QUARTERLY
SPRING 2020

Our new Branding & Logo is an abstract take on the speech bubble, combined with an upward facing arrow, integrating bold angles that reinforce the movement towards Christ. This bold icon represents the upward moving conversations staff and volunteers have with youth through programs and relationships. The icon is also a container that holds the Gospel message. **We are unifying our look across Canada; the mission of YFC remains unchanged.**

Taeryn Novak

'Connection in a Time of Isolation'

I've recently been reflecting on all that God has done so far this school year through this ministry. Through our programs at the schools and other weekly activities, youth are being invited into deeper relationship with us, and ultimately with Jesus.

It's so cool to see how much of an impact consistency can have in the life of a teenager. I've seen this especially through our Friday lunch program at Vanier. Students don't just come for a plate of tasty Kraft Dinner, but they come for the community. As we consistently serve them, care for them and become invested in their lives, they keep coming back for more.

As circumstances change and what we thought was just two weeks of spring break turns into an indefinite amount of time away from these students, I'm so thankful for technology that helps us stay connected. I'm personally connected with many students on social media, and that's been an invaluable way of continuing to reach out to them and encourage them. Sometimes it's just a quick message to check in, but as we look ahead there are so many cool possibilities, like doing video-call book studies, virtual interactive games...the opportunities are endless!

Just the other day I had a powerful conversation with a girl who was travelling home from a school exchange amidst all the panic and uncertainty at the time. I was able to pray for her, over text, and even though we weren't together we weren't even talking with our physical voices - that time of prayer felt so special and meaningful.

I guess I could be classified as a 'digital native'- I grew up in the age of computers and it's all pretty familiar to me. But social media only started to become what it is today when I was in my later high school years. Even I can notice just how integrated social media is into the lives of students in this new generation, unlike any before. For them it's a natural, important way to connect to each other and the world around them. Now, we just have an even greater opportunity and space to engage with them online, even when we can't see them in person. Regardless of the medium in which we connect with youth, I pray that the relationships we're building with them are transformational in their lives and their journey with God.

BELIEVING IN THE HOPE & POTENTIAL OF EVERY YOUTH IN THE COMOX VALLEY

Youth Unlimited™
YFC COMOX VALLEY

We exist to see : Every Young Person Living Fully in Christ

How we do it : Engaging and Equipping Youth to Know and Follow Jesus.

Trevor Finstad

CPC Youth Pastor, 'Be Grateful''

Hey! My name is Trevor Finstad, and I'm the Elevate Youth Pastor at Comox Pentecostal Church. I hope and pray that during this time you are healthy and safe from the COVID-19 Virus that has us social distancing and stuck at home. I get it - I was really looking forward to our planned Spring Break activities, but other plans came up. As I sit here on my couch (otherwise known as my new desk) at my house, I'm missing seeing my friends, my church, walking anywhere I want, shopping, and watching the Canucks finally win the Stanley Cup. Plans didn't go my way, and that's ok.

I shared last night at our Elevate Youth Zoom chat that at this time it's easy to focus on things we don't have or things that we can't do, but we need to take time today and focus on the things that we do have - good health, family, and friends that are only a virtual call away.

We need to take this time of uncertainty and learn to trust in the one who knows our future - God. In life, we are INVITED to trust God with our futures. Instead of being glued to your screens, which is so easy to do, take some time today to pray, read the Bible, practice loving your neighbour, call someone who you know is having a hard time, take food or toilet paper to someone who is running out. As believers, we are called to love and to serve. And if you find yourself in a time of stress and anxiety like myself at times over the last few weeks, let this verse speak to your heart like it does to mine: "Cast all your anxiety on Him, because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7.

If you are looking for a youth group or you know someone who is looking, Elevate Youth are still meeting together virtually. If you have any questions about our youth ministry feel free to email me at trevor@cpclife.com.

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TO SHOW SUPPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY,
DURING THIS COVID-19 CRISIS
JOIN US IN DISPLAYING THIS HEART
IN YOUR WINDOW

Keagan Preston

'Heart-to-heart Conversations'

Over the last few months at the Linc drop-in centre I have been connecting with students in various ways from playing basketball, to playing pool, to trying to skate in the skatepark. These worked well, but I felt like there was a group of students that I wasn't reaching as well as I could. They usually congregated on the couches in the corner of the room. Normally I would go over and chat with them a little about their week, and then go connect with other youth in the centre.

