

MOMENTUM

CHRISTMAS
2021

EVERY YOUNG PERSON

Guy Freeman

Executive Director

Our vision statement “every young person living fully in Christ” is a bold and aspirational statement. It implies that our goal as an organization is to reach the 19,000 youth in the Kawartha region with not just the good news of Jesus, but that they would also be transformed by it. It works in our favour that the good news and message of the gospel is contagious! As we come out of the pandemic, we are aware that the needs of youth are greater than ever before and we want to be ready to help meet this need with the hope of Christ.

This past year our Chapter has spent a great deal of intentional time working through a strategy and discernment process to hear from the Lord and to align our ministries, programs and operations to the mission we believe the Lord is calling our Chapter too. We are excited about where He is leading us and look forward to sharing more with you in the new year as we begin to bring the people and structures into place to see this happen.

Thank-you to all of you who continue to make this mission to

reach every young person possible! Through the last two years, we have been blessed to have remained financially stable through the continued generosity of our partners, careful spending by our team, and a number of unexpected financial miracles along the way. As we now move towards the end of 2021 with the hope to end this year strongly and start 2022 on stable ground our goal is to raise an additional \$25,000. This amount will go a long way in getting us through the winter months where funds are typically lower and where programming costs typically increase. You can check out the ways to give information on the back page of this newsletter!

We also ask that you would join us in prayer as we position ourselves to continue to reach every young person in our communities through our team of prayer warriors, church and community partnerships, dedicated staff and volunteers, faithful financial partners, and a God that cares and brings hope.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas & all the best for the New Year from the team here at Kawartha Youth For Christ | Youth Unlimited!

guy@youthunlimitedkaw.com



BANCROFT

GOD IS FAITHFUL

Kelsey Watts

Bancroft Managing Director

Things have felt a bit more ‘normal’ here at the Switch Yard / Bancroft Youth Unlimited over the summer and fall months, even with the lingering COVID-19 restrictions. We have been able to run our regular youth drop-in program two evenings a week, and we have around 9 young people regularly attending. We have also had several new faces appear over the last number of months, most of whom fall in the 14-15 year old range. Through COVID-19 we really saw a decline in our attendance, and our youth had typically been over the age of 16, so we are extremely excited to not only see new faces, but especially some who are younger!

With the nicer weather, we were able to take advantage of our outside space. We ate most of our meals outside, we played a variety of distance friendly games, and we hung out under our large tent. The colder weather means we need to shift inside, but we are blessed to have a building that will continue to allow us to build relationships with local young people.

Through the fall we took the first steps to building some new relationships with youth at the skatepark across the road. We invited Ian McIntosh from Haliburton Highlands YFC to come and use his skate ministry skills to help us build relationships with the youth and invite them to hang out with us at the Switch Yard drop-in. Reaching these particular youth has been on our hearts for a while, and we are so glad that these first steps have been taken.

On October 21st this year, the Switch Yard celebrated it’s 27th year of serving youth in Bancroft and the surrounding area! This is such a testament to God’s faithfulness to always provide the necessary funds, staff and volunteers to keep this ministry going. We look forward to what God has planned for the next 27 years!

During the summer and fall, we have also spent time thinking and praying about strategy and vision for the next three years of ministry. Our team feels that we have spent the last few years laying the groundwork to allow for more ministry opportunities, and are now seeking God’s direction for what that should look like. We desire to see every young person given the opportunity to live fully

in Christ. We intend to have programming that invites every youth to come and encounter the God who deeply loves them. We desire for our team to be mirrors of God's light to the darkest places in Bancroft. We want to be reckless with the love that God has given us and allow it to reflect into the lives of our young people.

To help us do all this, we are praying that God calls and equips both an Outreach Worker and Community Youth Pastor to join our team. One of them would focus on evangelism and the other would focus on discipleship. Together and with God's help they would reach every young person and teach them how to live fully in Christ. While we wait on God's perfect timing to raise up these staff

members, we plan to use the gifts and skills that God has blessed us with through our volunteers to take the next steps of faith and continue to serve Him faithfully.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace... in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

1 PETER 4:10-11

kelsey@youthunlimitedkaw.com

PETERBOROUGH

THE POWER OF THE ONE

Josh Lott

Senior Outreach Worker

If you had to sum up Jesus' teachings on the gospel in two stories, they would be the parables of the shepherd who lost his sheep and the woman who lost her coin (Luke 15:3-10). Both stories demonstrate a beautiful truth: God pursues us. He seeks out the one. God's heart is tender toward us and moves him to meet us—wherever we are.

