

Dear Parents, Students, and Church Family,

The past two months have been a whirlwind of different youth activities, and before we move ahead I wanted to take a little time and reflect back. In April a group of high school students and leaders went to the Mennonite Brethren National Youth Conference in San Antonio. We were challenged in many different ways but the one that sticks out to me was the challenge to look around us and see who we might be able to serve and minister to. We took this challenge on a couple of weeks ago at youth group and each group went out and spent our youth group time encouraging and serving in our community. I pray that as a group and individually we can look around us for ways to serve and encourage others. You can read the students' comments about this trip on our website under the youth ministry tab.

In May we took a group of students to the Believe Conference in Tulsa where we were challenged from the book of Esther to take a stand in our culture and to do what is right in any and every circumstance. It is not always easy to do the right thing when the pressure is on but if we prepare in advance and ask God for strength to stand, we can stand for what is right.

In January we had some students who took a major leap of faith and signed on to go to the Dominican Republic this summer. With much worry and fear about raising the funds to take such a trip they jumped -- trusting for God to provide. Almost all of these students have their funds raised. Please continue to pray for them and the team as we prepare to go and be the hands and feet of Christ in another culture.

One of the exciting things for me is when adults get involved in the lives of the students. Over this past semester a couple of adults have joined our team to help on Wednesday nights. Bill Seltmann came and told me that he loves to be with students, and so he has been coming on Wednesday nights and encouraging our students. Bryan Noone went with us to San Antonio as a leader for that trip and fell in love with the students and has now been coming and encouraging them on Wednesday nights as well. I am always looking for adults who simply love young people and want to encourage them with the love of Jesus Christ. If you love Jesus and love young people please talk to me. We would love to have you come and sit in on what we do and you will fall in love with these students as well.

As we look forward there are many exciting opportunities ahead of us to serve and reach out to others. I would invite you to participate with us in any of these activities. Please check out the NOCC Youth Ministries Summer Events sheet or check it out on the website at www.northoak.net

Jeff