Secondary School, representing 2400 students from JK to grade 12 in our area.

God has given us a vision to cultivate the soil in each of these communities which have elementary schools connected to the Fenelon Falls Secondary School. Each community will have its own unique challenges as we work to break ground. It is our desire to see fertile soil in the hearts of our youth, so that God can cause the seeds of His Gospel to grow.

My heart is to see a youth outreach worker in each of the 5 communities that surround Fenelon Falls. Fenelon Falls being the "HUB" (as I like to call it), is the center of the vision because its location is central to all the other communities, having the Fenelon Falls Secondary School in it. Bobcaygeon, Cameron, Woodville, Coboconk, Kirkfield and Fenelon Falls each have an Elementary School that feeds into the High School. Our intent in each of these villages, is to meet the greatest felt need of youth, regardless of what that might be. This may be partnering with the school by volunteering our time, or simply running after school programs on a weekly basis, interacting with and meeting the holistic needs of youth and their families as God brings them to light.

Here is my commitment to you. For the next year, my intent is to Break Ground in each community once a month (more if I'm able) with prayer at the forefront, then taking time to interact with individuals from the community and asking God to lead and direct as this takes place. There are two potential roadblocks that I foresee, and so, I'm asking that you make it a matter of intentional prayer. The first is staff, I need help with workers on the ground running programs and interacting with youth. I can't do this alone. The second is finances. God has been so faithful during this period of time during this difficult world-wide crisis, but without the partnership you provide, it is virtually impossible to accomplish this vision.

We need you!

WE ARE OPEN!

Jennifer Kloosterman
Peterborough Director

This fall, we have been able to open our doors at both The Bridge Youth Centre, and our *new* drop in location at the Kingswood Life Centre in Talwood. This includes Drop-in, the FIT discipleship program, Skate Club and community partnerships holding out the message of HOPE to young people all throughout the week.

“We are so excited to be open for drop-in at our second location,” Jon Norman, our Drop-In Coordinator reports. “For two years, the Talwood area has been on our hearts. Even now, **right in the middle of a pandemic, God has literally opened the doors** in order to expand our reach from our downtown space to the community around 993 Talwood!”

We are also excited to share that with the help of our amazing community partners (Kawartha Food Share, Food For Kids and Peterborough Youth Services) we will be **rekindling the food program we ran over the summer for a special Christmas Edition!** Over the summer, our amazing team of volunteers and community partners distributed over 166,000lbs of food to 620 families and youth in Peterborough! As we head toward Christmas, schools and

community partners will be able to refer families again for a special Christmas package which will include fresh and non-perishable food, hygiene items, and a special Christmas blessing package.

This year has brought tremendous challenges for our community. Many youth are more isolated than ever, and we know that the pandemic has had the most adverse effects on those who are most vulnerable. Thanks to your help, we have been able to keep our doors open to serve our community through this time, and be a place of hope and refuge to youth.



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LINDSAY

PREPARE

Al Cavers
Lindsay Outreach Worker

After the first major snow storm of the year we are reminded the dead of winter is swiftly approaching. In some ways I feel as though I am much better prepared for it this year because of the time the pandemic has provided to do projects around the house. In another sense, I am reminded that winter can often surprise us and though we may feel prepared, we often wake up shocked by just how much snow has fallen overnight, even when it wasn't in the forecast!

In many ways this explains our ministry year here at Youth Unlimited. We had worked hard to get our programs up and running at the start of the year, only to have to close them all down when the pandemic hit early in March. This launched us into a season of needing to be flexible and find new ways to connect with youth which would allow us to abide by the necessary Covid safety measures. This was both an exciting task and a frustrating one. We had to change our plans and preparations a number of times. Many of our regular programs and ministry opportunities were canceled or not safe to do in our current climate. We missed our youth!

But still we prepared, knowing that eventually we would be able

to open our doors again. So I am happy to report that we are busy working out the details to start up the On-Target Archery program in a new home in the new year. I can't wait to get going teaching the youth how to shoot archery, building their self-confidence and sharing with them the love of Christ! Most of us have periods of uncertainty in our lives, and during these times I can't imagine the amount of uncertainty that is present in these young people's minds. Jesus is my rock in my times of trouble, as I'm sure He is yours. As Christians it's our privilege to share this hope we have. So to say I'm excited to be able to have this opportunity to share this hope with the youth who attend this program would be an understatement. Archery and Jesus will be what we teach and share at this outreach.

