

Captive Free North Central 2006-07 Journal

Date: 9/19/2006

Submitted by: Erin Donlon

Journal Entry:

Well, we have been on the road for officially four days now, and North Central is rockin' it up. Our first night as a team we had an experiential worship and a youth night. Must say, for our first worship, it was purrrty swell. Some wires were missing, but it was all dandy when we got to rockin'. Then hanging out with the youth was awesome. By the time we were meant to leave, there was an electrical storm going on outside. Of course, being who we are, we went to watch; to us, it looked like God was having a dance party.



Erin Donlon

Next morning, we took off for Hector after church (and hanging with Mrs. Bromhal). Once we found the church in Hector, we played an acoustic set of songs and had a potluck. The people there were amazing and totally fun. For our day off, some of us went into town to hang at the youth center, and some just stayed at host homes chilling out. It was just a good day.

That's about all we have really been up to so far. Chilling with some amazing families and traveling around Minnesota. We love you all! God bless!

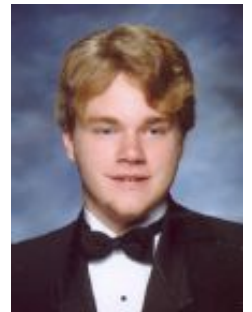
Sincerely,
Erin Donlon

Date: 9/21/2006

Submitted by: Andrew Bromhal

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone. Greetings to you from Captive Free North Central. We're coming up to the end of our first week on the road, and I know it already feels like a month. That's not a bad thing, though. I've been enjoying the traveling quite a bit. All of us have met some amazing people and families this first week. Just last night, we put on our second XP (experiential) Worship program for the youth at Sauk Valley Lutheran in Osakis, MN. It was definitely a major difference from our first XP. I was told that at our program, all the youth that came were there for that church's first youth group meeting. I was glad to be a part of that. We're getting ready to head to Fesston, MN today where we will do another XP. It should be awesome. Well, before I finish this up, I wanted to say something to each of our families. We all pray that everyone back at home is doing well, and we all miss you guys. Thanks a bunch. God bless.



Andrew Bromhal

Andrew Bromhal

Date: 9/23/2006

Submitted by: Courtney Esbenshade

Journal Entry:

Friday we arrived and met our contact Michelle. Before our program that night, she took us to eat at this tiny restaurant "Bob's." There was a home cookin' buffet, and trust me, we had our full share. We ended up sleeping in a Motel 8. The beds were so comfy, every one of us crashed



after the XP (experiential worship service). The XP went awesome. Kids **Courtney Esbshade** were even tapping along with my drum beat. Even kids in pews were singing and praising God. Amazing energy from them, too.

After the XP, the kids had a lock-in. So some way, we had to keep them occupied, at least until 12:00. So we played Philistines and some other games. The kids really listened well and had a blast. At the end of the night, the kids were begging us to stay. I'll admit, I was having a rad time with the kids, especially one kid who stood there and rocked out with me to a House of Heroes video.

Saturday morning, we tore down everything. As we were tearing down, we came across a neighbor's dog named Gunner. Which is hilarious because of the teamer on Captive Free East Lakes named Gunnar. Our contact Michelle took us to this restaurant for lunch, Joe DiMaggio's. The burgers were literally the size of my head. Crazy. All through lunch, Michelle kept saying, "Leave just a little room." We all were puzzled why, though. Not five minutes after she said that, this huge ice cream cake concoction was presented. Between the seven of us, there was still half of it left. So, with bellies full and pictures taken with Michelle, we headed off to the next place.

We met our contact Jay at our next XP. One of the most biggest kids ever. The XP went amazing. The set up was a little odd, but for the most part, AWESOME! It was so awesome to see the different types of kids. From popular to punk and scene, but all of them were so into it.

Date: 9/26/2006

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

The past couple of days have been really cool. We had an XP (experiential) worship program on Saturday night that went really well. Then we got to hang out with the kids a little bit. The youth director, Jay, was an awesome guy. He was so full of energy and excitement, it was totally awesome. He was a very generous person, too. He went and bought us a dolly to help get all of our equipment in without hurting ourselves. He was a very AWESOME guy!!



Richard Bodden

On Sunday, we led two worship services, one of which was on the radio, and we did some songs and a puppet show for the Sunday School kids. Later on that day, we traveled from Roseau, which was ten miles from the Canadian border, to a small town called Oslo, which was on the border of Minnesota and North Dakota. Oslo does a lot of farming with sugar beets. We set up and did a program for the middle school kids, which was so much fun. It was nice to take a break from the XP program and do something else.

That night, Andrew and I went to our host home and hung out for a little while, then went to bed. The next day was our day off, and we went to lunch with the seniors at the community center, which was a lot of fun. Then Andrew and I went back to our host home and hung out watching TV all day. This was a very relaxing day off, and we got to do our laundry.

So far, life on the road has been a lot of fun. It's very tiring, but at the same time, it's very rewarding. I am really amazed at the generosity of everyone, and I am very grateful. I will talk to you all later. Take care, and God bless!!

Richard Bodden

Date: 9/28/2006

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:



Maria Henriksen

Hello everybody,

I hope that you are having an amazing day. We have had some really great days. Tuesday the 26th was our travel day. We left Oslo, MN around noon. We arrived in Greenbush, MN one hour earlier than we were supposed to, so we decided to play at a park together as a team. We had some fun time there, even though there were only four swings and a table.

After playing for about an hour, we drove to the church we were staying at for the next two days. The pastor at the church was a lot of fun. We ended up eating at a small restaurant with the pastor, the pastor's son, and some of his friends, and just hanging out with them the rest of the night. The whole team was staying at the church, so we ended up watching a movie using the ceiling as a screen. That was a lot of fun.

Wednesday we played at a nursing home in the afternoon; the people there really enjoyed hearing us sing for them, even though all we "used" was a piano and singing. Simple but very powerful. After the nursing home, we played with kids from K-5th grade for about one and a half hours. The kids really enjoyed running around with us, and the smiles on their faces were amazing.

At 6 p.m., we had a kind of a potluck with some youth, and after that we did our XP (experiential) worship. It went really well, and we had a lot of fun. The evening ended with us just hanging out with the pastor and his son and his friend. We had an amazing time in Greenbush, MN.

Blessings,

Maria Henriksen of North Central

Hej alle,

Jeg haaber at du/I har en fantastisk dag. Vi har haft nogle rigtig gode dage. Tirsdag d. 26. var vores rejsedag. Vi forlod Oslo, MN, omkring middag. Vi ankom i Greenbush, MN, en time tidligere end hvad der var meningen saa vi besluttede os for at lege det rigtig sjovt selvom der kun var fire ginge og et bord.

Efter vi havde leget i ca. en time koerte vi hen til den kirke vi skal bo i de naeste to dage. Praesten i kirken var rigtig sjov. Vi endte med at spise paa en lille restaurant i byen sammen med praesten, hans soen, og nogle af hans venner og resten af aftenen tilbragte vi sammen med dem.

Da hele team'et "bor" i kirken besluttede vi os for at se en film—med loftet som skaerm—det var rigtig sjovt. Onsdag eftermiddag spillede vi paa et plejehjem—de gamle mennesker der noed virkelig at vi sang for dem, selvom alt hvad vi gjorde "brug" af var et klaver og vores stemmer—simpelt men med stor virkning.

Efter vi havde spillet paa plejehjemmet legede vi med boern fra boernehaveklasse til og med 5. klasse i omkring 1½ time (boernene noed virkelig at loebe rundt med os, og smilene paa deres ansigter var helt utrolige).

Kl. 18. spiste vi sammen med nogle af de unge og derefter spillede vi vores "XP-worship" (en form for lovsang med et gennemgaende tema). Det gik rigtig godt, og vi havde det smadder sjovt. Aftenen sluttede med at vi hang ud med praesten, hans soen,

og hans ven. Vi havde en utrolig tid I Greenbush, Minnesota.

Gud velsigne jer,
Maria Henriksen (North Central)

Date: 9/30/2006

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

Greetings from Miller, South Dakota! These past two weeks have been amazing for me and my team. We have finally expanded into South Dakota. The past two days have by far been amazing and my favorite. Friday night was spent performing and playing games with kids ranging from three years old up to 16 years old. The saying, "Kids say the darnedest things" came out in full force Friday. It was a fun and funny night. But at the same time, for the first time, I felt as though I made a great connection with the kids. Today we traveled down to Miller, where we had a performance. The kids were so into our program, and it was amazing to see God's little creations in action.

Life has been so amazing, and every person has been such a blessing. I thank every host family we've had thus far, for they have been awesome. It has been eye-opening to see how kind and generous people at the churches and our host homes have been. I have learned at least one thing from every place we've been. I look forward to the rest of this year! Until next time, may God bless you!

--Alyssa



Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 10/3/2006

Submitted by: Erin Donlon

Journal Entry:

Hey there, all you journal readin' people! We are just finishing up our second week on the road, and we be hanging strong. Let's see, what crazy adventures have us North Coasters had recently? We will begin on Sunday for the story o' fun.

When we awoke to the wonderful smell of breakfast, we were in Miller, South Dakota. After nourishing our bodies with food, we had our Sunday morning worship. It went really well, and the kids loved it. They didn't want us to leave. Even though the kids were so cute, we tore ourselves away (it was so hard...tear...tear...).

After a few hours in the van and a quick stop at Taco Bell (for which we had been looking for a week), we made our way to Waukay, South Dakota. After driving through the entire town, we called for directions. The man told us to go down Main Street, and we would see it. Well, Main Street was easy to find (it was the only street to be seen). We went down it until it ended (about a half a mile), and we didn't see the church. We did see three miniature ponies and some sheep. Once we found the church, we had a good time getting in. There was a wall of box elder bugs in the way, a serious wall.

Once in the church, we watched some Veggie Tales and waited for the youth. After they all got there and we ate dinner, we saw that with this age group, our XP (experiential worship service) would be best. So an hour before we started, we decided to set that up. It went well, and we had awesome fun.



Erin Donlon

Running out of time to write! Okay, day off highlights. We drove a Barracuda (really nice old car), and we bumped the side of our trailer on a fire hydrant. No harm done. Yeah, crazy days!

Love you all and God bless,

Erin Donlon

Date: 10/10/2006

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone,

The past few days on the road have been pretty laid back. I'd like to say thanks again to Martha for her help this past Friday with our XP (experiential worship service). She was a big help with running the sound board and the projector. It was also a lot of fun to hang out with her a bit.



