



Taeryn Novak: **United in Mission**

I recently spent an amazing week in Ancaster, ON, at Youth for Christ's Summer Institute. Over thirty YFC staff from all over the country (and a few from across the world), who are being credentialed, spent the week together learning about youth evangelism, critical youth issues, our own spiritual resiliency, and more.

Through meeting other YFC staff, I realized firsthand how God is at work in the lives of so many young people across the country. At one point I paused to think of the hundreds of youth represented in our classroom - youth that these coworkers of mine spend countless hours investing in, supporting and praying for. It was incredible to be surrounded by people who are so passionate about Jesus and sharing His love and redemption with the next generation. We come from different parts of the country and have unique backgrounds, but we are united by God and what He's called each of us to do. We work hard, we love hard, and we trust God to bring growth far beyond what we could do on our own, day in and day out.

I'll finish with a story. I visited my church youth group's camping trip last month and throughout the day got to know a young guy there. He was new to the youth group and was such a fun addition. Earlier in the day he had told me about his love for Diet Coke and how he'd run out of the supply he'd brought, so after mini golf that night, I decided to buy him one to surprise him. I walked up to where he was sitting, handed him the bottle, and his whole face lit up. With a huge grin he looked at me and said, "You're my best friend now. And I can't tolerate very many people." I laughed and asked "What about your other friends here?" "They're my friends," he said, "but you're my *best* friend."

That simple act of kindness didn't take much effort on my part but totally impacted his day and showed him that I really cared and was listening to him. Thank you so much for your partnership with us, because we could not do this work without you.



Cassia Philippson: **So Long, Farewell**

Well, the time has come; I am leaving Youth for Christ. Those words are hard to say. I know that God is leading me in a new direction and I trust his leadings in all things, but it is still hard saying goodbye. I've never liked change - I really dislike it, actually. But I know that God is good. I know that he has planned good for me. I know that he works for the good of those who love him. And with that I move forward, not knowing what the future holds or where life will take me. There is freedom in that and there is a security in Christ. But man, is it still hard to say goodbye!

My last month has been one full of prayer for the kids I have had the honour and privilege of working with. I pray that they know that they are loved. I pray that they know that they have a place in this world. I pray that they will continue to fight and move forward when adversity steps in their way. There is a part of me that struggles with wondering what will happen to them now that I am gone. It's hard not being witness to it day in and day out. But again, I trust God. I know that he is NOT done with them. That he is still at work even without me. God chose to use me for this season but he doesn't need me to keep changing the lives of young people. I rest assured in that and rest easy knowing we have a God that is much, much bigger than ourselves.

So with that, I say goodbye. I thank you for the investment you've made into this ministry. I thank you for all the support in any way that you have given. You have been a part of this ministry in a much bigger way than you may realize. Thank you. Please keep our staff in your prayers, keep our youth in your prayers, and continue to trust that God is at work in the lives of young people even if it is small and unnoticeable. He is there and he loves them. Goodbye for now.



Daniella Saunders, Guest Writer:
Life on Mission

Webster's Dictionary: *Missionary*,
noun: "a person sent on a religious mission, especially one sent to promote Christianity in a foreign country."

Is this what the world thinks when they hear the word "missionary?" That to be on mission means to be promoting religion to strangers across the globe?

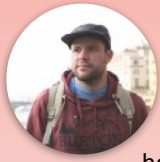
I spent the majority of this past year doing a discipleship and music ministry at a school in Ensenada, Mexico, and then on outreach in Uganda. To the outward eye, it probably looked like I "became a missionary" when I left for outreach. Christians seem to go on "missions trips" so often to see what's it's like to live the life of a so-called missionary. While reaching other impoverished nations is incredibly important, what would it look like if we first focused on reaching the nation right in front of us? What would it look like if we faced every day as if we were on a "missions trip?" What if we redefine this worldly definition of a missionary?

My prayer is that I can love those around me so radically that my entire life is an outward expression of the love that is within me through Jesus Christ.

Knowing that God loves you, and spreading that love because he loved you first, THAT is being a missionary. It's everywhere, and it's for everyone.



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Allen de Jong, Youth Pastor: ***This is God's Ministry***

As summer is rapidly approaching, it seems that a switch has been thrown in a lot of people's minds. As gloomy winter evenings turn into extended hours of golden sunlight, we look with anticipation at what new adventures await in the warmer months to come.

For me, this season brings with it a lot of transition. Since our church's ministry calendar often mirrors the school calendar, things are beginning to wind down a bit as we prepare to catch a bit of a breath over the summer months. This season always affords me a couple moments to pause and reflect on how the year has gone in our youth ministry at Northgate.

