

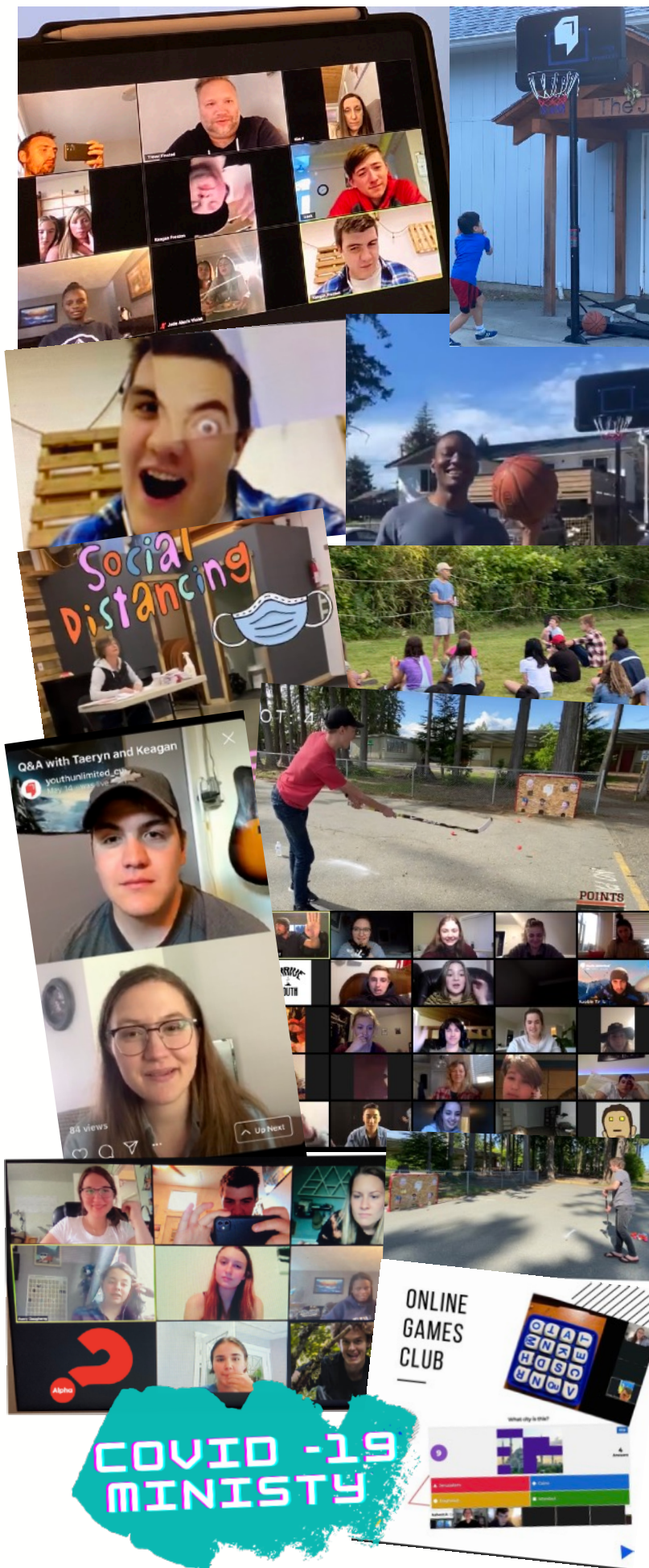


Taeryn Novak, Craving Connection

You don't need me to tell you that teenagers are very fluent when it comes to technology and the digital world. Especially in these recent months, it's been one of their few connections to the outside world and to their friends, and yet I know they are craving something more. As people begin to get out of the house and meet together in small, physically-distanced groups, I know these youth are feeling that thirst for meaningful connections with others.

I help with YFC's social media page and especially in recent months it's been a crucial way of connecting with youth and letting them know about our online programs. It's also an opportunity to encourage them with God's truth. The number of local youth following our page has been growing a lot lately, and it's exciting to be able to connect with them in this way. Teens follow a lot of people on social media - their friends, family, friends-of-friends, celebrities - and now we have a piece of that pie, so to say. Through our videos and posts this summer, I hope we can give these youth hope, show them that there's something more to life and their identity, and draw them into authentic community and relationships through our summer programming.