Instead of doing that, I just went and sat with them and listened. By not saying much I was able to learn a lot from them and about them. I remember one night that they were talking about leaving and going to smoke marijuana. At the time they were all leaving, I spoke to one of the youth in a personable way and asked, "What do you gain from smoking a joint?" His reply was, "It takes me to a different place while still being present." This led to a deeper conversation, and he told me about parts of his life and the things he has been through. It was awesome to be alongside him as he recognized the reason why he uses drugs. It didn't change his heart immediately, but taking one step at a time, I hope and pray that he is freed from it and that he leads the way for all his friends to see there is a new and better way.

Kaylee Crisfield

Volunteer, 'Demonstrating Grace'

Young people can be intimidating and difficult to understand, but they can also be the most impactful and kind people you meet. Galatians 5:22-23 talks about how we should carry ourselves as followers of Christ, saying: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

In the world that we live in today, society and social media have major impacts on who these kids turn into as adults, and as Christians and followers of Christ, it is our responsibility to show these children and teens the love of Jesus and the grace that comes from knowing Him. When we humble ourselves, and walk into a high school as joyful, patient, kind, and self-controlled, we briefly introduce students to the One who loves them unconditionally. We simply walk in and make a plate of Kraft Dinner for some teenagers, and then watch as they sit down, walk away, socialize, laugh and connect with their friends and our volunteers; we get to see connection that is cherished by Christ. Be loving. Be encouraging. Be graceful and compassionate. Only then, through how we treat them and our team members, can the idea that there's something different about us be planted in their minds. This is just one small way that doors can be opened.

Youth Unlimited™

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CUT OUT THIS HEART FOR YOUR WINDOW

Robbie Taylor

'It's All in the Perspective'

I recently had the opportunity to spend two days with some students as they went on a school ski trip to our local ski hill. It was so cool to see many of the students show bravery and faith as they tried out a new sport for the very first time. As I watched them I was reminded of all the fears I had had last year when I was learning to ski. It was crazy to think that only a year later I was now there to support the students in their very first time.

It was the last half of our first day and after the students had completed a beginner's lesson they were free to roam the hill and practice. I took a group that was still needing extra time on to the bunny hill and helped them down instructing them with basic words and encouragement.

There was one specific student that stood out to me. She had mastered the first bunny hill, so we moved to another one, which was very similar to the last. As she stood at the top I could see her fear physically take over her body and mind as she shook her head and said "NO" aloud. Nothing had changed but her perspective. The facts and truth were still the same. She had done this one, and even a harder run already. She had the exact tools and skills needed to navigate and control herself to get down safely and with joy. She was capable and able. But with her mind dwelling on her view of the hill, she let fear grip her and she adamantly refused to do it.

So did I spend the next 15 minutes yelling at her to not be silly and get over it to suck it up and move on? No, I did not! I spent the next 15 minutes reminding her of who she was, and what she could do. I reminded her that the only thing that was different was her perspective; that what she saw seemed bigger and scary but the facts and truth were that it wasn't. After spending time reminding her of the facts, I moved to invitation – I invited her to take one small step or movement at a time, placing faith in her ability and truth for just one movement at a time.

In the end, she managed to navigate her way down the hill, with a lot of screaming but with a sense of accomplishment and achievement after she completed it. And then she tried it again. It was neat to see the visible representation of how we often let our perspective in moments of challenge dictate our faith and trust in God. We have moments where we will not attempt something new because of fear of failure right in front of us. Fast forward to the second day: this same student spent most of the day skiing with freedom on that same hill, and even progressed to more challenging runs. As we journey with many students in their teen years, it often feels like we visit this story over and over again when it comes to faith and trusting God. Our best role is to help empower students to trust in God and his truth, and encourage and support them. We don't dismiss or make light of their fear, but remind them that it's not the absence of the storm that brings peace, but the presence of God through the storm.

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