This year— like most years— has presented its fair share of challenges, as well as some big wins. We've had new students show up, older students leave, students growing in their faith, students walking away from their faith, students going through

extreme challenges, students overcoming said challenges, students asking a lot of BIG questions, and most importantly, students meeting Jesus. Through everything, I've been so humbly reminded that this ministry does not belong to me; the successes and failures are not mine to own. This ministry is God's, and I am simply here to steward some of the leadership of it. Alongside me, I've got a great batch of leaders to help bear that load as well. They put in a lot of hours investing in our students, and they are one of the biggest reasons that anything good comes out of the Thrive youth ministry. Additionally, we've had the faithful support of YFC and its staff. They are always around to give an extra hand when we need it, and their presence in the Comox Valley is felt so strongly in so many areas. We couldn't do what we do without them!

Overall, it has truly been a blessing to serve and lead the youth of the Comox Valley this year. The future is bright!



Robbie Taylor: ***A Teen's Faith***

In 2 Kings 5, we meet a man called Naaman. He was a leader of the Syrian army who defeated Israel in battle and captured young teens after killing off their families, and those teens were used as slaves to run his kingdom. Israel's defeat was a result of God's hand- Naaman, however, in spite of being a victorious general, suffered from leprosy, an incurable contagious disease. He needed healing. In the story, we see an Israelite teenage slave girl who chose to believe the goodness and heart of God over her circumstances, and who overcame unforgiveness against someone who had destroyed her family and future. This teenage girl declared to Naaman's wife how the God of Israel would heal him, and that God's heart is to heal his creation. She had faith to believe in the power of God in the midst of her situation.

When Naaman heard that he could be healed he sent a message to the leader of Israel with this request. The king panicked, knowing that only God could heal and that he couldn't. Israel's king, the leader of the nation, was too fearful of man and did not trust God's heart to heal even the enemy. Then Elisha entered the story. Elisha, full of faith, told Naaman how he could be healed, and ultimately Naaman was humbled, followed Elisha's instructions, and was healed of his disease. Naaman came back to declare the God of Israel was truly the God of the universe, giving God all the glory.

This story is so powerful, as Jesus mentions in Luke 4. God's heart is for the lost and the guilty to find life and hope in Jesus. And that unbelief is what stops God's power of salvation and healing in our lives.

In this story we see a teenager with so much negativity in her short journey on earth, who chooses to believe in the power of God for healing and compassion towards even her enemy. Her actions result in this leader's physical transformation and heart transformation; that day the enemy became a friend of God.

YFC empowers teenagers to reflect on their circumstances each day, and to declare their faith in Jesus to their friends who are desperate for love, hope, and belonging. We genuinely believe Jesus is making things new in the lives of students, and that many young people today have the power to change their schools and their friends' lives by showing and sharing the love and life of Jesus.

God loves the world we live in and all who dwell in it. He's made a way through his Son's death on the cross, and it's his life today in us that makes enemies of God his friends. Believe in the next generation, and join me in believing for a better future for the students that live in our community.



Keagan Preston: ***Sleeping on the Floor***

"I always end up exactly where I need to be, despite the fact it's rarely where I intended to go." I heard this quote recently and I think it can describe what it's sometimes like for me being on staff at YFC. We as people like to plan and know what is coming up ahead, but so often we don't know what's around the corner waiting for us until we get there.

This last season for me has seen growth, new experiences and a lot of travelling. Since the last Quarterly we have had our banquet, I have been down to Victoria and completed my visit of another YFC chapter, I went with Comox Pentecostal Church to the first History Maker Conference in Nanaimo, and went camping with the Courtenay Fellowship Baptist youth in Parksville. I have been fortunate to have had so many opportunities and interactions with so many students from different places, ages, and backgrounds.

With all this going on I was recently asked "With all that camping and sleeping on the floor, don't you get a sore back?" To which I replied, "It doesn't bother me at all, because I want to see these kids alive in Christ, and if that's what it takes to help them find him, then I am prepared to do it."

Something that I became increasingly aware of in the last weeks is that you always have someone looking up to you no matter your age or background. This became evident to me at History Maker a few weeks ago. While in the middle of worship, I stopped, sat down, bowed, and began to pray. After I had finished I stood up and noticed that the grade 6 boys who were standing there before weren't in my peripheral vision, so I looked over to see where they were. They were all sat in the pew, heads bowed and praying. I hope this inspires you to do good deeds and use words that encourage because you never know who is watching or listening.



Hello from Ann Weir

As this school year comes to a close, it is good to reflect on all that the Lord has done through the YFC ministry: being available to kids in and out of school, Cumberland floor hockey, volunteering at the Linc, helping with youth groups and now helping at summer camps!! I look forward to hearing about the relationships built throughout the summer! We wait in expectation as to what the Lord has planned for these young people.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21.

I am thankful to all of you who support YFC both prayerfully, financially and through volunteering. Have a wonderful summer!!