

THE CONTACT

AFLC YOUTH WORKER'S NEWSLETTER

FALL 2012

Time After Time Management



Thank you Cyndi L.

To Do:

- ✓ Meet with Mike
- ✓ Lesson Plan
- ✓ Laundry
- Call Sarah
- Sleep
- Check the other to do lists

tc

The Vocational & The Volunteer

By Your Colleague
Jason Holt

"I know that you're busy, but..." Have you heard this?

You need to know that I've started to get frustrated when I hear it. I wonder, "Have I given people the impression that I'm so strained on my time that I cease to be approachable?" My mind concludes that is not the case, but my actions may communicate something else. It is an important area to evaluate.

After asking some quality people to write for this column, you are stuck with me. (Hmmm, too busy?!?) I have had the opportunity to be both in vocational youth ministry (last 13 years) and volunteer youth ministry (for the last 3 years). On top of these experiences, I have the benefit of another ten years of being involved in youth ministry through high school, college, and seminary. So wherever you are at in the range of youth ministry experiences, I want to share with you a few things that I am learning. Notice "learning"! I don't have it all figured out, so I look forward to learning from you as well.

Growing up, I liked the "You Pick" kind of stories. (If you want Reginald to try the door, go to page 42. If you want him to go on down the hall, go to page 73.) What you have here is that kind of option: Vocational (you're paid for youth ministry) or Volunteer (you are serving without financial compensation).

Coffee



s
h
o
p

VOLUNTEER: ALL THE TIME

The meeting was with youth ministry leaders from different groups. I sat curiously listening. "These people have never been a volunteer in their lives," I thought.

What they listed had no recognition for the commitment that a volunteer leader gives in youth ministry. If you are a volunteer, you have a valuable role to handle well. One friend recently admitted that sometimes volunteers have more influence.

As you know teens are savvy. If you are paid, they know it. If you are not paid, they can sometimes have a different appreciation that they matter to you. Utilize that fact by finding the best block of time to serve. As a volunteer, I give about four to eight hours a week to youth ministry in my local congregation. I MUST REFUSE to compare to the vocational crowd. It is a different animal.

What is the best block of time for me to share and show Jesus with teenagers? How am I doing in giving that time to them?

VOCATIONAL: ALL THE SPHERES

The area that I'm learning in vocational youth ministry is all the spheres of influence truly matter. Soul care with Jesus, family with meals, and ministry with schedules are all significant. Finding ways to identify and remember what is essential has helped me.

A youth worker friend was at a network meeting where he was told something for the community was a "priority". He later admitted to a few of us that if he took on every priority he wouldn't get anything done in his paid ministry role. If you are a vocational youth ministry person, you have a valuable role to handle well.

What is essential in your current spot? What does your job description say? What have you taken on that isn't core? Who can join you in addressing this situation? What are you prayerfully pursuing that will keep the essentials the focus?

MARGIN MANDATE

For all of us, we need to be healthy in our time with Jesus. We need time to pray and time to pace like Jesus. Cadre Ministries has a great tool called "Getaway Like Jesus". Some of you received it as a gift at a past Youth Workers Retreat. Maybe it is time to crack it open. Psalm 46:10a – He says, "Be still and know that I am God."

Youth Worker's Retreat

January 25-27, 2013

Abiding: Encourage Hearts & Equip Hands

Why YWR?

- Renewal from God's Word
- Refresh with God's people
- Revitalize with vision

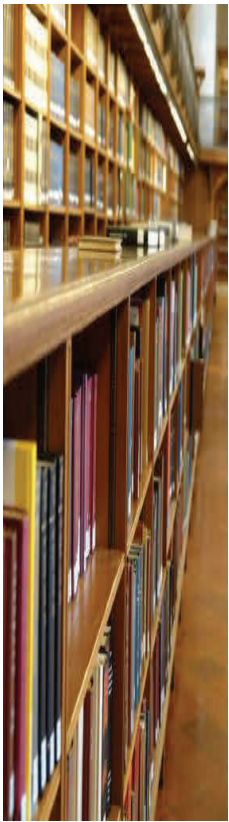
Leaving YWR...

