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GULFPORT, MS

Praise Reports ...

- A successful 2011
- The spiritual growth of our interns
- The mighty God-driven work we do at YFC
- The wonderful people at Magnolia Printing for graciously printing our newsletters each month
- The arrival of Holly Nicole Holt, daughter of Brad and Michelle Holt

Mississippi Gulf Coast YFC Ministry Sites ...

- Long Beach Middle School
- Bayou View Middle School
- Gulfport Central Middle School
- Gulfport High School
- D'Iberville High School
- D'Iberville Middle School
- St. Martin Middle School
- Ocean Springs Middle School
- Gautier Middle School
- Gautier High School
- Moss Point High School
- Magnolia Junior High School
- Colmer Middle School
- East Central Middle School
- East Central High School
- Vancleave Middle School
- Harrison County Youth Detention Center
- Harrison County Adult Detention Center, youth block
- Jackson County Youth Detention Center
- Xtreme – Gulfport
- Xtreme – D'Iberville

Prayer Requests ...

- A successful 2012
- The spiritual growth of Student Leaders
- The Xtreme Teen Centers growth in attendance

A Special Thank You to Some of Our Sponsors ...



Special thanks to Magnolia Printing for donating our newsletter.

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Mississippi Gulf Coast
Youth for Christ
1501 24th Avenue
Gulfport, MS 39501



Mississippi Gulf Coast Youth for Christ Financial Report – Dec 2011

Income	
Total Regular Gifts	\$ 19,627.98
Total New Gautier Donations	\$ 600.00
Total Golf 2011	\$ 370.00
Total Banquet 2010-D'Iberville	\$ 155.00
Total Banquet 2010-Pelican Ldng	\$ 20.00
Total Banquet 2011-Lyman CC	\$ 535.00
Total Banquet 2011-Pelican Ldng	\$ 1,115.00
Christmas Wrap Proceeds	\$ 1,657.45
Salute/Back Bay Fundraiser	\$ 80.00
Water Park Aug. 2011 Proceeds	\$ 1,500.00
Detention Center Proceeds	\$ -61.86
<u>Interest Income</u>	<u>\$ 0.82</u>
Total Inflow	\$ 25,599.39
Total Outflow	\$ 26,992.38
Net	\$ -1,392.99



JAN 2012

Our Vision ...

Our vision at Youth for Christ is to see every young person in every people group in every nation have the opportunity to make an informed decision to be a follower of Jesus Christ and be part of a local church.

YFC Staff ...

Rev. Brad Holt,
Executive Director
Joyce Bendall,
Asst. to Executive Director
Carla Hilley,
Bookkeeper
Tracey Burkes,
Head Intern
Mitchell Tompkins,
Second-Year Intern
Eva Gonzalez,
Intern
Jessie Nalley,
Intern
Jordan Springer,
Intern

Part-Time Staff:
Adam Bennett
Brannon Lott
Rev. Kevin Gantt
Billy Thomas
Monique Johnson

Gearred Up ...

is a monthly publication of Mississippi Gulf Coast Youth for Christ. Reach us here with questions or comments:

Youth for Christ
1501 24th Avenue
Gulfport, MS 39501
Phone (228) 864-0788

Note: The names of students in our articles are aliases to protect the students' identities.

 Visit www.coastyfc.com and find us on Facebook

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Gearred Up!

Gearred to the times, anchored to the rock.

A monthly publication of
Mississippi Gulf Coast
Youth for Christ



Taste and See

By Tracey Burkes

Do you ever wonder why you have so many questions and no answers? Ever wonder why our faith meter is at an all-time low? In Proverbs it reminds us to "Taste and see that the Lord is good." My challenge one Saturday night at the Xtreme was for the students to "taste and see." To ask questions, the hard questions, and see that God will be there.

I handed out a card and a pencil to each student and gave them the opportunity to ask a question. Some were, of course, goofy, but most were questions like, "If I have done bad things will God still love me?" "If my parents have done bad things does that mean God won't love me?" "How do I keep the faith when everything keeps going wrong in my life?" "How do you know if God is listening

to your prayers and so many others?" So many things tend to hold us back from just tasting. I told them that every week on Wednesday if they were not connected to a church, the Youth for Christ van would be here at the Xtreme waiting to take them to a Youth Group where they could ask questions. It excites me because these students are hungry. They have so many questions they are afraid to ask. Just like we have faith but we are afraid to put it to use because we are unsure of the outcome.