Richard Bodden

On Saturday, we were in Grand Rapids, MN. Early that morning, we met with a few youth and taught them how to do a puppet show. They came up with a really awesome puppet show, so we got them to perform it during the Safety Fair that morning. We also did a few puppet shows during the Fair then had a dance party, which was truly awesome. We had the rest of the day off, so we went and took some naps. Then we went out for dinner and a movie. It was a pretty fun night.

The next day, we went and did another puppet show for the Sunday Schoolers. Then, for the first time since we have been on the road, we got to just go to church. We didn't have to lead worship. Then after church, we traveled to Culver, MN, and did an acoustic program with the youth. After the program, we spent some time playing games with their confirmation class.

Instead of staying in Culver, Erin had talked to her uncle who owns a cabin in Saganaw, MN. He agreed to let us stay there. So that night, we went to his cabin and spent the next day there, just hanging out for our day off. We had a barbeque for dinner on Monday, and then just watched a bunch of movies. It was very relaxing.

That's all for now. I hope that you are all doing well, and I thank you for all your prayers and support. Take care, and God bless!

Richard Bodden

Date: 10/12/2006

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

North Central has had some absolutely amazing last few days.

Tuesday we traveled from Saginaw (where we had spent our day off) to Mora, MN. Mora is the hometown of Angel Brelie from Captive Free East Lakes, so we were all really excited to go there. We arrived at the church and got ready to do 'Plan B' acoustically. After getting our stuff in we went down to the school with our contact Daphne to see some of the kids from the youth-group in the church play football and volleyball. We probably spent one hour all in all watching the kids play.



Maria Henriksen

After that we went back to the church, ate dinner, and got ready to play. We had mostly young kids at the church this night so Plan B was a hit (Plan B consists of some worship songs, sing-a-longs and a puppet-show). After the program, we had some time to hang around with the kids and play games with them. It was so much fun having time to relate with the kids in a different way than when we play music.

Wednesday morning we had breakfast in the church. Angel's parents had provided the food for us. There we also some youth in the church. They had release-time in the church, so we hung out with them for a bit and then they had a Bible study, of which we were able to attend some of.

Wednesday afternoon we drove from Mora to Waseca, MN. The church we played at was rather small but we decided to do a full setup even though we would not have a lot of room. After setting up and doing sound-check we had a potluck dinner with the congregation. The whole time during the dinner more people kept coming and by the time our program was supposed to start there was about 100 people in the small church. The balcony was not supposed to be used but it ended up with being full.. There were absolutely no seats left in the church. People even came from another church in town. It was an absolutely awesome night. We had a lot of fun playing and shining God's light for them. The church just got a new pastor three months ago--and everybody there really likes her--and the work the secretary--our contact, June--had done for us (promoting us and getting people to come) was awesome.

We had the most amazing night, and it was awesome seeing how God is really working in this town.

God's peace,
Maria

And then in Danish / og så på dansk:

North Central har haft nogle absolut fantastiske dage.

Tirsdag rejste vi fra Saginaw (hvor vi havde tilbragt vores fredag) til Mora, MN. Mora er Angel Brellie fra East Lakes hjemby, så vi var alle spændte på at skulle derhen. Vi ankom til kirken og gjorde klar til at skulle spille plan B' akustisk. Efter vi fik vores udstyr ind kørte vi ned til skolen med vores kontakt Daphne for at se nogle unge fra kirken spille football og volleyball. Vi tilbragte ca. 1 time alt I alt med at se de unge spille.

Efter det tog vi tilbage til kirken, spiste aftensmad, og gjorde klar til at spille. Vi havde mest mindre born i kirken denne aften, så plan B var et hit (plan B består af nogle lovsange, syng-med-sange og et dukketeater). Efter programmet havde vi noget tid til at høenge ud med børnene og spille spil med dem. Det var rigtig sjovt at have tid til at tilbringe tid med dem på en anden måde end når vi spiller musik.

Onsdag morgen fik vi morgenmad i kirken. Angels forældre havde sørget for maden til os. Der var også nogle unge i kirken. De havde noget der hedder 'Release-time (hvilket er en form for lovligt fravær hvor du laver noget), og de tilbragte denne tid I kirken. Vi hang lidt ud med dem og derefter havde de et bibelstudie, hvor vi havde mulighed for at deltage lidt.

Onsdag eftermiddag kørte vi fra Mora til Waseca, MN. Kirken vi skulle spille i var forholdsvis lille men vi besluttede os for at bruge alt vores udstyr alligevel, selvom det ikke ville give os særlig meget plads. Efter vi havde sat vores udstyr op og haft sound-check (lydtjek) havde vi potluck (alle fra menigheden medbringer en varm ret eller desert og så spiser vi alle af hinandens mad) med dem fra menigheden. Hele tiden under middagen blev der ved med at komme flere mennesker, og da vores program skulle starte var der omkring 100 mennesker i den lille kirke. Det var ikke meningen at balkonen skulle tages i brug, men det endte med at den var helt fyldt. Der var stort set ingen søder tilbage i kirken. Der kom endda også folk fra en anden kirke i byen. Det var en absolut fantastisk aften. Vi havde en masse sjov med at spille og lovsynge Gud der. Kirken har lige fået en ny præst for tre måneder siden - og alle i kirken kan rigtig godt li' hende - og det arbejde sekretæren - vores kontaktperson, June - havde udført (gjort reklame for us og inviteret folk til at komme) var helt igennem fantastisk.

Vi havde en helt utrolig aften og det var super fedt at se hvordan Gud virkelig arbejder I denne by.

Guds fred,
Maria

Date: 10/14/2006

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”—2 Corinthians 13:13

Greetings, friends in Christ, from Wahpeton, North Dakota. This is our first stop in North Dakota, and it's always exciting to be in a new state. What a change tonight's performance was compared to last night. Last night (uh-oh, Friday the 13th) was an absolute blast. We were in Eden Prairie, MN, doing a lock-in. We were in charge of games and a worship set. The room was filled with so much energy, which was so amazing. There were over 100 middle school aged kids present, and it felt as though we were at a mini-Quake. I really enjoy lock-ins because I feel like I'm able to make more of a connection with the kids, since we have more time with them. After our portion of the night was over, we had the option of going bowling with the kids from 1:00-2:30 a.m. The group of girls I was with was so much fun. I definitely found a new way to bowl that night...or should I say morning?

Tonight was an amazing change from last night. The church had requested a Family Night Program instead of an XP (experiential worship service). The crowd of 20 was really laid back compared to the energy last night. Even though we had a small crowd, we still had a blast. I have found that some of the smaller towns we go to are so appreciative of the work and ministry we do.

I want to thank you all for your continuous prayers. I pray that we continue to have safe travels as we have already run into some snow. God's blessings to you all!

Alyssa



Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 10/17/2006

Submitted by: Erin Donlon

Journal Entry:

The word of the journal is splendiferous! On this splendiferous Sunday morning, we began by going to worship. During worship, we sang some pretty songs. At the end, we packed up and drove to a different church in a town called Barney and sang some more. You can imagine the song we wanted to sing, but NO!

I must say, the sermon in Barney is something that really stuck out to me. The pastor had one small girl and her younger sister play tug-o-war, and the older girl won. Then the little girl asked if there could be help, and the pastor said yes, and put another girl with the older sister. Help doesn't always come how or when we want. We must be careful in asking for things we want.

Then Sunday night, we traveled to Park River Bible Camp—well, after a stop at the mall on the way. Good new pants, and a scary moving mannequin in a store. We told Maria it was a real person, and he would jump at her. So she said hello, and when he moved,



Erin Donlon

she got scared. Then when we left, she did the same thing.

Okay, once we got to PRBC, we set up our rooms, got some food, and met an awesome Assistant Program Director. Jared was beyond cool, and we watched "Newsies" and then I curled up for bed.

Next morning we woke up, I went running, and then Maria, Alyssa and I went to the doctor. Lots of hours, yeah. Once we got back to camp, we chilled for a while, then went to a restaurant for dinner.

Tuesday morning! Happy birthday, Alyssa! Yep, it was Alyssa's 20th birthday! There was much rejoicing, followed by packing and leaving! We miss you, PRBC!

Then we drove to Lisbon, ND and hung out with two awesome people, Joy and David. They cooked us some great food and joked with us. It was awesome, and the love from their hearts was beyond splendiferous. That night we stayed in a hotel and just chilled out.

Well, I am sorry our splendiferous time together must end, and I am sorry I didn't use "splendiferous" more, but it is a long word, and my hand hurts. Love to you all, and God bless!

Sincerely,
Erin Donlon

Date: 10/20/2006

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

So, usually journals are supposed to be about what we have done. Been up to and all that. Well, I'll give a little taste of that, then something different. As usual with me.

So there was this block part we were to be performing at. Let's set the picture. Empty outside ice hockey stadium, an 8x6 "stage" which only Andrew and I could fit on, and it was 30 degrees and snowy. Woot! Even through all that, we sounded awesome, and our crowd was up and dancing.

Now to give some light on my opinion of team. It astonishes me every day to think of what I'm doing. I'm truly a servant for God. I live off 60 bucks a month, and the rest, generosity. The food I eat, the warm beds I sleep in. It's just amazing. These people don't even know me, and they are like, "Make yourself at home." "Do you need more food?" "Do you need to do laundry?" This journal is to give props and acknowledgement for every person/family that has hosted a teamer. Everything you have done for us is extremely appreciated. You are not EVER forgotten, and I thank you for everything.



Richard Bodden

Date: 10/26/2006

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

Before we left Duluth, MN, we decided to have our team-meeting at a café called Amazing Grace. We had a really good team meeting and some good work time here. By the end of our meeting Martha (Captive Free North East 2005-2006) met us at the café. We were able to hang out with her a little bit (we had lunch at her school and we were even able to climb a climbing-wall -- that was a lot of fun and really nice to hang

out as a team and experience something different together).

After that we headed to Cook, MN. We were actually supposed to do a youth night at the church, but the youth director, Michael, decided to cancel it because there was a big game at the high school that night, so we ended up just hanging out with Michael and his sister Melissa, who were the pastor in the church.



Maria Henriksen

We spent most of Thursday in the church. We had some time to do our job, and about an hour before our program, we decided to do full setup instead of just acoustic, so we had to work a little bit fast, but we managed to get everything done even with some time to spare before the program started.