- With encouragement
- With practical tools
- With networking
- With soul care from Christ



Brochure and more information, including the Thursday stay option, available on the [YWR WEBSITE](#)





Reference Room

SURF Your Schedule

By Pastor Jason Holt

The motorboat surged forward into the lake water and the line stretched taught from the pressure. In a matter of a few moments, I leaned back and found myself up on water skis. I was 19 years old. My college roommate had invited me with his family to a cabin in Wisconsin. Although I was born and raised in Minnesota (hello 10,000 lakes!), I had never tried water ski-

ing until that day. It was an incredible rush to get up and ride the water.

My friend told me upfront, “Don’t worry. No one gets up on their first time.” Maybe it is my competitive nature (or my old nature), but I took this comment as a challenge. The rewarding news – I did get up on my first try. The consequence – I was so focused on getting up at the start that I missed the directions on how things end.

After a number of minutes on skis, the driver decided to dump me. He yanked me around one corner and down into the lake I went. **Small problem: I didn’t let go.**

In my fervor to get up the first time, I had gripped the handle so tightly that my fingers did not naturally release. I proceeded to do my best submarine imitation for a number of seconds. “I wonder what I should do about this situation,” went through my mind. I fully missed the “let go” instruction from my roommate at the beginning.

Finally, my body discerned that there existed another alternative to the painful lake bottom drudg-

ery. My fingers released and I bobbed to the surface. The laughter of those in the boat communicated that my accomplishment of getting up on water skis the first time was clearly overshadowed by my dismount.

Many of us approach our time management like my first time skiing. If the crashing wake of thousands of pounds of pressure gets to me, then I guess I will let go of something. It is not the best plan. It is not even a good approach.

How can we follow Jesus and handle our time in a productive way? Here is one handle that has assisted me in a great way – it is time to SURF your schedule.

S – SABBATH

This word has been relegated to almost non-use, but it has been a refreshing rediscovery for me. Many have written on it and much is worth reading. But before you jump on someone’s blog who may or may not be practicing a weekly day of rest, **consider what God’s Word says** about it in Exodus 20:8-11, Mark 2:27-28, and Colossians 2:16-17.

The Lord has established creation and He himself rested on the seventh day. He designed us as well and knows what is best for us. Jesus’ interaction about the Sabbath reminds us that the focus is on Him in it and not on us. He is the Head and we are the Body. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath and we receive the benefits of physical rest through quietness and spiritual rest through abiding in Him.

U – U & JESUS

I know it feels like the musical artist Prince (“I Would Die 4 U”) wrote the title, but it is a crucial reminder. Your time with Jesus is paramount.

In my role, I get to interact with many teens and young adults. Time after time, the practices of getting into God's Word in High School or Bible School are abandoned by the demands of school and work. Notice the sequence here – Sabbath and Devotional Time both precede any other responsibilities.

Psalm 119:164 tells us that seven times a day the psalmist praises the Lord for His Word. It is worth your attention. **Colossians 3:16 indicates that the approach is to let God's Word permeate one's activities.** The Bible is our sole norm and source for faith and life. If it is the source, then we can schedule our lives to go to this foundation.

R – RESPONSIBILITIES

Here is the one that we run to – my responsibilities. When "What is going on today?" is asked, we jump to R. When we follow SURF, we find that responsibilities come third.

The danger with responsibilities is that we can overemphasize them (no Sabbath or no time with Jesus) or underemphasize them (what responsibilities?). **Colossians 3:17 states, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."**

There is a gratitude that comes with proper perspective. It is view that sees everything from the Lord. It is keeping an eye on the cross of Christ. Our identity and significance comes from Him and not from our responsibilities. Our accomplishments are not our life. Jesus is our life!

F – FILL IT

This last instruction seems counter-intuitive. "If I want margin, shouldn't I leave gaps in my schedule?" No.

Once we make space for the other three, it is helpful to place time for family, for friends, and for congregational involvement. (If Volunteer or Vocational, this one has to be identified carefully. See the Coffee Shop on page 2.) Open space is easily stolen. Marked off space is easily guarded.

Colossians 4:2-6 places an emphasis on prayer and people. I was encouraged early in my adult life to set aside time for my family. "No one else can be a husband to your wife and a father to your kids," the wise pastor explained.

I wish I could write that I have always kept this perspective. The Lord's grace and forgiveness is full. And yet, I am reminded that His mercy is not an excuse for me being sloppy with managing my life.

Time management is difficult, but God's strength has no end. **Colossians 2:6-7, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."**

Reflection Questions:

Sabbath – What adjustment would be helpful in your current schedule?

