



CBC Youth Conference Grows in Numbers and Purpose!



This year the Covenant Brethren youth saw their best and most diverse conference yet! When we think back to the beginnings of our youth conferences and how we wondered then if there was any point in continuing, we can see God had a purpose. In the very beginning we only saw nine youth attend the event in Fairmont. We spent almost all of our time stuck in a room and struggled to find programming. This past July 16th -18th, however, while we didn't see thousands of young people, we did have 32 great youth and 5 adult leaders who had a great time together. One young man told his church when he returned home that he was so glad that he had attended, and that the youth conference had been such a time of blessing!

The conference started Thursday night with the youth joining the adults in worship in the main auditorium at the Pasquerilla Conference Center in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. It was a great service and made us think about how much we not only need to follow the Great Commission and to "Go" but to go in the power of the Spirit! After the service we met to discuss conference plans so everyone would know what to expect. This year was the first time we would leave the conference grounds to go out to serve.



On Friday the youth began the day with worship and prayer. Pastor Jon Prater blessed us by challenging the youth to think about who had made a difference in their spiritual lives, why they had made that difference, and

how each youth could be that person for someone else. The message echoed the conference theme of "Go – Make – Baptize" and got everyone involved. They then began to work on a drama they would present to the adult conference and everyone participated without hesitation. We played some bonding games and had a lot of laughs until it was lunchtime.



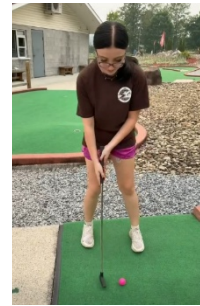


After a great meal, we loaded up in vans and traveled to the warehouse of Helping Hands ministry that had lined up service projects for the youth to do. To say that we were thankful and delighted for how hard the youth worked and the attitudes they showed would be an understatement.



They smiled as they cleaned up yards, emptied sheds, helped a man clean out his deceased sister's house, and painted a ramp. They did it all with the light of Christ in their hearts and on their faces. What a group! (A couple of the girls might have stopped smiling when they had to deal with spiders, but only for a short time.)

After each job we prayed with the homeowner. One group shed lot of tears as the host shared how drug addicts had destroyed his sister's beautiful home and he challenged the youth to realize that drugs didn't mess them up, but rather it was the addicts' choices to consume them that caused the problems. When we finished, we went to a local pizza shop to have dinner together and share stories and laughs. Then it was off to a miniature golf course and ice cream parlor for more fun and fellowship.



Saturday concluded the conference with the youth going before the adult conference to perform a drama to the song "Lead Me to the Cross". It depicted how easy it is to ignore the people all around us that need to be brought to Jesus. All too often, however, we are too busy with our own lives. The drama ended with a standing ovation from the conference attendees as many people wiped their eyes in response to what the drama said to them.

We then went back to our area and were challenged by Luke Sherrid who spoke about the power of God. The conference ended with a prayer of blessing over all the youth asking God to protect and use them to be His witnesses. It was a great time that went by very quickly.

We look forward to God continuing to grow and use our CBC Youth Conference to bless young people and to glorify His name!

Submitted by Craig Howard – Publications Committee