I must admit that it has been challenging trying to plan in-person programs for this summer, but during a morning of prayer the other week God reminded me of something pretty important. I was sharing with Him about my worries, hesitations, and feelings of inadequacy, saying, "God, I don't know how to do this. I don't know how to get youth involved, I'm bad at planning..." But then a thought popped into my head: This isn't about you. This is about young people in the Comox Valley who are craving connection, who after months of isolation are ready for relationships beyond the confines of their screens, and who most importantly need to experience the full, meaningful life Jesus longs for them to live. So, I look forward to this summer, one that will look different from any other but where we still have opportunities to connect with youth, to love them, and to point them to the One who made them.



QUARTERLY SUMMER 2020



Kaylee Crisfield is our latest addition to the YFC ministry team! Kaylee has been a key volunteer over the last number of years, supporting the staff team as they have served youth in the Comox Valley. Kaylee is adventurous and full of life, her love for Jesus and sharing his love is very evident and we are excited for Kaylee to be a great addition to the team. Kaylee will be interning this summer and will be undergoing the process of support raising to come on full time this Fall. It's people like Kaylee that bring the good news of Jesus to our teens and walk alongside so many in need of hope and love. Consider partnering with her today and making a kingdom investment as Kaylee goes and bring Jesus to our teens.



Robbie Taylor, Diversity & Observations on Growth

I recently took up gardening, as many people did during the Covid-19 season. For many of us being stuck at home gave us two options: start making homemade bread till flour and yeast ran out, or plant a veggie garden. I chose the latter. To be fair I already had my gardens planned out way before it all happened and Covid had us locked down. Through tending to my garden and researching all you need to know to make veggies grow well, I learned a few important things from my observations, along with prayers of hope that things would grow.

First, I learned that sticking all the same variety of vegetables in one spot can make it easier for pests and diseases to attack and damage; planting a mixed variety of veggies and having a more diverse bed supports a healthier community of veggies and a better harvest.

Second, I learned that things need their time and you can't rush the growth period. Often we can be too quick to judge the book by its cover or jump to conclusions before we've let the journey of growth start. Often we want to see real signs of change instantly and have high standards that disappoint us as the veggies aren't growing as fast as we would like. But it is God that ultimately causes things to grow and gives life to his creation.

These simple veggie garden observations have taught me way more than I first thought, as I've pondered the ministry and the work we do with

teenagers, as we desire to see all youth living fully in Christ. In working with students, the importance of diversity in the group is powerful: youth that act, look, dress and think the same way may seem healthy, but we need youth that think differently and learn from each other like iron sharpening iron. Some youth are created to be bold and outspoken, some thoughtful thinkers, and some serving needs with gifts of generosity and compassion. When trouble comes, if we don't have diversity in personality and gifting, then we can be easily attacked. Diversity brings protection and leaves room for some to stand up for others, protected in prayer, and to serve in generous ways.

Additionally, working with students we see lots of physical changes quickly, but spiritually it's not always at the same pace. If we spend too much time judging students or hold an unrealistic standard over their heads, we will miss the real moments of life transformation - or even worse, we can judge too quickly and quit on them when they need us there the most. Looking too intently for change causes us to miss the promise that God is faithful to complete the good work He started.

Lastly, the truth is that God causes all things to grow, and it's His life-giving spirit in our youth that will ultimately cause them to grow and flourish as He intended. As we believe in God for the transformation of our youth in this community, we rest in God's promise to be the author and perfecter of our faith; we just go in faith and believe that the harvest is plentiful.



Keagan Preston, Driveway Conversations

Being stuck at home with nothing to do is not a fun place to be. But this is the reality that young people faced in the past few months. As we could not run floor hockey, with the 'floor hockey boys' I was able to take the net to their driveway and make a challenge out of it. The aim of it was simple: try and get as many of the 10 balls in one of the holes as possible! It was a simple game but it meant a great deal to the students. Being able to compete against their friends even though they weren't together, and also getting to see a familiar face, was a good break from the lockdown routine.

