

CONNECTED

YOUTH FOR CHRIST of Northern Ohio - Newsletter

Connecting Teens To Jesus Christ And His Church

June 2024



Up Close and Personal with Evan | Steve Pausch

In October of 2019, we decided to partner with local churches in Brunswick and open a teen center in a commercial plaza right across the street from the soon to open new middle school where all Brunswick Middle School students would attend. This once bustling plaza has seen many stores move or close their doors after COVID. Now the parking lot is mostly empty of cars and foot traffic, except in the afternoons as school lets out and the sound of stampeding feet can be heard rushing into our center. We were blessed to be able to make it through COVID using Zoom meetings and masking and special cleaning rituals, and now we are filled almost to capacity with rambunctious teens inside our center every week. Thank you for your support that has made this ministry center possible.

This month I would like to introduce you to a friend of mine, Evan Church. Evan has been attending events at our center since almost the beginning as a student in Brunswick schools. Evan would tell you that he has struggled over the years with making some poor choices and with choosing the wrong people to hang around with. He has had his ups and downs but has been a staple in the teen center and often willing to help a hand. We recently sat down for an interview about how the teen center has impacted his life.



Evan, if the teen center, That Place 4 Teens (TP4T), wasn't here how do you think your life would be different? ***Lots of things would be different but for sure I wouldn't be doing as well in school as I am now, the adults here have helped me think about my future.***

What is your favorite thing about the TP4T? ***The Food and sitting down together to eat.***

What are the 3 best things about TP4T? ***They let anyone in, the games are fun, They let you be you without judging.***

How has TP4T influenced your opinion of God? ***I didn't believe in God before I came here. The story of the Good Samaritan has stuck with me and helped me realize I need to help others more. I still have a ways to go to learn more about God though.***

Can you tell us how you are different today than when you first started attending? ***I have learned a ton about God and what He has done for us, Bible verses help me a lot, I was on the wrong path hanging out with the wrong people before.***

Describe God ***Bearded long haired man who died for my sins and did many miracles***

Why do you like coming to TP4T? ***See friends in a safe place, Help other kids, Food, and I get to make others smile.***

How would you describe the adults who are here? ***Old, Fun, Caring, Enlightening***

How has TP4T helped you look at life differently? ***Hanging around the wrong people like I did in the past will get me nothing but trouble.***

What would you say to a young person who is finding themselves in trouble at school? ***Ask for help and find God.***

What would you say to the people who support TP4T so we can be open? ***Thank You! This place has helped change my life!***

Evan is just one of the many teens we work with each week at That Place 4 Teens. Many of them struggle with anxiety, gender questions, depression, guilt, and a long list of issues often masked behind an energetic, ever-changing teenager. Thank you for making it possible for us to be there and listen and help direct them to the One who made them.

Teen Parents | Laurie Beal

My husband, Jim, has joined our teen parents mentoring team. We were planning a teen parents overnighter event at the lakehouse and I realized ...oh wait, we should change the date, that's my mom and dad's anniversary. Then I was like ..nope ..perfect. they can be our special guest speakers on their special day after their dinner date.

My mom and dad were the original "teen parents" in my life. They were the ones that prompted my love and respect and admiration for young parents figuring it all out as they go, despite all the obstacles and naysayers. My passion for the last 15 years has been to share the Hope and Love of Christ with teen parents and their babies and provide the love and support and embrace that I wish my parents would have had.

When mom and dad arrived at the event, we put them in the "hot seat" and asked them to share how in the world they made it to 55 years and then opened it up for questions. Jim and I loved hearing their hearts for each other and to see them embrace and encourage these young moms and dads. The young people were super engaged and hanging on every word my parents were sharing. They talked about the ups and downs and the need for falling in love over and over again...always with the same person, and communication being key, etc. etc. and the need to have God as the foundation.

The teens were mystified and in awe of the accomplishment of FIFTY FIVE YEARS together and asked excellent questions. I, personally, am soooooo blessed to have had their example and love and the stability of committed parents my whole life! And my husband often expresses his thankfulness in getting my parents as part of the deal when he married me and us having their example of marriage that was way different from the family he grew up in.

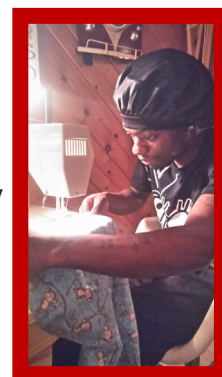
THAT gift is what has inspired Jim and I to work hard to give our kids that same gift.

Happy 55th anniversary Mom and Dad....we love you immensely!

Our lake retreat also consisted of lots of activities: moms and dads engaging in a team activity of sewing blankets for the babies (see picture to the right), making mint chocolate chip brownies, eating Sub Station pizza, painting nails for the moms and the guys went late night catfishing and

lots of talking and laughing and baby snuggles!

We are so thankful for those of you who invest in and partner with The Garage so we can continue to invest in the lives of young people and help them in their walk with Christ. Thank you!



Kids with Questions | Matt Mountjoy

I was once told that it's often more powerful to be teaching from the overflow of your own personal study in God's Word and what He has put on your heart than just covering a topic. While clearly all of teaching anything from Scripture carries with it the power of The Spirit, I will say it is pretty exciting when I have the opportunity to find something that God has put on my own heart and it lines up with our teaching topic. Currently, that topic is apologetics. At its core, apologetics is defending the faith, essentially having answers and understanding what the Bible says and what you claim to believe. This practice of apologetics is a great tool for evangelizing. After all, the Bible says to be prepared to have answers for the advancement of The Gospel.

In our Wednesday night group, we have a group of young believers who are really passionate about growing their own faith and learning how to answer questions of their friends and trying to witness to them. We also have in the Thursday night group the student leadership group that is diving in deeper. What I have found is most of the kids in this group would tell you that they believe in the Bible and want to get closer to God. While it is a great starting point for this group, my hope is that they make a clear specific decision to follow Christ. The cool thing is that both of these groups can benefit from understanding more deeply what it is they say that they believe.

We are going through these things covering two different categories. The first is to answer questions that they or their friends have about the Bible. The other is covering doctrinal basics so that these kids really understand what it means to follow Christ. Pray for us as we cover some pretty big and sometimes confusing topics, and pray that they keep asking lots of questions. Also pray that those that are looking to get closer to God do that and make a decision to follow Christ, and those that already have made that decision get a better understanding of their faith and how to share it with others!

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