

Youth Newsletter

April 2005

Alpha, Omega Youth Participate in World Vision 30-Hour Famine

Junk food is a major part of most teenagers' lives. At times, it seems like they can consume their weight in pizza, chips, candy, and soda pop. So it is difficult to imagine that a group of teenagers would willingly go without not just junk food, but any food at all, for over a day.

But, on Friday, February 25, and Saturday, February 26, 22 youth from Bethlehem did just that to raise money for malnourished children all over the world through World Vision's 30 Hour Famine.

This is the second consecutive year that Bethlehem's youth has participated in the 30 Hour Famine, and we are one of only 17 youth groups in the Tidewater area registered with World Vision to participate in the Famine.

The youth gathered at church on Friday evening, after already fasting since lunch, and started the Famine with a brief opening video from World Vision that provided some amazing facts about the problem of hunger. Each day, 29,000 children die from hunger-related causes—that's 1 child every 3 seconds. And 1.2 billion people—21% of the world's population—live on less than \$1 a day. But, fortunately, thanks to World Vision, a highly-respected Christian international relief agency, a donation of \$1 a day can provide a child with food, clean water, vitamins, and medical treatments that can make the difference between life and death.

The group then learned about the plight of the Maasai, a once-proud band of over 350,000 cattle herders in eastern Africa that now faces difficult times due to drought and poverty, and were given cards with their new identity as a member of the Maasai people in one of five different tribes.

Throughout the course of the Famine, these five tribes would compete in a number of Survivor-like challenges giving them the opportunity to earn cards representing food, water, shelter, health, and other things necessary for the survival of Maasai people. By playing the game of Tribe, the Famine participants learned of the difficulties faced by those affected by poverty and hunger, and how relief efforts such as those offered by World Vision can give them hope.

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES

ALL GROUPS

- April 3 Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
April 10 Youth Revival
• Pioneers, 5:30pm-6:45pm
details TBA. Old Fellowship Hall
• Alphas/Omegas, 5:30pm-8:00pm
Revolution.05 Concert, Graham Hall
featuring Days Difference and twenty4seven
- April 17 Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
April 24 Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
May 1 Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm

For more detailed information about your group's schedule, please contact your group's leaders.

Special thanks to all who supported the Alpha and Omega Youth during their recent Pie Sale!

The proceeds from this sale will be used for future mission projects and activities.

☞ Thanks for your support! ☜



Famine participants engage in a number of Survivor-style challenges in the game of Tribe

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(Famine, continued from page 1)

Later that night, the group went to Armory Lanes in Franklin for a few hours of fun and fellowship, then returned to Graham Hall and slept.

The group awoke at approximately 8:00am Saturday morning, and spent the morning in a number of fellowship activities, as well as additional Tribe challenges.



Famine participants play video games and cards to help pass the time

At noon, the five tribes participated in a Food Scavenger Hunt at Food Lion to benefit Bethlehem's Food Pantry. Each tribe was given \$20 from the Alpha Youth Group missions fund and a score sheet listing various items that would earn bonus points. The tribes were given 30 minutes to make their purchases, then returned to church to tally their scores. Points were earned for each item purchased, and bonus points were awarded for certain items purchased. The tribe that purchased the most items, as well as the tribe with the heaviest total purchase earned additional bonus points. After declaring a winner, the purchased food items were taken to the Food Pantry. In total, \$99 was spent on 183 items totaling over 129 lbs.



Famine participants participate in the Food Scavenger Hunt

After some additional fellowship time, several final Tribe challenges, and the convening of the Tribal Council to declare a winner, the group gathered at 5:30pm for a closing Bible study. The youth were challenged not to let their experience end at 30:00:01, but to continue showing God's love to others in the days, weeks, and months to follow.

Finally, at 6:00pm, after 30 hours of consuming nothing more than clear liquids, the group was treated to a delicious roast beef dinner by the COFFEE Class.



Famine participants enjoy their first meal in more than a day

Throughout the Famine, Heidi Greene, a correspondent from the Suffolk Sun, interviewed the Famine participants and participated in several of the activities. A feature article on our Famine was published in the Sunday, March 6 edition of the Suffolk Sun. A copy of the article can still be viewed online at www.pilotonline.com (an ePilot subscription is required).



Heidi Greene, a correspondent from the Suffolk Sun, participates in the Food Scavenger Hunt and interviews the group

Thanks to the incredible support of the church and community, the youth collected \$1,850 in pledges, enough to allow World Vision to feed 5 children for an entire year. Plus, thanks to matching Federal grants through the Faith-Based Initiative program, World Vision is able to make its donations go up to 7 times as far, enabling our donation to feed as many as 35 children for an entire year.

Special thanks to all who contributed, and a great job to those who went without food so that others might eat.



Bethlehem's World Vision 30 Hour Famine participants and leaders

Check out pictures from the Family Skating Party and other youth group activities on the Youth Group Web Site at

<http://www.bccyouth.org>

Scooters Make “Resurrection Rolls” for Easter

During their regular meeting on Sunday, March 20, the Scooters club made a special Easter treat called “Resurrection Rolls”.

Under the supervision of Scooter leaders Tammy Schlatter, Rachel Lewis, and Fran Johnson, the 2-through 5-year-olds dipped marshmallows in melted butter, sugar, and cinnamon, put them in the middle of a triangle of crescent roll dough, sealed the edges, and put their creations in the oven to bake.

The leaders explained to the children that the marshmallow represented the body of Jesus, the butter, sugar, and cinnamon represented the oils and spices used during the burial, the crescent roll dough represented the linen burial cloths, and the oven represented the tomb.



Scooter leaders Fran Johnson and Rachel Lewis help the Scooters make “Resurrection Rolls”

The marshmallow melted away during cooking, leaving the children quite amazed a short time later when they opened up the “tomb” and looked into the “burial cloths” to find that “Jesus” was not there, and that only the sweet “oil” and “spices” remained!



Youth Director's Corner *by David Salerno*

One of the most satisfying rewards I receive as Youth Director is to see young people grow up, both physically and spiritually, and to see true Christian character emerge.

Sometimes the indicators are very subtle. Sometimes they are hidden under a façade of teenage “goofiness” or feigned ambivalence. If you are not looking very closely, you might miss them entirely.

But they are there, and they give me great pride when I see them.

One great opportunity to see these signs of growth is during our annual World Vision 30 Hour Famine.

If you have not taken the time to “dig deeper” and truly see the effect the Famine has on the lives of the youth who participate in it, you really need to. Sometimes these effects are obvious, but most times they are more subtle.

Some youth will come out of the Famine with a greater understanding of the problem of world hunger, while others will show a greater passion for Christian service. Some will leave with a better appreciation for the things that they have, while others may even develop a desire to serve abroad in the mission field. Although the

intensity will vary, few youth can come out of this 30-hour long experience without experiencing some type of lasting impact on their lives.

Ultimately, I believe that there are some things that you just cannot learn in a classroom or from a devotion book. There are some things you must get out and do in order to experience true life-changing impact.

Some of the most valuable learning opportunities happen in the everyday and not-so-everyday experiences we face. These are the times that truly test and help build our Christian character, and provide invaluable “teachable moments” for spiritual growth.

However, I think it was best said by a Famine participant from another church, who posted these words on the World Vision 30 Hour Famine web site (www.30hourfamine.org):

- To feed a kid for a day: \$1.
- To feed a kid for a month: \$30.
- To feed a kid for a year: \$360.
- To do the Famine, help save kids’ lives, push yourself out of your personal comfort zone, gain a greater awareness of the problem of hunger, grow closer together as a group, and grow closer to God: priceless.

Until next month, God bless,