This heart-orientation has been our theme in Peterborough this past year. During the pandemic, we established a drop-in centre in the heart of the Talwood neighbourhood with the hope of reaching children and youth. After a few weeks of running drop-in, there was no sign of anyone. Was this a good time to start a new drop-in? It wasn't until a month later that one young man stepped in.

Over the course of the year, this one youth was the only one to attend our Talwood drop-in program. The space became a place for him to connect, build relationships, and have fun. Our staff poured into him, having numerous conversations about faith and what it means to live wholeheartedly in a relationship with God.

Last summer, we invited him to a worship event in Del Cray Park. It was there that he had a personal encounter with God. His heart was awakened to hear God's voice calling him as he witnessed a group of Christians pour out their souls in worship. After a year and a half of multiple staff members pouring into this youth, he encountered God without our coaxing in that park. We pursued the one, but really it was God who pursued the one. And in that park, that young man encountered the One.

As we reflect on our journey with this youth and the parables, we find that both the shepherd and the woman have lost something valuable. So they searched with all their hearts until it was found. And the reunion was cause for great joy.

God places a high value on the one. As a staff team, we were able to work alongside God to see this youth discover God in a significant way, knowing that God was already at work within his life. Now, we witness him enthusiastically living out this relationship with God in the Talwood area, where he is now a person of peace in the community. It all started with one youth showing up to our program. This is the power of one.

josh@youthunlimitedkaw.com



THE CHOSEN






In October, we showed the second season of "The Chosen"—a mini-series about the life of Jesus—on the BIG screen outside The Bridge Youth Centre. It was an amazing time of outreach into the community. Many young adults shared their testimonies and had the opportunity to pray with people in our downtown core. One young woman who was in a difficult circumstance gave her life back to Jesus and was filled with peace. God is moving in our city!



WELCOME BLAIR

We are excited to welcome Blair Hanson as our new operations coordinator in Peterborough! Contact Blair at peterborough@youthunlimitedkaw.com


THANK YOU TO OUR 2021-2022 PARTNERS

					
					
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LINDSAY

THAT MOMENT

AI Cavers

Outreach Worker, Lindsay

Sometimes the events in our lives, special or ordinary, bring us to one specific moment or realization. These are the moments that can change the course of our lives. There is usually a lot of effort and time spent before this happens, and we need to be ready to realize the significant moment that it produces for you or someone else. We all have these moments, and if we are not careful we may miss them because we disregard them as unimportant.

For myself, one of these moments came during our Youth Unlimited canoe trips this summer. One of the students on the trip, let's call him Rod, shared with me that last year he had gone through a period of depression so dark that he jumped off a bridge to end his life. He was pulled from the river and taken to the hospital. There as his depression started to lift he started to see his life as worth living again. As he shared this with me, I sensed that God was preparing us for a significant moment. I have been involved in Rod's life since he was in Jr. High and now he's a young adult and working full time. A few years ago, this young man would have called himself a Christian but he now identifies as an agnostic. Did I mention he is a genius? This is very challenging for me, a well driller by trade, to talk philosophy or faith with such a brilliant mind, but the cool thing about being a person who follows Jesus is the indwelling Holy Spirit and how He tends to level the playing field by giving you exactly what you need to say in that MOMENT.

On the last day of the canoe trip we were sitting around the campfire

and the topic of theism and how it seemed narrow minded that there was just one way to heaven came up. After some discussion, I asked Rod why he thought it was so hard for people to commit to following the Bible's way to heaven and the monotheistic view of Jesus. But before he could even answer God gave me the answer that Rod needed to hear. *"I know exactly why it's so hard to commit to being a Christ follower, Rod"* I said. To which he responded *"Why's that AI?"* with a smirk on his face. *"Accountability!"* I answered. *"No one wants to be accountable to their actions and the Bible calls us to a level of accountability that seems too hard."* Rod just hung his head for a moment and then responded meekly, *"You're right I believe you hit the nail on the head."*

In that moment, there was an open door for more conversation between us that would allow Rod to begin to think differently about our loving monotheistic God, the same God who pulled Rod from that cold black river last year. I look forward to continuing those discussions with Rod and others like him.