We had a fun night in the church. It took a little time before the youth loosened up a little, but by the time we had 'story time with Andrew' (his sharing), we had all the youth sitting on the floor in the front to hear his story.

After our program, we hung out a bit with the youth and after that we tore down our equipment. After all that was done we hung out with the Melissa, the pastor, her husband, the youth director, Michael, and one of their friends, Brian, out at the camp we were staying at. We had a campfire and watched a movie. It was a lot of fun to have the time to get to know the pastor and the youth director a little bit more than when we just talked with them just before our programs.

We had some amazing days in Cook, MN, but I also want to talk about one thing that has been on my mind a lot lately. That thing is prayer. When you're on team, everything is being provided to you. And I'll be honest—sometimes you get to a point where you take it for granted (or at least I do). But then something happens and God reminds me that without Him all this wouldn't be possible and that we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Him. I get this reminders by my teammates, the Youth Encounter staff, the awesome people we meet on the road and from reading my Bible. One of the things God has reminded me of is that we shall reminder to pray. When things are going great, don't forget God, thank God; when things are going bad, pray to God for help. He will totally help you through it. God knows what every one of us needs (even if it's unsaid), and God will provided you with the strength to continue, and He will be the one that guides you through. Just as in the poem about the footprints in the sand where it talks about that when there is only one pair of footprints it's not because God has left us, it's because God carried you. God will help you through and He will carry you!

One passage from the Bible that has been a lot on my mind the last few days comes from Philippians 4, 6: *In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.* I encourage you to remember to pray. When everything in your life is brought before God it helps you to cope. The fact that God knows about what is going on and what my concerns might be really helps me to see a way through hard times because I can trust in God being there for me—all the time—and that He will carry me through everything that I will encounter.

I hope this journal finds you all doing well.

In Christ,
Maria

Før vi forlod Duluth, MN, besluttede vi os for at have vores team-møde på en café ved navn 'Amazing Grace'. Vi havde et rigtig godt møde og også en god tid brugt på at arbejde lidt. Da vores møde var ved at være slut mødte Martha (fra Captive Free North East 2005-2006) på caféen. Vi havde lidt tid til at hænge ud med hende (vi spiste frokost på hendes skole og vi havde endda mulighed for at klatre lidt på en klatrevæg – det var rigtig sjovt og det var rigtig dejligt at have mulighed for at opleve noget nyt og anderledes sammen som et team..).

Efter det rettede vi vores næser mod Cook, MN. Det var faktisk meningen at vi skulle stå for en ungdomsaften dér, men fordi der var en stor kamp på den lokale skole havde 'ungdomskonsulenten', Michael, besluttet sig for at aflyse vores program, så vi endte med at hænge ud med Michael og hans søster, Melissa, som er præsten i kirken.

Vi tilbragte det meste af torsdagen i kirken. Vi havde noget tid til at udføre vores job på teamet og omkring en time før vores program besluttede vi os for fuldt setup istedet for akustisk, så vi blev nødt til at arbejde lidt hurtigt men vi nåede det hele endda med lidt tid tilovers inden vores program startede.

Vi havde en rigtig sjov aften i kirken. Det tog lidt tid før de unge havde løst lidt op overfor os, men da vi havde 'historie-tid med Andrew' (hans vidnesbyrd) sad alle de unge oppe foran på gulvet for at høre hans historie.. ☺

Efter vores program hang vi ud med de unge og efter det tog vi vores udstyr ned. Efter det var gjort hang vi ud med Melissa, præsten, hendes mand og 'ungdomskonsulenten', Michael, og en af deres venner, Brian, på den lejr hvor vi boede. Vi havde et bål og vi så en film. Det var rigtig sjovt og dejligt at komme til at kende præsten og 'ungdomskonsulenten' lidt bedre end vi normalt har mulighed for...

Vi havde nogle rigtig gode dage i Cook, MN, men jeg vil også gerne fortælle lidt om noget jeg har tænkt meget på i løbet af det sidste stykke tid... Og det er bøn. Når du er på team bliver alt sørget for for dig. Og hvis jeg skal være ærlig – nogle gange kommer du til et punkt hvor du tager det for givet (eller i hvert fald gør jeg). Men så sker der noget, og Gud minder mig om at uden Ham ville intet af dette være muligt og at jeg ikke ville være her hvis det ikke var for Ham. Jeg bliver mindet om dette af mine teammates, Youth Encounters ansatte, de fantastiske mennesker vi møder når vi kommer rundt og ved at læse i Bibelen. En af de ting Gud minder mig om er, at vi skal huske at bede. Når det går dig rigtig godt – så glem ikke Gud men tak Ham - når det går dårligt, så bed Gud om hjælp. Han vil virkelig hjælpe dig igennem det. Gud ved hvad hver enkelt af os har brug for (selv når det ikke bliver sagt) og Gud vil give dig styrke til at fortsætte og Han vil være dén der hjælper dig igennem. Der er et digt omkring nogle fodspor i sandet der taler om, at når der kun er ét søet fodspor i sandet, er det ikke fordi Gud har forladt os – det er fordi Gud bærer os. Gud vil hjælpe dig igennem og Han vil bære dig.

Et bibelvers som har været meget i mine tanker igennem de sidste par dage kommer fra Filipperbrevet 4, 6: *Vær ikke bekymrede for noget, men bring i alle forhold jeres ønsker frem for Gud i bøn og påkaldelse med tak.* Jeg vil gerne opfordre dig til at huske at bede. Når alt i dit liv er bragt frem for Gud hjælper det dig til at klare det. Det faktum at Gud ved hvad der sker i mit liv og hvad mine bekymringer er hjælper mig virkelig til at se en vej gennem hårde tider, fordi jeg kan stole på, at Gud er der for mig – altid – og at Han vil bære mig igennem alt jeg møder på min vej. Jeg håber, at I alle har et godt.

I Kristus,
Maria

Date: 10/28/2006

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

Wow, just wow! The last two days have been crazy. We were booked for two separate lock-ins. The first lock-in was on Friday in Grand Marais, MN. We were excited to find that we would be doing an acoustic worship set. The crowd was full of energy and got into our music. But no worries; they took that energy straight upstairs for games. It was a great time trying some new games with them. Not to mention we had a dance-off in which the youth won because we decided the members of Captive Free looked ridiculous. It was great to interact with the kids in a different way that's not just music.

Saturday, we traveled to Two Harbors, MN. The drive was beautiful along the shore of Lake Superior on a bright sunny day. Upon arrival, we found out that the pastor of this church had served on team 27 years ago. It was his serving on team that inspired him to become a pastor. It was fun to chat about our experiences thus far. Our program was more laid-back that night, as well as our game time. It was a lot of fun getting to know these kids because they were a little older and were able to relate on a personal level.

It's hard to believe that October has come and gone so fast. I'm sure November will too, seeing as how we have two Events. I'm very excited for them because it was the Quakes



Alyssa Gerlach

and the Zones that inspired my faith. I hope I can give back that gift to another young person. God has put me in the right place this year, and I thank Him every day. I hope this journal finds you well.

Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 11/7/2006

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone. So we started our Sunday leading worship at a church in Evansville, MN. We had a lot of fun there, and we had the little kids come up and sing the Sheep Song during the service.

After the service, we went back to our host home, and our host mom prepared a huge lunch for us. It was almost a Thanksgiving dinner. Then we packed up and headed down to Cokato, MN.

When we got to Cokato, we went out to a park for a little while to hang out. Then we came back and ate some homemade chicken soup. Sunday was Andrew's birthday, so our host family made him a cake. After dinner, we hung out with our host brothers and watched *Over the Hedge* and *Nacho Libre* in their youth room. They had a projector, screen and sound system in there, so it was like a small movie theater. It was pretty sweet.

On Monday, we didn't really do much. We played a lot of Mario Kart and did some laundry. Other than that, we just kind of hung around the house.

On Tuesday, we packed up and headed over to Afton, MN. We got there and went out with Kim, the youth leader, to Chili's for dinner. He was a really cool guy, and we had a pretty good time hanging out with him. Everyone needs to use the word he made up, "chem." (ch-em). This word can be used in place of "cool" or "awesome." It can be used in sentences such as, "This is pretty chem!"

After dinner, we went to our host homes, and our host family took Andrew and me into Stillwater. We walked around the town, then we went and got some really good malts. After that, we just kind of hung out at our host home until we went to bed.

That's all for this entry—talk to you all again later on. Take care, and God bless!!
--Richard Bodden



Richard Bodden

Date: 11/9/2006

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

It has become that time again --the time for me to tell you all what we have been up to lately... Well, Wednesday started with a 1 and 1/2 hour drive from our host-home to the church because we had to pick the rest of the team up at their host-homes... After arriving at the church and having a team meeting and devotion, our contact Kim took us out for lunch. Another employee at the church, Maria, also joined us for lunch... After lunch we headed to the nursing home that we would be playing at in the afternoon. The nursing home was in Hudson, WI--that's right, Wisconsin; watch out West Lakes, we're invading your region... This was an amazing nursing home.. The employees and the residents there had so much energy--some of them even started dancing when we sang "This Little Light of Mine". That was so much fun...



Maria Henriksen

After the nursing home, we drove back to the church and got ready for our youth/family night.. About 100 kids were there, and it was a lot of fun.. They were really energetic and were really getting in to it... After our program we all went back to our host-homes and Courtney, Alyssa and I had a really nice time hanging out with our host-mom..

Now, Thursday, another good day.. We headed to the church and tore down all our equipment and got ready to go to lunch with our contact Kim... And he even got us coffee/cocoa afterwards... We had a really good time in Afton, MN, and we'll even be coming back in the spring...

Well, after we left the church we headed to the Youth Encounter-office to do our call-ins (checking in with the people responsible for our jobs to make sure every things is done right)--that's right, we did call-ins in person.. Yay, you've gotta enjoy being on the North Central team. After having been in the office for about an hour we drove to Mahtomedi, MN, where Sounds Like Love is taking place this weekend. We met up with Lisa, Susie and Brittany and were shown around the church. After that we drove to our host-home... Then the evening arrived--we had dinner with our host-mom and after that we headed to Jeff D. Johnson's CD release... We even brought Donna (our 'boss').. It was a lot of fun.. There were a lot of YE-people; Cassie, Boo, Josh (WM 05-06), Bodil (WM 04-05) and Leah (from Luther Dell). And then most of North Central 2006-2007.. When I met Cassie and she told me who else was there, I got really excited when she told me that Josh and Bodil were there because they're some of my best friends.. So that was a really good evening...