Since that time, a dozen or so students have been asking questions each night or texting me like crazy looking for answers. We pray together and figure it out together. My prayer is that these students will no longer look to their friends or the wrong people for answers but that they will find it in God. That is the heart of tasting and seeing that the Lord is good.

Let's Sit and Talk

By Eva Gonzalez

Sometimes teenagers need to be taught things that the bible may not give direct instructions, but because of the bible I am able to teach young women how to be Godly women. In bible times, women were seen as property and had little to no rights at all. It is to be assumed especially due to the culture of the time all young ladies were modest, well mannered, and lady like. Not much is said about how young ladies should act in the time of courtship in the bible because during that time they were just married off. How do you show a young woman of today, who doesn't know the Lord, how to act like a woman? In this day in age, this is completely different from 40 or 50 years ago, and definitely different then in bible times.

I know the traditions that were taught to me as I was growing by my great grandmother, grandmother and mother. But what happens when traditions fade or are never even taught? We need something more solid and lasting to teach our young women. I was confronted with all these questions when I had to pull aside a student for her conduct in the Xtreme Teen Center. As we sat and talked about her actions, I told her things that were passed down from my family.



Because of what God has done for me and teaches me through his word about love and self respect, I hope I was able to teach her a little to instill in her biblical truths. Learning from the bible teaches more than how to be a classy girl but to how be a woman of God.

Each week God teaches me something that

a young woman needs to know. I then have the opportunity to take what God says, begin to be a better Godly woman myself and pass it on. Today I know the young woman I sat with has heard Godly wisdom and the next time she looks at choices she is making she will remember our discussion.

Former YFC ED Neil DeMarco passes, but impact on youth lives on



Note From the ED

I had the privilege of volunteering with Neil DeMarco almost 19 years ago. Neil was the very first Executive Director this chapter ever had. Anyone who knew Neil knows he was passionate about the Lord and reaching lost students with the Gospel. I was deeply saddened when I received a phone call in November of 2011 telling me Neil was going on Hospice Care and would most likely be entering Heaven within the week! I am sad to say we recently lost a warrior for the Kingdom of Heaven, but I know that God gained a son who pointed thousands of students to Jesus Christ. One of those students was Jason Shankle, a

friend, former student and volunteer of this ministry. Jason recently wrote the following:

Greetings All,

I was involved in YFC regularly back around '90-'93 with Neil DeMarco. It's been some time since I've volunteered and spoke with Brad. Hearing of Neil's passing recently was saddening news, but also reminded me of the impact that Youth for Christ has had and continues to have in my life even 20 years later. Wow, that's 20 plus years that YFC has been on the Coast. It's inspiring to see God continue to use the ministry of YFC to reach out to youth that otherwise may not hear the life changing message of the Gospel.

Take Care and God Bless!

100 Wasn't Enough

By Jessie Nalley

One of the exciting things that happens at Youth for Christ is to have the opportunity to give a Gospel presentation and see students stand up and dedicate their lives to Jesus Christ.

That is exactly what happened at St. Martin Middle School at the end of 2011.

During the fall we had seen God draw young people to Himself, not knowing that He could "do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20).

At the Gospel presentations, when students profess their faith in Christ we asked them to complete a commitment card and I had brought 100 cards with me.

But that day 150 students came forward and said "yes" to Christ. What God did far exceeded my expectations. I praise God for what He is doing.

I love to see how He always exceeds my expectations.

Planting Seeds and Waiting

By Kevin Gantt

JJM Director

For the last six years I have seen hundreds of teenagers in the three detention centers that Youth for Christ serves and have shared God's Word in the lives of these teenagers. Some of these teens have been difficult to reach because of their attitude, not caring about us, not wanting us in their lives, not wanting to waste their time, or so many other excuses.

Several years ago, I met Rick at the Harrison County Youth Detention Center. There were times when he made it difficult for me to share with the group because he would act out and the other guys would follow his lead and making the visit difficult.

Then there would be other times where he would interact in the discussion and I would think I am making a difference. Then once again, he would act out and I would not want to be anywhere near him.

This Christmas, while visiting the Harrison County Adult Detention Center, I delivered a Christmas Bag to Rick (not knowing that it was going to be him). He was extremely happy for the bag. That gave me the opportunity to talk with him briefly and I could tell that he had grown up a little since the last time I saw him in the Youth



Detention Center.

