

Spring, 2011



Jonathan Schultz
Director

Jim -

I recently had the privilege of joining the Front Range Region of Young Life, here in Colorado, for their monthly staff gathering. I was asked to provide a morning devotional and share a little about the Alumni and Friends initiative. Though Easter was a few weeks after this gathering, and it would have been fairly understandable to center our devotion on this, I wanted to focus on what happened forty days following Jesus' resurrection. Can you guess what I spoke about? That's right, the ascension! I am convinced that one of the most under-appreciated and, often-times unknown, days of the year is ascension day. Have you ever seen an ascension day card? Have you been invited to an ascension day party? Me neither. The day of ascension is when the church pauses to remember that Jesus did not only rise again, and reveal himself to more than 500 witnesses, but he ascended into heaven. The ascension proclaims that Jesus is not only risen, but he reigns! He is engaged in what is happening in our world and in our lives and, according to the scriptures, "intercedes" on our behalf(see Romans 8:34). The ascension takes the old "WWJD?" (What would Jesus do?) acronym, and transforms it into "WIJD?" (What is Jesus doing?). Again, he is alive, ascended, engaged, interceding and actively involved in our lives. Our challenge is to recognize this, and join him in what he is doing. I pray that the wonder, hope, and transforming power of the ascension will be yours today!

Along these lines, I want to share with you a little of what Jesus has been doing in and through Young Life Alumni and Friends these past few months, and what he is calling us to in the coming weeks and months...

- We continue to see growth in the number of people joining the Alumni and Friends Network! There are over 72,000 involved today!
- We continue to roll out our "Alumni and Friends Toolbox" on our staff resources website. This will serve as a way to provide field-tested resources to our areas.
- We are getting closer to rolling out Young Life's first Facebook Application, the "Young Life Connector." This is an application that will link a person's Facebook account to their Alumni and Friends profile, and will also serve to grow awareness of the network exponentially!
- We now have a regional Alumni and Friends Advocate for each of the 41 Young Life regions in the U.S! This means that we have a person who is representing Alumni and Friends to their peers; moving forward certain messages, answering questions, and providing feedback to me.
- We are engaging in a strategic planning process during the next four months that will provide us with a clear sense of where we aim to be in the next five years, and how we will get there!
- On the back of this letter, I am providing you with a few quotations from people that I have been in touch with the last few months. I hope they are an encouragement to you, and give you a sense of the impact that this work can have.

In closing, I want to thank you for your ongoing partnership with Young Life Alumni and Friends. Please be encouraged that your involvement is making a difference in many lives worldwide, as we seek to connect, re-connect, and reach a world of kids!

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Schultz'.

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Who are we impacting?

- College Students entering the work force:

"I will be graduating from Virginia Tech this May and moving to Northern Virginia to work with a construction company. The office I will be working out of is 20 minutes from the George Mason campus and was hoping to live with some people familiar with Young life. Are there any other people in a similar situation as me? If so I'd love to get in contact with them to hopefully find some roommates to live life with. Mark"

- Those out of school for a while

"I just want to extend my gratitude, mostly to the Lord, to all who have served through YL. I was saved because of the Love of Christ that was shown me by the YL leaders at my high school, some 36 years ago. I later went on to be a volunteer leader in one of the local junior highs. It was there that I recieved great discipleship & training. Although my dream was to be a full-time YL leader the Lord had a different path. I currently serve as a full time missionary in Poland & have been for the last 14 years. I continue to meet people where they are at & to extend the love of Jesus that transforms lives." Thank you, Denise (Note: We have since connected Denise to our Young Life staff in Poland, as she would love to see Young Life in her community.)

- Those Retiring...

"I would be interested in talking with someone from Spokane and/or Deer Park about some kind of involvement. I am gradually relocating to Deer Park/Spokane. I bought a house there about two years ago and I am planning to retire there in another two years. I'm still working in Berkeley now and spend part of the summer months and a few odd weeks otherwise in Deer Park. Since I'm going to end up in Deer Park, I would be interested in talking to someone there about area needs, especially because I am now starting to think about what I want to do in retirement. " -Robert

- Potential Committee Members...

"Yes please connect me with my local area director! I've always wanted to give back to Young Life, but never realized that there might be opportunities beyond leading students (frankly, I'm terrified of high school aged students!). Looking forward to getting involved..." -Sarah

- Potential Leaders...

"I was a member of YoungLives when I was a teenager. I would love more information on how to get involved. It was an AWESOME experience for me and it would be an honor to be able to help other young women as so many helped me. If you could have someone email me that would be great. I look forward to getting involved again and to hearing from you or someone else in the organization." -Laura

And many, many more!!!