That's it for now, I hope that you're all doing well..

In Christ,

Maria

Det er blevet den tid igen - tiden hvor jeg skal fortælle om hvad vi har lavet på det seneste... Onsdag startede med 1 1/2 times køretur fra vores værtshjem til kirken fordi vi skulle hente resten af teamet hos deres værtshjem... Efter vi var ankommet til kirken og havde haft vores team-møde og andagt tog vores kontakt, Kim, os ud til frokost. En anden ansat i kirken, Maria, var også med til frokost... Efter frokosten kørte vi til det plejehjem hvor vi skulle spille/synge den eftermiddag. Plejehjemmet var i Hudson, WI -- det er rigtigt, Wisconsin; pas på West Lakes, vi er ved at invadere jeres region :)... Dette var et helt utroligt plejehjem.. De ansatte og dem der bor på plejehjemmet havde rigtig meget energi -- nogle af dem begyndte endda at danse da vi sang "Et Lille Lys Jeg Har". Det var super sjovt...

Efter plejehjemmet kørte vi tilbage til kirken og gjorde klar til vores program denne aften... Omkring 100 børn/unge kom og det var super sjovt.. De havde rigtig meget energi og levede sig virkelig ind i det hele... Efter vores program tog vi tilbage til vores værtshjem og Courtney, Alyssa og jeg havde en rigtig hyggelig aften med vores værtsmor.

Torsdag, en anden god dag.. Vi kørte til kirken, pakkede alt vores udstyr ned og gjorde klar til at gå ud til frokost sammen med vores kontaktperson Kim... Og bagefter købte han endda kaffe/kakao til os... Vi havde nogle rigtig gode dage i Afton, MN. Og vi kommer endda tilbage til foråret... :)

Efter vi forlod kirken i Afton kørte vi til Youth Encounter's kontor for at udføre vores 'call-ins' (snakker med folkene der har styr på vores jobs for at sikre at vi gør det rigtige..) - det er nemlig rigtig, vi udfører 'call-ins' person-til-person... Juhuuu, man kan da ikke andet end nyde at være på North Central. Efter vores besøg på Youth Encounters kontor kørte vi til Mahtomedi, MN, hvor Sounds Like Love (et stort korstævne) foregår denne weekend. Vi mødtes med Lisa, Susie og Brittany og blev vist rundt i kirken. Efter det kørte vi til vores værtshjem... Så blev det aften - vi havde middag med vores værts-mor og efter det kørte vi til Jeff D. Johnsons CD release... Vi havde endda Donna med (vores 'chef').. Det var super sjovt... Der var en masse Youth Encounter-folk dér; Cassie, Boo, Josh (WM 05-06), Bodil (WM 04-05) og Leah (fra Luther Dell). Og så det meste af North Central... Da jeg mødte Cassie og hun fortalte mig hvem der ellers var der blev jeg super glad da hun fortalte mig at Josh og Bodil var der, da de er nogle af mine bedste venner... Så det var en rigtig god aften... Det er alt for nu, jeg håber at du/I har det godt..

I Kristus,

Maria

Date: 11/11/2006
Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach
Journal Entry:



Alyssa Gerlach

Hello again,

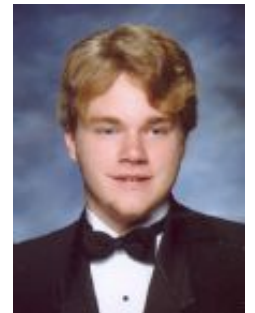
This weekend we were very blessed to be able to participate in, or I guess help out with, Sounds Like Love. For those of you who don't know, Sounds Like Love is a weekend-long choral festival for high school students. Friday night started around 7 p.m. with a worship set, and we were the first group up. The energy and excitement were so amazing. The kids then had their first rehearsal as a large group. I was amazed, not only by the energy of the director, but also by the talent these kids had. Also the director was teaching all these crazy dance moves, which made the kids get into their music so much more. The night ended with a band when the St. Andrew's Alive band performed.

Saturday morning came a little early, but we managed to pull through. We started the morning off with a slower worship set. It was then fun to see some of the various churches show off their own choirs. Right away then started the long day of rehearsals for the kids. That night was probably the best part of the weekend because, for the first time, we got to hang out with the kids. There was a group there from a church we had already visited, and so I spent the majority of my time with them.

It has been amazing these last couple of months, and I can't wait to see what else the Lord has in store!

Alyssa

Date: 11/16/2006
Submitted by: Andrew Bromhal
Journal Entry:



Andrew Bromhal

Greetings to all from Buffalo, MN. We have been here in Buffalo at Zion Lutheran Church since Tuesday. It has been a great stay. Wednesday night, we did a program for Zion's confirmation class. I am told that many of the kids in confirmation will be at our Quake that we leave for tomorrow. I think that will be awesome to see kids there that we know and have met before.

Speaking of Quakes, we had our first Event training this morning and afternoon. It really put what we are supposed to do at the Quake in perspective. I'm really pumped for the Quake because I always went to them when I was in middle school. It's going to be crazy to be on the other side of things.

Well, that is all I have right now. Until next time, goodbye.

Andrew Bromhal

Date: 11/18/2006
Submitted by: Courtney Esbshade
Journal Entry:



Courtney Esbshade

So, after going to bed at an uncharacteristically late hour and waking up way too early, we headed down to the ballroom for the first full day of our first Quake. After Jacob's Road and our awesome speaker dude Dan, Treks started. Andrew and I had the Junior Guides, and from the first

impressions of them all, I knew they were a fun and loved group. We talked to them about how this generation uses the word "love" for everything, but to love like God loves is totally different. As a cool activity, we had them write love notes to some of their friends or whoever they thought needed some extra attention. Then for lunch at the mall, I went with an amazing group of girls. We ate Burger King, which oddly enough seems to be the only place I eat at Quakes.

The most excitement happened after dinner—or as some of my Junior Guides say, "din-din"—which was Crazy Dress Night with, oh yeah, the infamous Dance. For the first part, Alyssa and Erin held the Dance down while I went to the Letters to the Troops room, which went awesome. So many letters were written. So props to all the kids who wrote letters. Then Alyssa and I switched, and of course for Crazy Dress Night, we all dressed up. Andrew was Raphael the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle, Alyssa was a sparkly witch, Maria was a tourist (ha ha), Erin was Aunt Samantha in an Uncle Sam outfit, Richard wore a boa and a witch hat, and I wore craziness. I'll just leave it at that.

The Dance was awesome, needless to say. Cha-cha, slide, shout, YMCA. Oh yeah. So after crazy dancing, we had one of the greatest Campfires ever. Jacob's Road performed, and you felt God hardcore in that room.

For Family Time, a youth director named Neil invited me. The group I was with had a little worship set, which was very cool. (Forgot to say that during my one Trek with my Junior Guides, it was one of their missions to get me thrown in the pool. But they failed.) So after a very long day, I headed back to my room but ended up talking to some of the kids near my room. Got yelled at for being in the hall, then went to my room and found my comfy spot. Crashed hard and dreamt of the amazing day God gave me.

Date: 11/19/2006

Submitted by: Erin Donlon

Journal Entry:

Yeppers, it once again be time to have journal time with Erin from CFNC. Hmmm, how shall we begin this amazing time together? Well, I believe a good deep breath in, followed by a slow exhale, sounds splendid.....oh yeah. That hit the spot.

The beginning of this journal happens to be Sunday the 19th of November, which was the last day of our first Quake. No lie, Quakes are just downright awesome. So we began the day by packing our rooms and heading down to the ballroom for our morning celebration.

So we started playing loud and crazy music and opened the doors to let the kids in. Yeah, I know these kids were tired, but man, they were happy to be there. I never really understand how people can say they can't see God. Watching a couple hundred kids become close friends in just a weekend and wanting so much to stand next to each other forever, how could that not be God? These kids just met, but they create an unstoppable force for God. They raise their voices together to praise God and nothing could overpower them.

After a tough goodbye, we tore down and went to lunch with Jacob's Road (the featured band of the weekend). If you haven't listened to them, DO IT!! Seriously, everything at the Quake was so amazing. We ate, went to Buffalo, MN, and did nothing for a long time.

Here's the serious part, though. We are a bunch of kids from all over that met three



Erin Donlon

months ago, and we change these kids. A simple smile or quick hug pushes them to go farther and do more than they ever thought possible. God is awesome! And he does it all day, every day, for everyone!

Erin

Date: 11/23/2006

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

Wednesday we had the opportunity to sleep in a little (we didn't get to our final destination the day before until 2 am), and the rest of the day we had the opportunity to hang out with each other, relax and get some personal stuff done.. What a nice day...

Thursday - Thanksgiving Day... My first Thanksgiving! (I might bring this Holiday back to Denmark when I go back because it involves a lot of great food!) We were lucky enough to be able to spend Thanksgiving at my teammate Erin's place. I really enjoyed this day - great food, fun times hanging out, playing games and just relaxing... Ohh how I enjoy Holidays...

So, I realize that this is gonna be a really short journal but we didn't experience all that much the last two days - which is also really nice once in a while...

Before I end this journal I'm gonna throw something out to you all - something I've known for a long time but have been reaffirmed a lot for me lately.. A pastor not too long ago told us, that a team (and this goes for any kind of team - couples, friends and teams like this) that prays together, stays together... This couldn't be more true... When we pray together as a team I always feel more secure afterwards and when it happens that we don't pray before a program it just doesn't go well for us.. So this is my challenge/encouragement for this journal - pray together... It can really 'cause' miracles!

In Christ,
Maria.



Maria Henriksen

Onsdag havde vi mulighed for at sove længe (natten inden var vi ikke kommet i seng for kl. 2 fordi vi ikke var ankommet til vores destination før da.) og resten af dagen havde vi mulighed for at tilbringe noget tid sammen, slappe af og få klaret nogle personlige ting også.. Sikke en dejlig dag...

Torsdag - 'Thanksgiving' Dag... Min første 'Thanksgiving'! (jeg overvejer at fejre denne begivenhed i Danmark når jeg kommer hjem, for den indebærer en masse dejlig mad! :) Vi var så heldige at vi kunne tilbringe denne højtid/begivenhed hos min teammate Erin. Jeg nød denne dag meget - rigtig god mad, gode muligheder for at hønge ud, spille spil og bare slappe af... Hvor jeg dog nyder højtider...