I really enjoyed spending the time and connecting with the boys while they were trying to score. I remember one conversation with a student, where he opened up about troubles at home and how it had affected his family. We talked through it, and it came down to forgiveness - even though family dynamics can be tense because everyone is living so close together, he needs to keep forgiving, because without forgiveness we can end up having broken relationships.

It's a really great reminder of Matthew 18:21-22: "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'" I'm thankful for the opportunity to journey with these boys in their struggles and be able to invest in them even though things look different in our lives right now.



Moses Lee, So Much Potential

Hi, my name is Moses Lee and I came on staff at Northgate Church as the Junior Youth Coordinator in September 2019. One of my main roles is to plan and carry out our youth ministry nights on Wednesdays, and I am truly blessed to be a part of the work God has been doing through our church and YFC for the youth of the Comox Valley. Our youth ministry here is called "Thrive Youth", and I've been a part of it since I was in grade 6. Now that I'm leading it as a coordinator, it is a blessing to now invest and pour into the lives of the students. There are so many significant highlights about the 2019/2020 school year regarding youth ministry, but here are a few.

This past year, I've partnered with YFC on Thursdays at Lake Trail for Coaches Corner, where we facilitated open gym for students during lunch time.

Through YFC's connection with the school, I've been able to create relationships with their students and be a presence of Jesus' light for them. The second thing would be ministry during a pandemic. It has been an experience to navigate youth ministry during this time. Even within COVID-19 and "Youth Online", seeing students come to know Jesus and hearing new testimonies come up amazes me and reminds me that God is just as powerful and working through any circumstance.

The last would be my reason/passion for youth ministry. I stepped into this role blind-sighted, but God opened my eyes to the potential middle schoolers have in them. They have so much potential they might not even know, and I want them to grow in that for what's coming next in their life and further the kingdom of God. We have a lot planned for this summer and I'm ecstatic for what God's going to do next. Thanks a lot for reading, and I hope you have a great summer.



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THANK YOU PASTOR RANDY

Many of you know Randy Dyck, who has been the youth pastor at Courtenay Fellowship Baptist Church for the past 26 years. He has faithfully and lovingly served youth, and has had a huge impact on many lives. As he steps away from full-time youth ministry and moves into an associate pastor role, we want to celebrate how God has worked through Randy in the lives of teens. We asked him what one of the most rewarding things has been for him while working with youth and here is his response:



"Recently, I took a few minutes to reflect on the fact that, despite how different these past few months of youth ministry has been, the power of the gospel was in no way limited by our circumstances. Even though the way in which we engaged with teens may have been different, the truth is that "the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

As I think on the last twenty-six years that I have been involved with youth ministry in Comox Valley, the thing that I have found the most rewarding is witnessing an individual teen's life changed by God. I have immensely enjoyed pointing them to God. I loved directing them to God's greatness and His grandeur. I loved sharing how Jesus can change their lives. What has really brought reward was when I could tell from their eyes that God in His grace had helped them to see His truth, and the reality of this truth began to change their lives. I understand the joy that Paul felt when He said, "I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion" (Phil. 1:6).

Like Youth Unlimited, I believe in the hope and potential of every young person, because the gospel is not limited. Although I am stepping out of full-time youth ministry, I will continue to rejoice when God changes the lives of teens. Even one youth changed by God will have a lifetime of impact in the world for His glory."

THANK YOU ANN WEIR 13 GREAT YEARS OF SERVICE



Ann Weir has faithfully served on our ministry team as the office administrator for 13 plus years. Ann has dedicated her time to serving the ministry team well and the youth in her care as they would come through our programs, and has been so faithful to prayer for and care for so many teenagers over the years. Ann has kept our office running smoothly and has always brought a bright smile and the joy of Jesus into all her working days!

We are going to miss Ann and her infectious heart of love for Jesus and the support she's been to each of us. Ann has decided to retire and spend more time with her family and friends and get the well needed rest for all the hard work she has blessed us with over the years. "Well done good and faithful servant" has been a theme that keeps coming up when we think of Ann's time on staff. If you get the chance please congratulate Ann on her well earned retirement. We are now in the process of looking to hire a new administrative assistant for the ministry team.