

Kari's Comments

Before we move into September I want to do a little CIY MOVE recap.

Wow! What a great month it has been for the Youth Ministry. Sixteen of us spent a week at CIY. It was incredible. We had a great time, and had a lot of fun. But that is just the beginning. I could honestly tell you stories for hours about our week. But I am just going to tell you one story, and then I am going to let the students tell you the rest.

We were being challenged all week to MOVE, challenged to make a difference. We went into this week with expectations. We were praying for specific things to take place.

On Thursday evening (our last night), I sat, as tears of joy flooded my eyes, as I saw not only our prayers being answered, but my expectations being exceeded. God was doing mighty works in the lives of our students. It is so exciting and encouraging to witness.

We challenged our students to be bold in their witness for Jesus Christ. They were encouraged to use technology as a means of sharing their faith. Some of them came home and wrote a blog about their experience.

Now, I am going to let them tell you about their week, and what God is doing in their lives:

"I've been at CIY MOVE at SIU Carbondale with some of the most amazing people in my life. All week, I was fellowshiping with friends – new, old, and closer than before – on a string of topics each day...The point is that God MOVES all of us through the Holy

Spirit, who is in all of us once we accept Him. We join together with other believers to grow up, stronger and firmer in the faith. Our Christian brothers and sisters build us up and hold us accountable for our decisions. And we have to take all of our boldness to show the rest of the world how much God loves us all and how He can change our lives. I shared my testimony with my youth group, and later with a friend who needed a lot of help. I danced a dance of joy and sang until I couldn't sing, so I just started yelling the words at the top of my voice. I prayed for more people in one night than I think I ever have before. And with more heart...I can't believe it's over. I want to live in CIY mode forever. But if I'm always there, I'm not bringing others to know God! I'm back in Oakland, back in action, I'm ready to MOVE!"

"In my life, I've always been kind of afraid to speak my mind. On July 27th, I went with my youth group to CIY. It was a week long camp called MOVE. And it truly changed my life and opened my eyes. I've gone to church all of my life and grew up around the Christian faith and saw and observed how a Christian is to act. I've been a saved Christian for three years now, but it took those three years to make me realize that I was just 'talking the talk.' I learned so many things at CIY, and it's helped me MOVE closer to God, which was the point of the camp. Not only did I MOVE closer to God, I MOVED closer to my youth

group. We became a stronger community. We shared problems we had and our life testimonies, which helped me come out of my comfort zone."

"When we were at CIY it taught me so many things. It brought me closer to God. It was just an all around great experience. I know in my life I was raised in a Christian family, I go to church almost every single Sunday. But I'm not living my life the way I should be. I think we all can strive to do better and to move. I know I can for sure."

This is just the tip of the iceberg. There are many more testimonies to share, many more stories to tell.

Four of our students were baptized. Congratulations to Austin Boothe, Nick Puski, Liz Timmons and Drake Todd. Welcome to the family of God. Seven more of our students took a stand to rededicate their lives. I love you all, I am so proud of you. I am excited to be a part of what God is doing in your lives.

Youth Group Kick-Off is Sunday, Sept. 7, 2008. Jr. High youth group now includes 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Watch your mail and the bulletin for more information.

I am excited to see what God is going to do this year.

Praying for you.

In Christ,

Kari Otto

Youth Dates and Events You Need to Know...

- **Sunday, Sept. 7, 6-8 p.m.** – Jr. High (6th, 7th and 8th grade) and High School Youth Group Kick-Off at the church. Cook-out, games, fun and fellowship! Girls, bring a snack (chips, cookies, etc.). Guys, bring 2-liter drinks. You won't want to miss this!
- **Friday, Sept. 12 and 26, After game-11 p.m.** – 5th Quarter, Oakland Lake Park. Bonfire, food and fun!
- **Sunday, Sept. 14, 21 and 28, 6-8 p.m.** – Jr. High and High School youth groups will meet in the sanctuary and then meet separately.
- **Tuesday, Sept. 16, 3:30-5 p.m.** – JAM begins. More info on pg. 2.
- **Saturday, Sept. 20, 7-10 p.m.** – Live music, The Hub. (See back page.)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 24, 7:15 a.m.** – "See You at the Pole," around the flag pole at OHS. A time to come together, lay aside all labels and groups, connect with God in prayer and connect with fellow Christians. Students, be there to pray for your school. Adults, be there to pray with and for our students as they strive to make an impact for the Kingdom this year.



At CIY's MOVE: Front row, l to r: Austin Boothe; Joseph Gross; Drake Todd; Jana Huber; Angelica Ragonese; Aaron Boothe. 2nd row: Rich Puski; Nick Puski; Damon Ledbetter; Morgan Henry; Holly Henry; Stefanie Borntrager; Liz Timmons. Back row: Eileen Brown; Kari Otto; Dan Brown.