Okay, det er gået op for mig at denne journal ikke bliver særlig lang men vi har ikke oplevet super meget de sidste par dage - hvilket også er rigtig dejligt en gang imellem...

Før jeg afslutter denne journal vil jeg dog gerne lige 'kaste noget op/ud i luften' - noget som jeg faktisk har vist længe men som jeg er blevet påmindet meget i det seneste stykke tid... For ikke særlig lang tid siden fortalte en præst os, at et team/hold (og dette gælder alle former for hold - par, venner og hold ligesom det jeg er på) som beder sammen, bliver sammen.. Dette kan ikke være mere sandt... Når vi beder sammen som et team/hold føler jeg mig altid mere sikker bagefter og når det sker at vi ikke beder sammen inden vi spiller går det bare ikke godt for os... Så dette er min udfordring/opmuntring i denne journal - bed sammen... Det kan virkelig udrette mirakler!

I Kristus,
Maria.

Date: 11/30/2006

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

Hey! Alyssa here from North Central! Lately, I have been letting you all know what we've been up to, but I kind of want to take this time to thank all of our host families, churches and contacts. Life of the road is a major blessing, and every person that we have come in contact with has been amazing. So here are the last couple days. We spent Thanksgiving at Erin's house, and her parents were so comforting around the holiday season when some of us were struggling being away from home. None the less, we left for Westbrook, MN on Saturday and were greeted at the side of the road by Pastor Roy, and once we



Alyssa Gerlach

hopped out of the van he gave us huge hugs. It was comforting to know how much somebody appreciates what we do. He has a long history of Youth Encounter through his family and church and knows the struggles and blessings we encounter. We first visited a nursing home, where we found out that it was one of the residents' birthday, and so of course we had to sing "Happy Birthday."

We then went to the church, and after unloading all of our equipment, Pastor Roy said to follow him because he had a surprise for us. He took us to the basement of the church and into their library. Here, there were about 10 different quilts that myself and my team members could choose from to keep. The elder ladies of this church made *US* quilts without even knowing us. We were all absolutely speechless. Then we got to do something that we had never done before. Pastor Roy had offered to let us partake in a team communion service. We all served each other communion, and this was just an absolutely amazing bonding experience.

I just want to thank everybody we have encountered from day one on the road. Every person has been an extreme blessing, and this year would not be the same without each and every one of you!!

Yours in Christ~

Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 1/11/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

Tuesday and Wednesday we stayed at Park River Bible Camp in Park River, ND. This is actually our second time here, and it was really cool to get to do a program there. We had a little bit of free time there, so we took the time and practiced a bit and just hung out with the people at the camp and our teammates (and actually, also my parents because they were over here for Christmas and stayed for a few days into the new year so that they could see us play). We played at the school in town Wednesday night, and we had a pretty good turn out. Our program went pretty good, and it was a lot of fun to talk a little with the youth after our program. After the program, we tore down our stuff because we had to leave early Thursday morning.



Maria Henriksen

Wednesday evening ended and Thursday morning came quick (a bit too quick, after my opinion, but that's team life). Thursday morning we left the camp at 9 a.m. We said goodbye to the people at the camp and to my parents (it's sad to say goodbye to your parents when it's your birthday)... We drove from Park River, ND, to Minot, ND. On our way there we took a picture by the geographical Center of North America—in Rugby, ND. In Minot, we played at Dakota Boys Ranch. Our program went really well, and it's really awesome to see the work the people there do to help the young people. It's amazing to see how they never give up on the youth there and just keep on trying to help them. I truly admire how people keep on working with something or someone, even though it's really hard at times. After our program, we had dinner with the pastor there, and after that, we drove down to Benedict. We arrived at the church around 8.30 p.m. and met our host families and went there. After talking a bit with my host family, it was time to go to bed after a long day with a lot of driving and program.

A verse that I would like to share with you this time comes from John 16:33, and it says: "*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world*". I think that it's really good to remember that no matter what we go through, God is still there. And also to remember that even though God is there for us always, we will still encounter hard times. But God will always be there for us!

In Christ,

Maria.

Tirsdag og onsdag boede vi på en bibel-lejr i Park River, North Dakota. Dette her er faktisk vores anden gang her og det var rigtig fedt at have mulighed for også at spille for de unge dér. Vi havde en lille smule fritid dér, så vi besluttede os for at øve lidt, hænge ud med nogle af dem der arbejdede på

lejren, vores holdkammerater (og faktisk også mine forældre fordi de var herhenne til jul og blev her i nogle dage for at se os spille). Vi spillede på skolen i byen onsdag aften og der var et ganske godt publikum. Vores program gik godt og det var rigtig sjovt at snakke lidt med de unge dér efter vores program. Derefter var det tid til at tage vores udstyr ned fordi at vi skulle køre tidligt torsdag morgen.

Onsdag aften endte og torsdag morgen kom hurtigt (lidt for hurtigt efter min mening, men sådan er livet engang imellem). Torsdag morgen kørte vi fra lejren kl. 9.00. vi sagde farvel til folkene dér og til mine forældre (det er trist at sige farvel til sine forældre på sin fødselsdag)... Vi kørte fra Park River, ND, til Minot, ND. På vores vej dertil tog vi et billede ved det geografiske center i Nord Amerika – i Rugby, ND). I Minot spillede vi på en lejr for unge der har været ude i problemer. Vores program gik ret godt og det var virkelig fedt at se det arbejde der bliver udført dér for at hjælpe de unge mennesker. Det er utroligt at se hvordan de aldrig giver op i arbejdet med de unge dér og bare bliver ved med at hjælpe dem. Jeg beundrer virkelig hvordan folk kan blive ved med at arbejde med ting og mennesker selvom det til tider er virkelig hårdt. Efter vores program spiste vi med præsten dér og kørte ned til Benedict. Vi ankom til kirken omkring kl. 20.30 og mødtes vores værtsfamilier og tog med dem hjem. Efter at havde snakket lidt med min værtsfamilie var det tid til at sove efter en lang dag med meget kørsel og program.

Jeg har et vers jeg gerne vil dele med jer og det kommer fra Johannes 16, 33: *"Sådan har jeg talt til jer, for at I skal have fred i mig. I verden har I trængsler; men vær frimodige, jeg har overvundet verden"*. Jeg synes at det er rigtig godt at huske på at lige meget hvad der sker, er Gud der stadig for os. Og også at huske at selvom Gud er der for os vil vi stadig gå igennem hårde tider. Men Gud vil altid være der for os!

I Kristus,
Maria.

Date: 1/13/2007

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

Hello, all you wonderful people. The gang of North Central is on a roll. Today, Saturday, we got to venture into another state of our region—Montana. Just a word to the wise, you enter Mountain Time as you enter MONTANA. Here we thought we were right on time, but as we were setting up, it dawned on us that we were an hour early. It's all right—an hour extra to set up never hurts anybody. Saturday night was a lot of fun because we had our first lock-in since winter break. We had a program from 6:30-7:45, and then it was our time with the kids. The time was spent playing games, eating all that good junk food and pop, and giving some personal testimonies. I always enjoy lock-ins because it's that time to relax and become a kid again. It was nice to finally get some rest that night, since we were not used to Mountain Time.

Let's step back a day to Friday. Benedict, North Dakota, a small town of about 65. I'm starting to enjoy small towns the most because the hospitality and generosity is amazing. Our program was an acoustic one, which I tend to enjoy a lot more. I feel as though it's easier to connect with your audience when you're not restricted behind all the sound equipment. We didn't have many kids at our program, but the ones we did were very enthusiastic.

Thank you to those who have helped us in our ministry. Your kindness and generosity are more than one could ask for. As I was reading the Bible the other day, I came across Hebrews 13:5, which says, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" This fits perfectly with team life because without the generosity of host families and our own families and friends, we would not be able to do this ministry. So thank you once again.

In Him,



Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 1/15/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! I hope that you are all doing well and that you had a wonderful holiday season! It feels good to be back out on the road, and we're just as busy as we were when we left.



Richard Bodden

Sunday morning, we did two worship services at two different churches, in a town called Northwood, North Dakota. The night before, we had done an XP worship service at a place called the Net, which was a local youth center affiliated with all the churches in town. Our contact was Alicia's mom, which was really cool because Alicia is on the South Central team. It was a very busy time, doing a program in three different places, but everything went really smoothly, and we had a great time. We met some really cool people and had a lot of fun hanging out with them.

On Sunday night, we went to Valley City, North Dakota. We did a program there that night, and we met a lot of cool people there, too. We had an awesome program that night, lots of energy and lots of excitement, and a conga line! It was an awesome time praising God!

They arranged for us to stay at a hotel that night and on our day off. We didn't really do much on Monday, just hung around the hotel for a while. We went out for lunch with Maria's parents, and then we had some good pizza for dinner with our contact. It was a very laid-back day.

Well, that's all for now. Talk to all later. Thanks for all your prayers and support! May God bless each of you in all that you do!

Richard Bodden

Date: 1/23/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

Mondays are our days off, so yesterday I did pretty much nothing. I slept in (which was really needed since we had had a really busy weekend and I felt like I was coming down with something). So Monday was spent by relaxing at our host home, eating dinner at the boys' host home and after that a quick trip to Wal-Mart. All in all a really nice and relaxing day.

Today we left Williston, ND, and started our trip east in ND. Today we drove to Washburn where we had a program. On our way to Washburn, ND, we got stuck in the middle of a military convoy, and we didn't know whether we could pass it or not so for a good half an hour we drove in the middle of the convoy, but since it was slowing us down a lot we finally decided on passing it (another car did it--so we felt safe). And everything went fine, so we should just have done it a little bit earlier. But we did make it to our booking in time.

We had a really good program in Washburn. The people there really enjoyed it and they danced along to our sing-alongs and did all the actions with us. It was a lot of fun. After our program and a little bit of hang-out time with the people that were at our program, we went to our host home for the night. We all stayed at the same place, a bed-and-breakfast. It was a lot of fun staying there.



Maria Henriksen

Erin, Andrew and Richard got their hair cut (one of the ladies that owned the place had a salon in the basement), and later on that night we all did a work-out to a DVD Alyssa bought a few days ago. It was a lot of fun, and we all laughed a lot that night!

In Christ,
Maria.

Mandag er vores fridag så igår lavede jeg stort set ingen ting. Jeg sov længe (hvilket jeg virkelig havde brug for, fordi vi havde haft en travl weekend og jeg følte at jeg var ved at blive syg). Så jeg tilbragte mandagen med at slappe af hos vores værtsfamilie, spise aftensmad hos drengenes værtsfamilie og derefter et hurtigt smut til Wal-Mart (lidt ligesom Bilka eller Føtex). Alt i alt en dejlig og afslappende dag.