A couple of weeks later I was able to see Rick again. Sitting with him in his jail cell talking about life in the jail, the Bible, some of his visits to the Youth Detention Center, and his life. I could see a difference. I learned that he had a rough childhood, made some bad choices growing up, was involved in drugs, and hung out with the

And, thank you, to those of you who donated gifts and money for the Christmas Bag.

A little gift can go along way with Christ.

wrong people.

I told him that there was more than just reading the Bible for knowledge, that we had to have a relationship with Jesus. As we wrapped up our time I shared with Rick how he needed to have a relationship with Jesus and

he agreed. We closed our time in prayer and he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

A teenager who made it difficult for me during several visits made me realize that even in the difficult times, God planted the seeds of His Word in the life of this teenager and in His time allowed me to be a part of his life change.

Please continue to pray for the staff and residents in all three facilities that Youth for Christ serves. The JJM staff and volunteers continue to reach out to these teenagers on a weekly basis to show them God's love and in time the life changing message of Jesus Christ.

Recruiting for God's Team

By Mitchell Tompkins

I remember when I was a child; probably 2nd-6th grade and my friends and I would play football at recess every day. There were certain kids that I would always want to be on my team, either because they were my friends or they possessed more skills than the others.

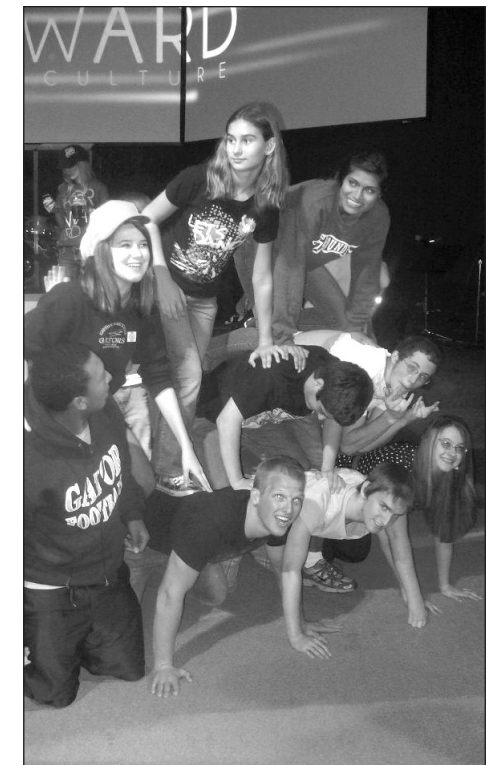
Even at a young age I was aware that with those people on my team I would do better because they gave me more confidence, or at the very least I would be a part of the winning team.

Something that completely parallels that idea today in the students that I work with. Every day I see students that possess so much potential, and I just pray that God allows me to have such an impact on their lives that one day I can look back and say

that I had a part in what God has done and that I was on their team. Being on God's team may give these students the comfort of working with people with the same goals, confidence that they will win and help build the spiritual skills they will need for a life time.

Thanks to the ministry of Youth for Christ, I am able to see students who are or will one day do amazing things for God. Whether it is a student leadership meeting on one of my campuses, a Campus Life meeting, or the Xtreme Teen Center, I see students who have amazing gifts and abilities.

I am so proud to be part in such an amazing ministry, and I want to encourage all of you to continue to be part of our team. Together we can see so many lives changed, and we can have the privilege of being a part of what God is doing in the lives of the young people of South Mississippi. Thank you.



Life – In Abundance

By Jordan Springer

We live in a generation where pain and suffering is the norm and has become the acceptable way of life. For many young people, their families have been built upon a foundation of abuses... mentally, physically and of course, spiritually. I could tell you horror story after horror story that have to do with drugs, alcohol abuse, and unwanted babies as a result of these things. Not all of the students that we see every day on campuses fit this description, but many do. That's when I feel overwhelmed but thank God we know it is not us who change students but the Spirit of God who works through us.

Sometimes all it takes to show these teens Christ is to bring them to the Xtreme Teen Center; a local youth group, or just take them to McDonalds. That's the time that I see them living out a childhood that Jesus intended for them – having fun, relaxing and forgetting the world for awhile. Because of your support of Youth for Christ these teens experience opportunities where Jesus is alive and the Youth For Christ staff have the privilege of pointing this generation of students to an amazing God who loves them & gave his Son, who took all the pain & suffering the world could give, so that they could have life, abundant life.