

THE CONTACT

AFLC Youth Worker's Newsletter

Summer 2016



Networking
Needed
Now

Encouragement, Prayer, & Omelets

By Pastor Jason Holt

To this day when I hear the term “networking”, I think of encouragement, prayer, and omelets. My first full-time youth position was in Fergus Falls, MN. Although Jennifer and I had found out much in advance about the wonderful congregation and the great community, I was unaware of one of its best benefits. Upon my arrival I found an established network of youth leaders that met monthly.

From the newbie to the 10+ year veteran, we were a mash up of denominations and experience. When we met we focused on Jesus, on encouraging one another in the faith and in the calling of youth ministry, and on praying for one another.

Some would come with an initiative from their individual congregation, which was fine, but I observed over 8 years that only when the encouragement and prayer together launched an idea that it bore fruit that impacted the community.

Each spring a network coordinator would host everyone at his home and make personalized omelets. Your choice of toppings from an array of options was a way to honor one another. Four years after I began with the group, I was asked by my peers to become the network coordinator. The only problem was that I didn't know how to make omelets!

After omelet training, I was ready to go. Youth ministry is not a solo sport. We all need healthy networking now!

In Christ,
Jason

*Pastor Jason Holt
Is the National Youth Director
for the AFLC*

A top-down view of a white ceramic coffee cup with a dark brown handle, filled with a latte. The coffee has a beautiful latte art design in the center, resembling a heart or a stylized flower. The cup sits on a dark brown wooden surface with visible grain and knots. The lighting is warm, creating a cozy atmosphere.

Coffee Shop

YOUTH WORKERS WEEKENDS JANUARY 6 - 8, 2017

Our annual gathering will be in Minneapolis/St. Paul
in conjunction with RECHARGE from
Youth Leadership

Best rate is \$110 by 12/12/2016
Regular rate is \$135 after December 12
Online registration opens in September



AFLC Youth Ministries — Video Cluster information for the month of June

Tuesday, June 7 at 3:00pm (Central; 4pm
Eastern; 2pm Mountain; 1pm Pacific)

[https://global.gotomeeting.com/
join/938177189](https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/938177189)

Access Code: 938-177-189

Telephone Call-in: (571) 317-3122

Tuesday, June 9 at 8:00pm (Central; 9pm
Eastern; 7pm Mountain; 6pm Pacific)

[https://global.gotomeeting.com/
join/257649445](https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/257649445)

Access Code: 257-649-445

Telephone Call-in: (408) 650-3123



Reference Room

By Jason Kaat

Conquering Grit Hill

Motivation was high as I laced up my shoes and stretched before beginning my morning run. The first mile was easy, my pace perfectly in sync with Toby Mac's *Eye on it*. Then, like clockwork, I felt my heart fumble and breathing shallow as I prepared for my nemesis a half-mile ahead. It has earned a name in my lexicon: Grit Hill. And there it was before me at the 1.5-mile mark daring me to conquer its summit yet again.

I think a career in youth ministry can be much like facing Grit Hill. In my first years I had the strength and stamina to keep up with the rigors of student ministry. However, fifteen years down the road my perspective had changed. I was no longer young, cool and relevant and my son and his classmates were in my junior high group: total game changer. I was disappointed that some

parents and even staff saw "church" as a checklist to complete rather than an opportunity to disciple our young people. The distance between reality and my expectations formed an ever-widening gulf. The question loomed, "Do I have the grit required for the long haul in youth ministry?"

Today I find myself pushing through forty and my son graduating from high school in May. To make it up my career equivalent of Grit Hill I learned that I can't do ministry alone. I need other youth workers to learn from as we run the race building healthy youth ministry together. If you are starting out in youth ministry full of energy and confidence, that's awesome! Enjoy that season of life, but there's a storm coming and you *will* run into trials. When they come, is there someone in your

life pouring into you? Are there other youth workers in your community with whom you are collaborating, praying, and resourcing?

A basic principal Christ taught us was to lead from an overflow. The Father poured into him and he in turn poured into others. We need to take time in prayer and God's Word. He also modeled doing ministry in community.



In Kara Powell's book *Sticky Faith*, she challenges us to build a constellation of five mentors around our young people if we want to give them a shot at a faith that sticks beyond high school. The same could be said of achieving success for the long haul in youth ministry! Do you have five older, wiser youth workers pouring into your life? Do you have peers with whom you sharpen one another? Who are the Timothies in your youth ministry who you are pouring into?