I dag kørte vi fra Williston, North Dakota, og startede vores tur øst-på i staten. I dag kørte vi til Washburn hvor vi havde et program. På vej mod Washburn var vi pludselig midt i en militær-konvoj og siden vi ikke vidste om vi måtte overhale den eller ej kørte vi i midten af konvojen i ca. en halv time men den forsinkede os rimelig meget så til sidst besluttede vi os for at overhale (en anden bil havde gjort det, så vi følte det var sikkert nok). Alt gik fint – så vi kunne bare have gjort det tidligere.... Men vi nåede frem til vores booking i tide.

Vi havde et virkelig godt program i Washburn. Folkene dér nød det virkelig og de dansede med på vores sing-alongs (syng-med) og gjorde også alle fakterne. Det var super sjovt. Efter vores program og en lille smule tid med at snakke med folkene der havde været til vores program kørte vi til vores værtshjem. Vi boede alle sammen samme sted – et Bed-and-Breakfast. Det var meget sjovt at bo dér. Erin, Andrew og Richard fik klippet deres hår (en af damerne der ejede stedet havde en frisør-salon i kælderens) og senere på aftenen gjorde vi alle sammen lidt gymnastik til en DVD Alyssa havde købt nogle dage forinden. Det var rigtig sjovt og vi grinede alle sammen meget den aften.

I Kristus,
Maria.

Date: 1/27/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone!

I hope this journal entry finds you all well. Things have been coming along out here on the road. We have been very busy, but we have been doing a lot of good work.



Richard Bodden

We arrived in Huron, SD on Thursday. We are going to be here until Tuesday. It's pretty nice to stay stationary for a weekend. Thursday night, we had a housing ministry, so we spent the evening at our host home.

An unfortunate event happened that night while we were in the town, which resulted in the loss of a few members of their community. Please pray for strength, guidance, and encouragement for the family and community of Huron. We did our Rescue XP worship service on Friday night. There was a good amount of people who came to the program. I am very glad that we did this program because it talks about how in tough situations, we should turn to Jesus to help us in our time of need. I really hope that those who came were able to receive that message and put it to use, especially in this difficult time.

On Saturday, we spent time with a number of the youth. We played many team building games with them, and did a Bible study. We really wanted to build on the theme of "building your community." After that, we ended with a worship service then traveled home for the night.

We have met some really great people here in this town. People have been very kind and generous, and for that, we are very grateful. We are also very grateful for all of your prayers and support for us while we are on the road. Please pray for the Huron community. Take care and God bless!

Richard Bodden

Date: 2/8/2007

Submitted by: Alyssa Gerlach

Journal Entry:

This journal entry is going to be something different than I'm use to writing due to the fact that I've been home for the past week on a medical leave. I was suffering from a skin condition which got diagnosed as psoriasis. Thanks to the wonderful doctors, it is being healed and I am able to rejoin my team. Before I came home, I was really struggling with where I fit into this crazy year on team, my calling and why God works in such mysterious ways. Well, here is what I'm starting to realize: the reason God works in such mysterious ways is because he doesn't want you to get bored with your faith. He doesn't want you to take advantage of the fact that he exists and leads you through life, but more so wants you to keep questioning. So in the end, you can give the thanks and praise where it's most deserved...to God. Many times we get wrapped up in asking Him to do this and that, that we forget to give thanks for the big and little things He has provided for us. This year is amazing to me because we only receive a little stipend each month, but yet probably have eaten more food and received more donations than ever imagined. God is living through each person that we encounter, and they are the ones that inspire us to keep up what we are doing this year. And all these people so far this year are why I'm here and why God has called me to team, to teach them about the good news, but also to learn life lessons or more about the Gospel through different people. So, thank you to all those we have encountered on the road. Your willingness to serve God in more ways than you probably know has inspired me to continue sharing the Gospel! THANK YOU!



Alyssa Gerlach

Date: 3/4/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

Hello all,

Here's on update on what North Central have been up to lately.

We just got done loading the van and trailer after our Bismarck Quake. The only thing I really don't find all that fun about Quakes is the loading in and out process. The elevators and where we always park is just never all that great. However, we got it done, and now it's time to drive to Jamestown, ND.



Maria Henriksen

I want to share something with you from this past weekend. Last weekend we had the Twin Cities Quake II. We had about 420 kids there, and we had a good time, but we were still really tired after the Quake. Then this weekend came, and we knew that the Quake was going to be a lot smaller-- maybe around 180 kids were going to show up. This, however, was before the weather got really bad. On Tuesday when we drove to Bismarck, we drove through the snowstorm, and then again on Friday morning on our way to the hotel, it started snowing again. It was extremely windy and the snow was blowing everywhere. So we started the weekend with being 1.5 hours late because our van was stuck. Then after that ,the load in process was tough, but we made it in good time. After setting up the system and sound check, we finally had the time to take a five-minute break. While still getting ready and working, we ordered pizza and by the time registration was over, we had three churches there. The weather made a lot of churches cancel. A church had cancelled but had forgot to tell one of the girls, so when she showed up at the hotel, everybody didn't really know

what to do. After a lot of thinking and phone calls, one of the other churches opened up their arms and let the girl share a room with some of their girls. It was great to see how God is working through everybody at a weekend like this. Captive Free, our speaker Ted Rossing, and our musician Lynn Stoneking were not the only ones setting a good example! It's great to see how God is working and changing the actions of the kids and adults there....

Another great experience during the weekend was the family time's I attended. The groups of kids we had at the Quake were a really great bunch, and it was great to see this aspect of the youth groups over here!

On Saturday, a few more churches showed up. So from Saturday afternoon until Sunday when the Quake was done we had about 70 kids there. The Quake ended up being a smaller Event, but I really enjoyed it. It gave us a lot more possibilities to talk to the kids and hang out with them!

God is great!

In Him,

Maria.

(Undskyld mit dårlige dansk)!!

Hej alle sammen,

Her er lige en opdatering på hvad North Central har lavet det sidste stykke tid.

Vi er lige blevet færdige med at bære alt vores udstyr ud til traileren efter vores Bismarck Quake (hvilket er et ungdomsevent). Den eneste ting som jeg ikke synes er super sjovt ved vores Quake's er når vi skal bære alt vores udstyr ind og ud! Elevatorene og hvor vi skal parkere er ikke altid lige super. Men vi fik det klaret, og det er nu tid til at køre til Jamestown, ND.

Jeg vil gerne dele en oplevelse fra denne weekend med jer. I sidste weekend havde vi vores Twin Cities Quake II. Vi havde omkring 420 børn dér og vi havde det rigtig sjovt, men vi var dog stadig utrolig trætte efter Quake't var slut. Denne weekend kom og vi vidste at event'et ville blive meget mindre – måske omkring 180 børn ville komme. Dette var dog før vejret blev virkelig dårligt. I tirsdags da vi kørte til Bismarck kørte vi igennem en snestorm og igen i fredags da vi skulle til hotellet om morgenen sneede det igen. Der var utrolig meget vind og sneen blæste over det hele. Vi startede weekenden med at komme 1,5 time for sent pga. vores van sad fast. Det var hårdt at bære alt ind, men vi fik det klaret i rimelig god tid. Efter vi havde sat vores lydudstyr op og fik klaret sound check havde vi endelig mulighed for at tage en 5 minutters pause. Mens vi stadig arbejdede på at blive klar bestilte vi pizza, og da tiden kom til at indskrivningen af kirken var færdig havde vi tre kirker der. Grundet det dårlige vejr blev en masse kirker nødt til at aflyse. En kirke havde aflyst, men havde glemt at fortælle en af pigerne, så da hun kom til hotellet, vidste ingen rigtig hvad vi skulle gøre. Efter en masse gennemtænkning og opringninger, tilbød en af de andre kirker dér, at lade hende dele værelse med nogle af deres piger. Det er super at se hvordan Gud arbejder gennem alle i sådan en weekend. Captive Free, vores taler Ted Rossing, vores musiker Lynn Stoneking, var ikke de eneste der satte gode eksempler! Det er rigtig fedt at se hvordan Gud arbejder og ændrer opførsler hos unge og gamle....

En anden rigtig god oplevelse i denne weekend var noget kaldet familie tid, som er ca. 30 minutter kirkerne tilbringer med deres egne børn om aftenen. Jeg deltog i en familie tid både fredag aften og lørdag aften, og det var virkelig fedt at se denne del af ungdomsgrupperne herhenne. Det var nogle super børn der var der denne weekend.

I løbet af lørdagen kom der nogle få kirker mere. Så lørdag eftermiddag indtil søndag middag hvor Quake't var færdigt havde vi omkring 70 børn. Quake't endte med at blive et mindre event men jeg nød virkelig vores tid dér. Det gav os en masse muligheder for at snakke med børnene dér og hænge ud med dem!

Gud er fantastisk!

I Ham,

Maria.

Date: 3/5/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone!! How are you all doing? It's been a long past few weeks. Lots of time battling snow storms while traveling from place to place. We also started our Event season and have had two Quakes in the past two weekends. I would really like to share about the Bismarck Quake this past weekend because there was something really unusual that happened.



Richard Bodden

First, we were lucky even to have this Quake, due to the blizzard that hit all of central North Dakota three days before the Quake. But fortunately, the snow didn't stop us. We lost some of our staff support through cancellations, and a number of churches had cancelled, too, but we still had around sixty kids show up. It was a really great time.

So now, you may be asking, "But what about this unusual event?" It took place on Saturday evening during the time of the dance. I was going to help with the prayer room. Usually, I sit and play the guitar while people are praying, to help them focus and relax their minds. Well, the prayer room was downstairs, so I went down and found it...right across from the hotel bar. I thought to myself, "Why on earth did they put it here, with all the noise and drinking going on across the hall?" Not to mention the cigarette smoke pouring into the room.

I sat down, opened my case, and started playing. As time went by, people came in and out of the room, praying. I came to a point when there was no one in the room, so I decided I was going to sing some songs for the Lord. The first song I started to sing was actually not a worship song, but in the middle of the song, this guy starts calling from the door. I looked up as he walked in with his wife. I thought to myself, "Oh boy, now what?" He came in and asked me if I could sing a love song for his wife, and he would throw some money in my case. He had seen me playing as he passed by while going towards the bathroom. I told him, "Well, this is a prayer room, and I'm not really supposed to do that." But he insisted, so I said okay.