Let's all keep looking for those moments, shall we?

"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.'"

LUKE 15:4-6

al@youthunlimitedkaw.com

KAWARTHA LAKES

EXPANDING OUR BORDERS

Martin Chipp-Smith

Kawartha Lakes Director

This year has been different to say the least. For me, it's been a challenge personally, and yet at the same time, rewarding because Jesus continually shows me the path to take. Nothing worthwhile in life comes easy. In the Kawartha Lakes Satellite, we are continuing to press on, move forward to fulfill the vision that we believe Christ gave to us.

Last November, I began a prayer journey each month, praying for each community within this area. It's been a rich time of seeking God in Cameron, Woodville, Kirkfield, Coboconk, Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls. During these prayer times, I have asked the Holy



Spirit to open doors of opportunity to connect with people, I have prayed for each school, and I have prayed for staff to come aboard and participate in sharing the Gospel to the youth in these communities.

I am super excited to announce that we have filled one of our four staff positions. Andrew Atkinson-Clements joined our team on October 1st, 2021. He has volunteered with KLYU for the past few years, teaching **Karate** every Tuesday evenings to students six and up. With Andrew joining the team, we have been given an incredible opportunity to expand the program to an additional evening. Our hope

is that we will continue to grow and by this time next year (*Lord willing*) we will be having a karate session in Bobcaygeon on a weekly basis.

On-Target Archery is up and running under the supervision of Al Cavers, and we are continually challenging these youth to pursue a relationship with Jesus.

On another note, Teresa Ward (Monarch Bible Camp Director and KLYU Staff) has been working on expanding some programming into the Coboconk area and has a connection in Woodville that is interested in some KLYU programming for the youth there as well. Here is a note from Teresa on the summer camps she ran:

What a great way to engage and equip youth to know and follow Jesus - working at a Bible Camp. The partnership between Youth Unlimited and Monarch Bible Camp is the perfect blend of equipping young people to serve the Lord and sharing God's love and hope in Salvation with children and youth alike.

We had the opportunity to bring hope, health, and well-being to campers throughout the Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton Highlands this summer. We ran 7 weeks of day camps and enjoyed interacting with and building relationships with campers and our three full-summer missionaries and three volunteers. Despite masks and social distancing God ministered. Campers were deeply engaged in learning about God in Chapel, got into deep worship through songs and joined in on discussions about faith. God prepared 45

*campers to invite Jesus into their lives and become part of God's family. This reminds me of **Ephesians 3:20** which says, "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work in us, to Him be the glory, in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever. Amen."*

My prayer is that as we grow, we will continue to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying to us, we would continue to trust His Guidance, and that we will trust His timing.

martin@youthunlimitedkaw.com



HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

FROM DARK TO LIGHT

Ian McIntosh

Haliburton Highlands Director

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

HEBREWS 4:12 (NIV)

Amidst the challenges of the pandemic we have grown stronger with the strength of the Lord. Speaking faith, hope and love into the lives of young people has been our focus. We cannot let our flame be extinguished. Believers across Canada must stay connected to the word of God and fan the flame within their hearts to burn brighter than ever before! Our hope here in Haliburton is to connect young people to local churches so they can be edified by Christian leaders and mentors. This can only be done with wisdom, discernment and the truth written in His word.

Through one-on-one mentorship this past year I have connected with a number of youth and Jesus is moving within their lives and families. This looks a little bit different in every circumstance, but most often it looks like just spending time with them doing the things that are part of their everyday lives. We don't always need a program or fancy event to reach out to these youth and share the love of Jesus with them. One of the youth I met three years ago at the skatepark.

He was quiet and reserved at first so I was intentional about getting to know him. As our relationship grew we continued to hangout at the skatepark, spent time playing video games online together, and later would occasionally take trips to the city. He had lost his dad a couple years ago and I was able to be there for him. Sometimes we would go visit his dad's grave together and when he graduated he brought his cap and gown with him. We



even brought his dad a Double Double, his favorite coffee. I know He would be so proud of him if he was here with us today. Another youth I've been connecting with has also been through a lot in the past couple of years so we have been intentional about doing fun and exciting activities together like snowboarding, playing pool and fishing. We are currently working through some social challenges he's facing and overcoming them with the strength of the Lord. I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the lives of these youth. We are learning and growing together!

