



THANKFUL FOR OPPORTUNITES!

I met Joslyn when she was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She is now a senior and led her first small group with 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls! This picture was taken at a church picnic. Behind the smiles is a loving relationship that has grown even during difficult moments. God is good!

November 2018

Shout out to Dave Easton for awesome photography!

### DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY,

**SHOCKING:** At Youth for Christ, we track our progress: **Christ sharing relationships, first-time commitments to Christ, and number of kids integrated into church communities.** Our Christ sharing relationships were up 11% last year, yet our first-time commitments were down 39%, and getting kids involved in a local church was down by 51%. It's shocking because our focus on kids and kingdom growth has never been greater.

With much reflection, I realized that we did not take kids to the Ocean City Youth Conference because it was no longer offered. Camp and retreats produce some of the most effective results in bringing kids closer to Jesus – much time and prayer goes into events like this. God is at work as we engage students for several days. Students are removed from phones and other interruptions. Trustworthy relationships develop and grow; therefore the message of Christ's love is clearly heard and experienced.

**GOOD NEWS:** In January, we have a new opportunity to take kids to Winter Blast at River Valley Retreat Center. It's gong to be amazing, but only for the kids who can get there! The cost is \$165. It's a great price for all expenses.

**BAD NEWS:** Yet, many families have a hard time balancing rent and food. (ALICE report states 33% of Frederick County students face this reality daily.) Extra oppourtunities are not a necessity, especially a Christian youth retreat for non-churched families!

For example, I handed the retreat flyer to kids, but after club I noticed a couple of flyers were left on the table. I ran after two sisters who were walking home. They replied, "No thanks. We can't go." (That is an affordability response. It's easy to recognize.)

**YOU CAN HELP.** No child should be left out of this life-transforming opportunity because of financial hardship. \$165 pays for a child. Would you be interested in helping a child afford this retreat? \$100, \$50, or \$25 in a one-time gift, or a larger gift for a group of kids.

There are also several opportunities for you to share your time. Please give me a call, if you would like more information.

Great Commission is our focus; The Harvest is why we labor. Please pray for our Christ sharing financial and time invested opportunities. Grateful for every blessing upon blessing and trusting in God's provision, *Cindy*