We are also working on preparations for a Bible Study that will be geared towards the youth who have gone through our programs in the past. This will be separate from the Archery program, and the agenda will be to have no agenda, just to field the big questions that those who come have about faith, God and life.

Thank you so much for your faithfulness in these uncertain times, God bless you as you prepare to celebrate the herald of His coming. Jesus, Emmanuel.

MOMENTUM | Christmas 2020 | P.2

WE NEED TO BE ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBLE

Chris Jones

LYU Satellite Director

For Lakefield Youth Unlimited (LYU), during this time of COVID, it feels like we are in the middle of a “youth” recession. We have not been able to physically be in our elementary schools or rent space from the school board and therefore we’ve had to cancel our Gym Night and all other after-school programming. Access to the youth has become limited due to social distancing and heightened fear. As the LYU Barn is still being renovated, we do not have space to operate programs yet. Youth interaction and gathering is at an all-time low.

Psalms 78 describes the account of Israel being in the wilderness and how God had intervened with goodness towards His people by bringing them out of Egypt using plagues and wonders. In verse 15 it says, “He split rocks in the desert. He gave them plenty to drink, an ocean of water.”

Sounds impossible? As a follower of Jesus, we need to be about the impossible. That it’s His wheelhouse, making the impossible possible. God is not about feelings or comfort. God is love. We need to love Him and our neighbours and others. As we pursue this, we get to see water flow abundantly from rocks.

Things can’t always be fixed by money, science, a plan, creative ideas, seclusion, or compliance. But we can choose ways and

things of God by bringing His will to be done in Lakefield as it is in heaven. This is how we at LYU are choosing to move ahead. We are taking prayer days and encouraging staff to pray and listen together. I have also gone back to hopes, dreams, and prophecies that have been given to LYU and me personally to stand firm on the impossible by keeping an eye out, heart open, and faith ready to advance for His Kingdom.

We are also moving ahead with renovations at our new building, the LYU Barn. We are trusting God to provide the funds needed so that our staff can move into the new space by this spring. To date \$44,286 of our \$80,000 goal has been raised! Please visit lyufundraiser.ca to find ways to donate to this wonderful project.



RENOS UNDERWAY ON THE LAKEFIELD BARN

SHOWING UP

Rebecca Sage, Sarah Jones & Anne Orsi

LYU Elementary Outreach Workers

Coming back together in September began with prayer as a team as we opened ourselves to how ministry would look without our normal avenues of connecting with young people and families. Reconnecting with the relationships that we have in our community, after some separation in the middle of COVID, became our elementary team’s focus for ministry. We came back to the simple ministry of “just showing up” as Chris Jones would say.



PLAYING GIANT JENGA WITH A LAKEFIELD FAMILY

just show up = intentionally being present

Porch visits, virtual calls and hanging out at the skatepark have become our primary ways of reconnecting. Showing up means building trust with parents so they can share how they are really doing, being silly together (one time resulting in a staff falling flat on their butt), dropping by with a caring card and treat, asking students to share something that is important to them, learning each parent’s Tim’s drink of choice, praying with a parent who is just holding it together, asking students what they have missed during Covid, and just playing together. We are also being given an open door to show up virtually in the grades 2-8 classrooms of St. Paul’s Catholic School, to run an LYU program called “Courageous Kids” that teaches students how to combat their fear and anxiety.

We are encouraged by the reminder that presence was and is at the core of Jesus’ ministry. We hope and pray for you as you find new ways of showing up in your place of ministry, in your community, workplaces, neighborhoods, families and friendships. May Jesus’ presence be in and with you.

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LAKEFIELD ELEMENTARY PROGRAM PARTNERS 19/20





POTENTIAL

Kelsey Watts

Bancroft Managing Director

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word '*potential*' as, "latent qualities or abilities that may be developed and lead to future success or usefulness." Potential is a word that is used a lot in youth ministry, in fact, Youth for Christ Canada's tagline is, "*We see the hope and potential in every young person.*" It is such a rewarding experience to help someone else see their God-given potential. To see them develop their "latent qualities or abilities" and head towards a successful future. To see each and every young person that walks in these doors realize their potential would be such a blessing! But how do we get there?