I played for them a song I had written a while ago, and they really enjoyed it. Then he asked me to stay there and think of another song while he went over to the ATM to get some more money. I began thinking, "What did I get myself into now?!" He came back and threw \$20 in my case and asked me to play another song. I thought for a minute and asked him if I could play a worship song instead. He agreed, so I began playing another song I had written a while ago.

When I finished playing, he burst into tears. I paused and sat watching him for a minute. He began to explain to me about his life and the things he had gone through. I told him about Youth Encounter and what I was doing with Captive Free and what we were doing there that weekend. He said that he was traveling all the time, too, and he missed his kids, of whom he had lost custody after an unfortunate accident. I asked him if I could pray with him and his wife, and they agreed. We prayed, and then he threw another \$10 in my case and asked me to play another song. So I played them another song I had written.

The tears continued to flow as I finished. He said that the message in the songs was powerful and it really touched his heart. It made him think about how he had been going one way with his life, and now he wanted to turn it all around and go the other way. I shared with him the theme for this year on the road, Rescue. I told him about how Christ died to save us from all these troubles, and how if we turn our hearts to him, he will pull us out, set us back on solid ground, and continue to lead to us down the path of righteousness and truth that leads to God. He will help us to get our lives back in order, to live for God.

The man continued to cry as some youth who had been there praying got up to leave. He apologized to them for disturbing them. They said he hadn't, and one of them came and gave him a hug. He asked me to play one more song before I had to leave. I played for him Psalm 121, which is a song that really ties in the Rescue message, asking, "Where does my help come from?" and answering, "My help comes from You, maker of heaven."

After I finished talking to him, I took the money and went to Nate, the Event Director, and asked him to put it in the offering for Feed My Starving Children, and I explained what had happened. This really got me thinking of how God works in the strangest ways when you least expect it. I was trying to figure out why on earth I was stuck down there next to the bar, but now I realized why. To share the Good News with that couple.

I get asked all the time about what I am doing out here on the road. I realized that this is what I am doing, putting the message we have been teaching to youth into practice. Sharing the love of Christ, and how he rescued us, with everyone we meet, regardless of who they are or what they look like. This was a very moving experience for me. I ask for your prayers for this couple, that they will turn their hearts to Jesus and seek God's help in turning their lives around. I thank you for all your prayers and support. Please continue to pray for our ministry and for us. Take care, and God bless!

Richard Bodden

Date: 4/28/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

This year on the road has given me so many new experiences. I've been places and met people I would have never thought. A recent example, which has actually happened a few times now but still surprises me, is one of the times that we have played in a prison. In February, we played at the prison in Springfield, SD, which was a really cool experience, and this past Thursday, we went back. We played with their worship band; we played some songs, and they played a few songs, and then we played a few songs together. It really surprises me, but the two times we've been able to jam with them have been some of the coolest things we've been able to do while on the road.

Before arriving at the prison, Pastor Bill had told us that some of the inmates hadn't stopped talking about us since we were there the last time, and that they were so excited that we were coming back. The few hours we spent inside the prison meant more to some of these inmates than words can describe!

And this is what leads me to the Bible verse I started this journal with! It's absolutely amazing to me how much people can change when they get to know Christ as their personal Savior. They don't just change a little bit—they change a lot! They literally become a new creation. The way they were before has passed away! Growing up, I had never seen the way people could change in such big ways; experiencing this now makes me feel so much more in awe of God.

There are several things in my life I would like to change, and a lot of times, it's a really tough progress, and I can't imagine how tough it must be when it's your whole life you wish to change. This is where the power of the Holy Spirit enters. I think God is the one giving them the power to change their lives and become followers of Him.

God is AMAZING, and he can work through every single one of us. God has opened my eyes to a whole new meaning of 2 Corinthians 5:17, and I think that it's amazing to see Bible verses in "action"!

I pray that God will bless you and open your eyes, minds, and hearts, so that some Bible verses can become more real and significant to you!



Maria Henriksen

Date: 5/2/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! It has been a while since the last time I wrote. We have been busy trying to keep everything moving with a three-person team. We are still doing well, and the Lord has been taking care of us out here.

I am going to write about one of our exciting times out here on the road. We were back up in Duluth, and we had the opportunity to return to the Woodland Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility. We got to go once early in the year, and we had a very moving experience there, so we were all very excited. We knew this program was going to be a lot of work, so we recruited some of our good friends in Duluth, Martha and Ben, to come and help us. Ben played the drums for us while Martha helped to run sound. We did our program as usual and included a Q&A section in it, and all the kids were very receptive to us, joining along with us in all the songs.

Then after the program, we invited the kids to come up and talk with us and pray with us. It is really moving to me to see all these kids come up to us. I had one kid who asked me to pray for his brother. I offered to pray with him, then another kid asked to join in, then the next thing I knew, there were about twenty kids standing in a circle with me, ready to pray. So I opened the prayer, and for about ten minutes, all of the kids were taking turns offering prayers to the Lord.

Afterwards, the kids helped us to pack everything up. I really enjoy doing programs in these correctional facilities and prisons because the people are usually very receptive to our programs. We can really see how they are moved, and we can bring them encouragement and strength in their faith. These programs really mean a lot to them.

Well, that's all for now. I hope that you are all doing well. Thanks for your prayers and support. Take care, and God bless!

Richard Bodden



Richard Bodden

Date: 5/8/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

PREACH THE GOSPEL AT ALL TIMES. AND IF NECESSARY, USE WORDS
– St. Francis of Assisi

I would like to share with you something that has been on my mind a lot lately! It all begins with the starting statement in my journal: *Preach the Gospel at all times. And if necessary, use words.* Is this how we live our lives?? Do we just talk the talk, or do we actually walk the walk?? Does the way we live our lives show other people that we're Christians??

When I think about this, there's a lot of thoughts going on in my mind. God gave us the 10 commandments, and all of the commandments in the New Testament especially, to help us and to guide our lives in a good direction, a direction that is pleasing to God.

Now, what is our response to that? Do we live by these 'rules,' or do we just simply don't care about them? Would people we meet know that we're Christians by the way we live?

A lot of times it seems easier to just live our life the way everybody else does and that way we'll fit in and we may feel like we won't lose anything—however, this is not the case. Not living our lives as God intended us to do will make us lose the good feeling we get when helping other people, and we won't honor God.

Do we choose to only talk the talk—meaning talking about how we should act but not living it out—or do we actually walk the walk—talking about how we should act and behave and also living it out? I want to encourage you to walk the walk, not only because you'll then honor God, but we'll also be a great testimony for some people, because we might be the only Bible that they will ever read. And this is what God wants us to do. Preach his Word at ALL times, even when we're not using words.

We will never be able to live our lives 100 % for God, simply because of the fact that we are sinful people and none of us are perfect (actually we're not even close). But we can try to honor God in



Maria Henriksen

everything that we do, and even by doing that, we can be a great testimony to other people.

I really want to encourage you to live your life for Christ. It may seem hard, but there's a lot of things that we can do to honor Christ. You can start by holding the door for the next one coming through the door; if someone drops something you can help by picking it up. There's so many ways that we can help our neighbors, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

I believe that we can make a difference—a difference in the world. Even the small things that we can do, that might seem worthless to other people, can change the lives of other people and change their hearts. Don't give up—you never know how you can change someone's life just by giving away a few seconds to lend a helping hand. Basically that's all it takes—a few seconds!

May God bless you and give you strength to offer a helping hand or a listening ear whenever someone will need it—not just when we think that we want to help. That's how we can preach the Gospel at all times!

Date: 5/19/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

I would like to start this journal by sharing a little bit about my faith-life. My faith-life is a rollercoaster. Sometimes I feel really close to God; at other times I doubt a lot! Lately it's actually been going pretty good—I've been able to keep a close relationship to God by praying and worshipping, and I haven't really doubted for a while. But I still felt like something was missing, and that's where our devotion the other day comes into the picture. For our devotion we were talking about trusting in God, not worrying about anything, and just letting God take control.



Maria Henriksen

And this is what I've been missing. I didn't actually realize this when we were having our devotion. I just continued by day feeling kind of down and not really knowing what was wrong. But something happened that made me realize what I'm missing and what is not going that great for me.

We were staying at a Bible camp in North Dakota, Park River Bible Camp, and this night they had a campfire in the evening. Since camp had not started yet, the campfire was not really planned the whole way through, so you could just suggest songs and then we would sing them. For a few minutes no one really suggested any songs; we all just sat there, staring at the fire, and having other conversations. And then the camp-director suggested a song, one of my favorite campfire songs, "Light the Fire." We sang this song, and this is when the tears started coming. They sang a few other songs (all songs that I knew), but I just sat there. And then, all of a sudden, it hit me: since we started team, I've been a lot better at trusting God, but there was still parts of my life that I just didn't want to let God take control over. The campfire lasted for about 45 minutes—most of these minutes, I just sat there thinking (and crying). This is when I understood that I had to let God take control of my life. So I took some time, shut out the voices around me, and took the time to pray to God; that he would take control, that he would give me the strength to give everything over to Him and to trust in Him. After my prayer I continued to just sit there, and by the time they started the last song I started singing along again, feeling a lot better, feeling like I don't need to worry any more.

By the end of that night I felt great—I felt refreshed! I've grown up with being told that we should trust God and let Him take control over our lives, but I don't think I really understood it until the other day.

25 Therefore, I tell you, don't be anxious for your life: what you will eat, or what you will drink; nor yet for your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

26 See the birds of the sky, that they don't sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. Your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you of much more value than they? **27** "Which of you, by being anxious, can add one cubit to the measure of his life? **28** Why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They don't toil, neither do they spin, **29** yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not dressed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today exists, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, won't he much more

clothe you, you of little faith? **31** "Therefore don't be anxious, saying, 'What will we eat?', 'What will we drink?' or, 'With what will we be clothed?' **32** For the Gentiles seek after all these things, for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **33** But seek first God's Kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be given to you as well. **34** Therefore don't be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Each day's own evil is sufficient.
(Matthew 6: 25-34)

Letting God take control of your life and trusting in Him is not always easy, and it's an ongoing 'battle' for me, but I want to encourage you, as well as myself, to let God take control and not worry about it. God will provide for you; for everything you need, when you need it!