Skateboarding has always been a fascination of mine and that grew over the years into a ministry tool. I have volunteered a lot of my time with Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec at Muskoka Woods. Their indoor skatepark has always been a great space to connect with young people and get to know them on a deeper

level. This has prepared me for ministry here in the Haliburton Highlands. With the Haliburton Junction Skatepark so easily accessible by local youth, it has become a great space to meet new young people and develop a foundation for quality relationships. We are now at a point where we will be implementing some teaching into our program in Spring 2022. Alpha Canada provides excellent resources that communicate clearly the life of Jesus and many other Biblical components. Our numbers have grown significantly this year peaking at 45 youth. We look forward to the spring when the weather will allow us to begin this program again!

This ministry continues because of your love, prayers and support. Thank-you to all those who join with us in the work of bringing faith, hope and love to local youth. We will make a difference with the wisdom and discernment that comes from God. Your support is greatly appreciated!

ian@youthunlimitedkaw.com

UPDATES

Chris Jones

LYU Satellite Director

OUTDOOR SUMMER AXE THROWING LEAGUE

During this past year of the pandemic, as students and their families struggled with isolation, Lakefield Youth Unlimited (LYU) used a creative idea to reconnect with them. Peterborough Axe Club and LYU partnered together to host an Outdoor Summer Axe Throwing League in the parking lot of LYU's newly renovated building, The Barn, at 25 Bridge Street. This occurred during the months of July and August, on Tuesdays from 6pm-8pm. There were 17 participants aged 8-16, competing over a 10-week period for the final championship position. Anne Orsi, LYU's Summer Outreach Worker, was instrumental in organizing and running this event.

What we **HEARD** from youth, coming to the league, was how they missed gathering together. They missed seeing friends, making new ones, talking, laughing, and sharing experiences. Just within a two week period one parent noticed a positive change in their child. Previously this child was showing signs of loneliness and depression during the isolation of Covid but then turned back into the kid that was pre-Covid - robust and engaged with friends and other experiences.

What we **SAW** on those evenings was camaraderie and healthy competition between age and height differences, resulting in there being a winner. After the matches the youth complimented and encouraged each other no matter what the result. Out of this experience relationships were created and strengthened as participants laughed and conversed together between times when axe blades were being sharpened. We also saw their parents cheer, laugh, and encourage their kids as they developed their skills each week. Parents were also connecting with each other by laughing, listening, and supporting each other during this challenging time. What we saw was **COMMUNITY**.

We, at LYU, were pleased that the Outdoor Summer Axe Throwing League was a way to re-engage and become reestablished within the community during a difficult year of Covid-19.

Katie Bauman

Office Manager

WE'VE MOVED!

After two years of dreaming, fundraising and planning, we have now fully moved to our new location The Barn (25 Bridge Street, Lakefield). We are still continuing last minute renovations and sorting through moving boxes but our old office at the LYU House has been completely emptied and the space is now being rented to a tenant, providing more affordable rental space in Lakefield.

As we look around our new facility we are thankful and amazed at how God gave us a vision for this building many years ago and now... here we are! Thank you Jesus for taking care of our needs and providing us with more space to minister to youth in Lakefield and the surrounding area. We have a vision of providing skill based programs for youth, as we share the love of Jesus with them and help them reach their full potential as God intended.

There are two rental office suites in our The Barn which help us sustain the cost of our building. We are very pleased to have Kawartha Youth For Christ Head Office and Lakefield Community Church Office as our tenants and "neighbours". Welcome!

LYU 2021 ONLINE FUNDRAISER - "COMMON THREAD"

To celebrate 18 years at Lakefield Youth Unlimited (LYU) we shared video clips, photos and LYU updates during our "Common Thread" ONLINE Fundraiser from October 7-21 (find us @ lakefieldyouthunlimited on Facebook and Instagram). Even though our fundraising posts ended on October 21 it is never too late to donate. Please help us reach our \$15,000 goal for our general account. Check out our fundraising thermometer and donate at lyufundraiser.com. Currently we have raised **\$11,341.92**. Our theme "Common Thread" explains how LYU's presence is interwoven throughout our Lakefield community (and the surrounding area) as we work together with businesses, churches, schools and other organizations to meet the needs of youth.



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MOMENTUM

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** Gifts will be used solely for their designation unless the need has already been met in which case KYFC will use it where most needed.

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