We believe a big part of it is to have the Switch Yard itself reach its fullest potential. To develop the latent qualities and abilities of this organization would lead to future success and usefulness in the lives of youth. So that is what we have been up to this year. We have been working from the ground up in efforts to maximize the effectiveness of the Switch Yard so that it can reach and impact as many young people with the Gospel as possible. We have made changes in our staffing and volunteers, tidied up the building, attended training, worked on networking within the community, held a profitable fundraiser that covered much deficit we were carrying, reevaluated programs, and more. We have seen God at work with each step of the journey, and we are so excited for what is next!

We want to be an organization with effective programming that truly meets the needs of youth today. We want them to realize their full potential in this life by developing life skills and by entering a relationship with Jesus. However, we also do not want to lose sight of the moment. Our Drop-in program has been running again since August and we have averaged 5 youth a night. Praise God! We firmly believe that even while we set the groundwork for the future, we can still have a big impact in this handful of youth.

So, as we invest in the here and now and plan for the future, we believe that we are headed in the right direction and feel that God has been blessing this ministry. All the praise goes to Him!

Please join us in praying for our youth. We pray that God would draw them out to Drop-in each week and that they would enter into a relationship with Jesus. Please also be praying for us as we continue to move forward towards the maximum potential of our youth and the Switch Yard!

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THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

Ian McIntosh

Haliburton Highlands Director

What a beautiful way to enter the Christmas season. Haliburton Highlands Youth Unlimited just held an online fundraiser in support of the young people in the community. The fundraiser was 1 to 100 squares with dollar amounts ranging from \$1.00 to \$100.00. It began on November 22nd and we are happy to report that we reached our goal of \$5,050.00. God is good! Following this, we felt led to extend this fundraiser by adding another 50 squares which would increase our goal to \$11,325.00. Check out youthunlimitedkaw.com/haliburtonhighlands for more information, updates and how to give! A huge thank you to all that have supported this ministry through your generous giving.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

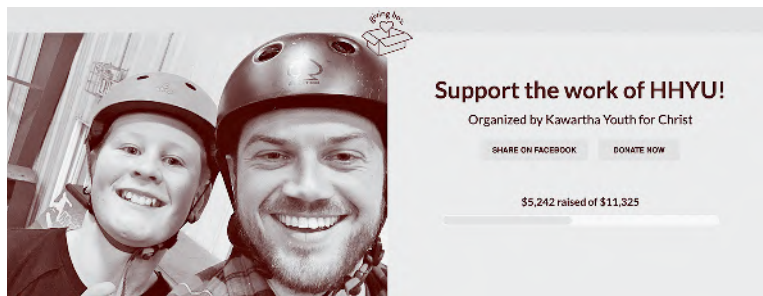
2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Over the past few months, HHYU has been working one-on-one with students within the community of Haliburton. With proper COVID-19 protocols and regulations, we have been able to take some of the students that we have been journeying alongside, out to lunch or for a coffee, and continuing to help guide them through life's difficulties and changes. The town of Haliburton recently added a new skatepark called "Junction Skatepark" and this location has been an excellent spot to develop new relationships and spend quality time with youth. Furthermore, HHYU is excited to be offering a new program to teach and develop youth to become more creative musically. In October we began online music lessons for ages 8-18. Each lesson is a total of 45 minutes comprising 30 minutes of music instruction and 15 minutes of "life lessons" and positive conversation. Music lessons are available for drums, guitar and piano, and offered for a total of 8 consecutive weeks. One student started out with the 30-minute music lesson and is now expressing interest and beginning to ask questions about what we believe. This is exciting news! HHYU continues to also support Jr. Youth (gr. 6-8) and Sr. Youth (gr. 9-12) operating out of Lakeside Baptist Church in Haliburton.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Colossians 3:23-24

The spirit of God is moving in the communities within Haliburton County. We believe that hearts will be changed for His glory and His kingdom will come here to earth as it is in heaven. Please continue to pray that the light will outshine the darkness and our youth will reach their full potential. We want to see every young person living fully for Christ!



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