



PEACE.

December 2021

Wow - I find it hard to believe that it's already (and yet, *only*) the end of 2021!

A lot of things have been keeping me busy this year: a move in January, a new puppy and graduating from the YFC Canada credentialing program in the spring, and now, **I've returned to school part-time (while still working)** to finish my degree in Pastoral Skills and Youth Ministry. This has been a very exciting time of intellectual, **professional and spiritual growth**, as I learn more about the evolution of youth ministry through the years, leading well, and where we are headed, especially post-pandemic.

Over this past year, face-to-face ministry has continued to evolve with the ever-changing contexts that we can work within. We have hosted a broad range of programming this year: monthly **movie nights**, focusing on themes in media; **summer events**, which was full of fun outdoor activities and faith discussions; a weekly **program for girls**, where we created a safe space for youth to share about their lives and struggles. We are excitedly working on facilitating lunch-time and after-school **drop-in programs** to run for the foreseeable future, and I am really looking forward to these!

Reaching out to kids in a smaller group or a one-on-one mentoring context has been a core part of our work, and it has been wonderful to **create space for building and deepening relationships**. Through this, God has been challenging our ideas of success. After all, Jesus had a small group of disciples, so **we shouldn't underestimate the power of quality over quantity!**

I didn't realize until the end of September just how much **I was hanging on to my idea of ministry!** The ways that God brings things to our attention is pretty amazing - for me, the story of the Israelites griping in the desert after being freed from Egypt kept coming up, and I began to realize that **I've been doing the same thing... oops!** I've been so focused on what I miss about "normal" ministry that I wasn't fully paying attention to the ways that **God is nudging me forward.**

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:7

I've begun to see that when I experience God's peace in the midst of upheavals, **it doesn't just surpass the understanding of others**, it surpasses even my own understanding! As I have experienced this, I have been led to pray that you (and our students) will experience peace that surpasses even your own understanding, and find rest in him, no matter the circumstance.

Not only did God provide ways to continue youth programming, but he blessed us with abundant opportunities to build relationships with the amazing people who support our work - **yes, I mean you!!** It is a joy to attend fundraising events and get to know the community that makes this work possible by supporting us and lifting us up in prayer. **I am so grateful for each and every person** who has unknowingly provided encouragement, and proves that "it takes a village" is true!

As this year comes to a close, I humbly ask that you remember our ministry with your year-end giving. **Would you support my ministry with a year-end gift by filling out the enclosed form?** Your involvement adds confidence and security to our ministry for the coming months and years, and gives me greater freedom to follow God's leading in this work. If you are already a financial partner, **thank you so much!**

If you would like to donate online, please go to: www.yfcstratford.com/donate

I am incredibly grateful for God's provision through this year, and **I hope that through the ups and downs of 2021, you have witnessed his power and blessings, too!** If there is any way that I can be praying for you, or if you would like to find out more, please don't hesitate to reach out using my contact information below - it is my privilege to be able to journey through life and ministry in partnership with you!

With much love,

Kate Heyen
Campus Ministry Staff & SWO Social Media Manager

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"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." - Isaiah 26:3

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." - Romans 15:13

"In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." - Psalm 4:8

"For God is not a God of confusion but of peace." - 1 Corinthians 14:33

"May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." - 2 Peter 1:2