U & Jesus – Which area (Word or prayer) do you want to enhance in your devotional times?

Responsibilities – What demand is overbearing on your schedule and what can be done about it?

Fill It – Have I given the proper time to my family, my friends, and my congregation? If not, how can this change?

C o n v i e n c e S t o r e

Youth Ministry 360

Free Thanksgiving Games & Goodies

Gene Veith

Reforming the Church

Greg Stier

Free "Firing Jesus" e-Book

Derek Melleby, Director

CPYU's College Initiative

Cadre Ministries

**Time Management for Painfully
Pooped-Out people in the Church**

Peder Eide

**Leading Family Worship
at Home**

Simply Youth Ministry

Tips on Getting the Word Out

Children & Pornography Factsheet

by Dr. Walk Mueller

CPYU's Digital Kids Initiative

“Cold”



I said it.

Right in front of the AFLBS Chapel, I said that I have had a cold heart over the last month. It was an awkward moment. Part of me wanted to massage it with words to soften its impact and part of me intended to express it more fully. I started to describe the lack of my love for the Lord and for others. Students shifted in the pews with a creak. Apparently a number of us needed to face our cold hearts. How did the Lord want to work in this situation?

The list of influences that brought me to that conclusion includes 70-hour work weeks and multiple overnights away from home. I've placed my share of blame on those in the past, but this time was different. I could not simply chalk it up as a tough set of weeks.

In this instance, I had prepared. I had laid out the schedule. I had checked regularly with Jennifer. I had prayed and studied. Everything was supposed to work right...but it didn't.

Why?

Without allowing busy-ness and unpreparedness to be candidates for blame, I was stuck facing myself in the mirror. It was me.

My cold heart was a result of me and nothing else. I know that my sinful nature is all too often working, but did I really ignore it? Did it need nurturing to come out? No, it was there along the way. Was God's grace lacking? Never! Jesus is always there. So what's going on?

It was in this window of time that I read II Timothy 2:11-13.

Here is a trustworthy saying:

***If we died with him,
we will also live with him;
if we endure,
we will also reign with him.
If we disown him,
he will also disown us;
if we are faithless,
he remains faithful,
for he cannot disown himself.***

The Lord spoke to my cold heart with this warm truth – Jesus is faithful, even when we are faithless! This sequence is powerful! Jesus' death at the cross is our life. Jesus' strength is our means of endurance.

The caution comes in with a reminder to not take this relationship lightly. Our old nature wants its way. The temptation to walk away from Him will come, so be alert. If we were to reject him, He will disown us. This statement is not a reflection of Him, but of us. We are doing the leaving in these verses. Watch out!

What about Jesus?

From His side, He is constantly faithful. He remains unchanged. It is contrary to His nature to disown Himself. By His grace, we are His and that's where it stands. May our hearts be moved again by His faithful character, His lasting sacrifice, and His powerful love!

*Holt is the Director of
Youth Ministries for the AFLC*

THE CONTACT

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations
Youth Ministries
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Plymouth, MN 55441
E-mail: youth@aflc.org

Table of Contents

Coffee Shop	2
YWR2013	3
Reference Room	4-5
Urgent Care.....	7
Upcoming Events	8

Upcoming Events

January 25-27	Youth Workers Retreat, ARC in Osceola, WI
January 31	Early-Bird Registration for FLY Convention
February 1-3	SIDE x SIDE Winter Retreat, ARC in Osceola, WI
March 15-17	Spring Campus Days, AFLBS in Plymouth, MN
March 24	SW Central MN District Event, YMCA in Fergus Falls, MN
June 13	Youth Service at Annual Conference, ARC in Osceola, WI
July 1-6	FLY Convention, YMCA in Estes Park, CO

The Contact is published twice a year to encourage and engage youth workers of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The AFLC is a growing fellowship of 275 churches whose members believe that the Bible is true and that everyone needs Jesus. AFLC Youth Ministries exist for three goals: to win; to build; and to equip youth for Jesus Christ. We are here to assist in making disciples!



Editor Pastor Jason Holt
AFLC Youth Ministries
National Youth Director
Tues-Fri 8:30am-5pm
jasonholt@aflc.org

Managing
Editor Chris Rasmussen
AFLC YM Assistant
Mon-Fri. 8:00am-4:30pm
chrisr@aflc.org