Blessings to you,
Maria

Date: 6/8/2007

Submitted by: Christina Fisher

Journal Entry:

Well, hello to all who read these journals! This is my first official journal as a member of the North Central team! It's so awesome to be here and be serving alongside these wonderful people. I joined the team three weeks ago, and it's been a wild ride (pun intended) since that point.

Over the past week, we did the Avalanche Ranch VBS curriculum in Baker, MT. It was so awesome. The pastors there were amazing, and I really felt like we were loved and welcomed into their community. The kids were amazing, always willing to help and so full of energy, and the host families we stayed with were so generous!

One thing that really moved me was the devotion that the pastors lead us through on Friday. It was so meaningful to be reminded to breathe and take moments to consider God in my life. So often I forget to really take time to see his work in my life.

Well, I'm really excited for all that this next week in Pierre, SD and all that I'm sure God will do!



Christina Fisher

Date: 6/11/2007

Submitted by: Justin Harakal

Journal Entry:

God works in some pretty amazing ways.

May 11, 2007 was a typical Friday night for me at home in Pittsburgh. I was hanging out with some friends watching a band at a local club. Fast forward one month: June 11, 2007. I am sitting in Pierre, SD where we just finished our second day of VBS.

As some of you may know, I have done this team thing a few times before and honestly thought that chapter of my life was over. I was quite happy finishing up my schooling and getting a job as a drafter. Apparently, God thought otherwise, so here I am on my third week on NC 2.0. I am continually amazed by the way God works. Like how bringing Christina and me together with Maria, Andrew, and Richard would work so well. Or how letting 20-some preschool kids pile on top of me can bring the whole class closer.

It's good to have an outline for your life, there is no doubt about that, but try not to fear change because you have no clue what God may have in store for you around the bend. If you roll with it, you will be amazed at what you see.



Justin Harakal

Date: 6/12/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello!!

How are you all doing? I hope that everything is going well. We are doing pretty well out here on the road. We just started our first VBS for the year in Baker, Montana. It was a great time; we led sing-alongs and helped out with leading games.

We had a really great time with the kids. The pre-schoolers were especially quite a handful, but it was still an awesome time. We had a really awesome time working with Pastor Reba and Pastor Bruce. They were really great to work with and also learn from. There were a lot of other really cool people that we met in that town, like Don our host dad. I really enjoyed spending the week there; it was a smaller town, so by the end of the week, it really felt like we were a part of that community.

Spending this time with these kids, it really started reminding me of Mark 10:15, talking about how we should accept the kingdom of heaven like a child. It's just really awesome how they put all their hearts into whatever they do, and I really hope to learn from them this summer in our VBS season. I encourage all of you to take some time to think of that, too. Maybe stop and watch some kids playing or something and just think about this verse.

Well, that's all for now. Thanks again for all your prayers and support; we really appreciate them. Take care, and may God bless you all in all that you do.

Richard Bodden



Richard Bodden

Date: 6/22/2007

Submitted by: Maria Henriksen

Journal Entry:

This past week, we've been in Glendive, MT. It's been our third week of VBS, and it's been a lot of fun! The VBS here in Glendive was a few churches working together, and it was a really cool experience!

I want to share with you an experience from yesterday. We had a little bit of time in the afternoon, and we really wanted to do our devotion in the state park in Glendive, so that's what we did right after lunch. We all met up together and drove towards the state park.

We ended up in a really nice area, with beautiful surroundings, sitting by some tables in the shade of a few trees! This was probably one of my favorite devotions in a long time. And what made it a lot better was that after the devotion we had a little bit of time to just soak in the beauty of God's creation! The area was extremely beautiful, and it was just what I needed at that time—some quiet time with God in the middle of his amazing creations!

If you have a chance this week or in the near future, go somewhere you can soak in some of the amazing and beautiful things that God has created!

In Christ,
Maria Henriksen
John 16:33



Maria Henriksen

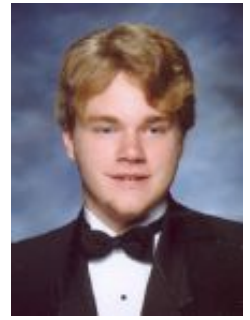
Date: 7/6/2007

Submitted by: Andrew Bromhal

Journal Entry:

Hello there to all who are journal-reading faithfuls or even first-time readers. If you are

reading this and usually read our journals, you might be asking the question, "Why has it been so long since Andrew has written a journal?" That is a wonderful question that I've been try to answer myself these past eleven months that I have gone without writing one. The best answer I can come up with is that I'm lazy. That's the only answer I have without lying. Well, for all those who want to read my second journal all year, I hope you sit back, relax, drink some coffee, and maybe even eat a scone if you will and enjoy reading how God has touched my life in the past week or so.



Andrew Bromhal

Journal Entry #2: Why kids drive me insane and yet I still love them

This past week was something special for us. We got to hang out with friends, spend time in the Twin Cities, eat at Applebees four times, and we didn't have to do a VBS. It sounds pretty sweet and, dare I say it, easy. I wouldn't call it easy, so I'll just stick with special. This past week, we were booked at a camp in one of the suburbs of St. Paul. Not only that, but we were double-booked with our good friends from Captive Free West Lakes. Two Captive Free teams under one roof. Let me tell ya, it was a party. It was great to work side by side with friends like that for a whole week. But this is not the main part of the story or even the focal point. The main focus of this story is the kids we got to hang out with. The kids at this camp all came from two places. They all came from two different parts of downtown St. Paul. Most of the kids we have worked with this year have all been from small towns. It was our first extended time working with inner city kids. Let me tell you about these kids. Most of them would barely listen to any sort of instruction, you couldn't get them to sit still much less be quiet, and there were over 100 of them. They were no different than any other kids their age, just a lot of them for a lot of hours of the day. These kids were insane, but I had more fun with them than I have had in a really long time. Even though I was tested so much, especially my patience, I saw so much potential and joy in these kids. They had the kind of potential that makes you want to stick around and see what they can become. Their joy was overwhelming. Seeing them laugh after being thrown off the merry-go-round. (Some of the kids would hang onto the merry-go-round with their hands and have their bodies and legs completely parallel to the ground, hanging off just flying. It was awesome.) Seeing them just want to run and play with us. Seeing them jump and scream during the music we played for them. This week showed me why Jesus loved children so much. It's through children that you see two things: the future and happiness. In my opinion, that's the best combination of anything to see in anyone. What's better than a happy future? Is there anything that can bring more hope than that? God blessed me this past week through a bunch of screaming kids.

I hope everyone enjoyed my second journal of the year. I hope you got a glimpse of what I saw, and maybe you got something out of it. I hope you enjoyed your coffee and scone. Let me know if you need any more relaxing time. I'll write another journal. So long for now.

Your friend,
Andrew Bromhal

Date: 7/7/2007

Submitted by: Christina Fisher

Journal Entry:

This week was awesome! Being back in the Cities was like coming home. I really loved meeting and working with Captive Free West Lakes. We combined to do a day camp at Gospel Hill Bible Camp. It seemed like a short week because of the holiday in the middle, but the kids we met and spent time with made me remember why we were there.



Christina Fisher

There was one girl in particular who touched my heart. I don't think she even knew my name before she was permanently attached to my hand. In most of the churches we serve at, people gravitate toward us because we are Captive Free. This girl didn't know who we were; she was just looking for someone to love her. The rest of the week, she followed me around, holding my hand. As she was getting on the bus, she asked if she would see me the next week, and I tried to explain why I wouldn't be there. We said goodbye, and she gave me a huge hug and got on the bus.

I have felt so fortunate on the road to be loved by so many kids, but this girl seemed so desperate for love. It broke my heart to think that she may not have that kind of love in her life. She will be in my thoughts and prayers for a long time.

In Him,
Christina

Date: 7/11/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! How are you all doing? I hope that everything is going well. We are in the midst of our VBS season right now, and we are having such a great time. Working with these kids is just so much fun!

Right now, we are in Culver, MN. We had been up here before a long time ago, so it's nice to return here. We are also right outside of Duluth, which is one of my favorite towns in MN. I am staying with a really awesome host family; they are very outgoing and very energetic. So we are having a really awesome time out here.

It has been a really weird week, though, because four out of the five of us have been not feeling well in some manner. That's been kind of rough that we haven't been able to keep all of us healthy at all this week. So we could use prayers for health.

We are doing the Great Bible Reef in VBS this week. It's a smaller group, but the kids are still pretty wired, which is awesome. I have been helping out with snack, which has been a lot of fun because I am getting to help do a review of the Bible story that the kids are reading each day, which I really enjoy doing. It has just been a really fun week of VBS so far.

Yesterday we also had a fun time hanging out with the middle schoolers and high schoolers out at a retreat center. We hung out and had a really great Bible study talking about how we face temptation in our lives and how we can overcome it. We had a really crazy game of soccer and finished off with a fun campfire.

Well, that's about it so far. Thank you again for all your prayers and support. We greatly appreciate them. Take care, and may God bless all of you in all that you do!!

Richard Bodden



Richard Bodden

Date: 8/10/2007

Submitted by: Richard Bodden

Journal Entry:

Hello everyone! How are you? I hope that everything is going well. We are about to wrap everything up for the year, so this will be my final journal.

It has been a long year. Lots of good times and lots of bad times. This year has been a really good year, though, and I am really glad that I was a part of this.

Some of the bad times include losing three teammates, conflicts that may arise between teammates, not feeling respected sometimes by your teammates, and not getting personal time when you may really need it.

But when you take a step back and look at the good things, you begin to realize that these good



Richard Bodden

things really outweigh all the bad times we may have had. Good times like making a lot of new friends with teamers, alumni, staff, and even people on the road. Being able to connect with people and make a good impact on their lives, sometimes even leading to that person wanting to join team. Going to prisons and correctional facilities and really touching the hearts of people there. Reaching out to people who may not know God's love, and planting the seed in them. Doing Events and hanging out with kids at churches. Bringing strength and encouragement to people to help them to grow through the messages we share. Having fun with host families, and seeing how God works through them. Having fun times with our teammates.

As you can see, when you look past the hard times and see the good you've done helping others, and growing with your teammates, the good times outweigh the bad. It has been a great year, and it is a real blessing to be a part of this ministry. Thank you again for all your prayers and support; they are greatly appreciated. You will hear from me again next year on the Mosaic team in Crown Point, Indiana, so feel free to check back next year. Your continued prayers and support are greatly welcomed. Take care, and may God bless all of you in all that you do!

Richard Bodden