I have yet to make it through Grit Hill without my lungs feeling like they are on fire, but each time I run the hill the fire isn't as intense. The reason I keep at it is because I want to be healthy and I have other runners who are encouraging me along. Likewise, surround yourself with people who can help make you a healthy youth worker. You can find a network near you by visiting youthworkers.net and if there are none near you, why not start one? I will be there to help encourage you along as you build a healthy network.

Jason Kaat has been serving in youth ministry for over 20 years currently serving as the North Central Regional Coordinator for the National Network of Youth Ministries. Jason has a knack for inspiring churches work together in order to reach every teenager in their community with Christ's love. He has been married for over 20 years to his wife Valerie.

They reside in Plymouth, Wisconsin with their son Ethan (18) and daughter Gillian (15).



Make A Difference: 365 World-Changing Devotions

Dr. Ken Castor of Crown College in Minnesota has released a new resource for teenagers. He targeted a daily devotional that was written for teens to focus on Jesus and to boldly live out their faith in this crazy culture.

As a youth leader, you can get the first week of devotions for FREE by texting **CASTOR to 54900**.

To receive a bulk discount, you can email Sandy at finance@broadstreetpublishing.com.

Write in the comments section of the sales order form:

“Discount Order through author: Ken Castor”

- Case (40 books) at \$7.50/book (50% reduced from \$14.99 retail) = \$300
- Less than a Case \$10/book (33% off from \$14.99 retail) = \$10 x ___ = \$_____



Convenience Store



#1 Top Grad Gift from Interlinc—Free for class of 2016!

<http://bit.ly/1qghDMI>



7 E's to Help Others Reach Their Full Potential—Tony Dungy

<http://bit.ly/1WsZwkG>



Ministering to Youth on the Autism Spectrum

<http://bit.ly/23KU7F4>



Center for Parent/Youth Understanding (CPYU) Podcast
—A New Resource from Walt Mueller

<http://bit.ly/1NrVIO6>



Urgent Care

By Pastor Jason Holt

Oh...My Soul: God's Delight!

It was one of those lasting images you get after a large concert or your favorite sporting event.

At one of the national youth network conventions that I attended, the organizers had a brilliant idea. They honored in front of 4,000 youth leaders one volunteer that had been actively serving teenagers for over 40 years. Now in her late sixties or early seventies, a shocked smile climbed across her face as she stepped on stage without being aware of the honor about to be bestowed. Her name and service was called out and the thunderous applause began from the priesthood of believers.

This moment came back to my mind when I read the following verse:

You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.

- Isaiah 62:4

We tell teenagers consistently (and correctly!) about the reality of our sin and the powerful grace of Jesus Christ. They sometimes shrug their shoulders at the incredible truths of Scripture, because within themselves and within their world,

all they know is rejection. But you know God's Word, so you continue to proclaim the excellencies of Christ (I Peter 2:9).

You know that the Lord delights in them...do you know that the Savior King delights in you?

Sometimes we focus on delivering God's truths so much that we skip God's truths delivering us. Sometimes we lavish God's love on others without pausing to receive God's love through others. Sometimes we exhaust ourselves cheering others on that we forget that the One sending us is cheering us on.

Today is a day that you need to know that Jesus delights in you! By His grace, the packed auditorium stands to clap, because the One on the throne has pointed out you.

As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.

- Isaiah 62:5b

In Christ,
Jason

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 16 Youth Vesper's Campfire @ The ARC, Osceola WI
- Evening gathering for teens & adults at Annual Conference.
- July 5-8 AFLC–Youth Works @ Kansas City MO
- Serving week for AFLC Youth Groups
- July 18-22 FLY Beyond 2016 @ The ARC, Osceola WI
- National youth equipping conference
- Sept 28 See You At The Pole @ Your School
- International day of prayer for teenagers
- Oct 14-16 AFLBS Campus Days @ Plymouth MN
- Training gatherings for parents and youth leaders
- Jan 6-8 2017 Youth Workers Weekends @ Minneapolis MN
- National youth leader retreat w/ Youth Leadership's Recharge
- Feb 3-5 ARC Winter Retreats @ The ARC, Osceola WI
- SIDExSIDE (7-12 Grade) & Sno Daze (4-7 Grade)

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 four goals: to win, to build, to equip, and to multiply youth for Jesus Christ. We are here to partner in making disciples who make disciples!



Pastor Jason Holt
National Youth Director
jasonholt@aflc.org
763-412-2005

Mrs. Chris Rasmussen
AFLC Youth Ministries
Administrative Coordinator
chrisr@aflc.org
763-545-5631

Mr. Daniel Keinanen
FLY Convention Coordinator
flycc@aflc.org

