

INTRODUCING...

# NATHAN (NATE) THIESSEN



A local boy, Nate has worked in several industries, generally in leadership or management roles.

He grew up in a Christian family and has been a member of local churches dating back to his late teenage years. As a married man, he began a journey of searching for deeper spiritual meaning in life, tired of going through the motions.

### Nate's Story

During the spring of 2018, my personal health began to cause me some alarm. I began getting frequent migraines and generally feeling ill/exhausted most days. Through this time, many people provided encouraging thoughts, prayers and friendship - I am thankful for that.

I believe in hindsight that God was allowing this to happen, to steer me in a new direction. In August of 2019, a friend from a local church, who I hadn't spoken to in years - saw me at the local Tim Horton's one day as I got breakfast (at a very odd hour, due to unusual events that day). This friend had heard of my illness and was checking up on me, but also mentioned casually that Youth for Christ was looking for people to help in ministry. This was the third time in as many days that I had heard this, (from three unique sources) so when sharing with Rita, we wondered if the Lord was speaking to me through these people.

Over the following months, it became evident, through scriptures encountered in daily reading, encouragement from other believers, and many circumstances that worked together: showing that God indeed was calling me to partner with Youth for Christ. I left behind a career in management at a local ag equipment dealer and beginning in December have been trying to be helpful to the great team in Portage.

Since December, I have been helping with drop ins, connecting with local high school teens 3 times a week. We also have a ball hockey program once a week, which has been really fun and encouraging. On Fridays I partner with Tyson and Jordyn to host a sports jam or drop in for junior high youth from the north end. To our great delight I have been invited in to Yellowquill school where I volunteer with grades 5 and 6, aiming to start a program when school resumes. Finally we are working towards a Bible study for young men on a weekly basis, which would be an excellent time to dive deeper with some of our contacts that we have made.

I am overwhelmed by the love and support already poured our way and am delighted to be a full-time staff member here at Youth for Christ/Youth Unlimited Portage la Prairie. We appreciate your prayers as this transition to ministry is still new and a little overwhelming for our family. Thank you all!




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# STORIES

A YOUTH FOR CHRIST PORTAGE NEWSLETTER

ART SCHROEDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## CHANGE

There are changes coming to YFC. Our name and logo have had an update. Many of the chapters have had "Youth Unlimited" attached to their YFC name, so as an organization we have merged the two names into one longer name - Youth for Christ/Youth Unlimited. Our



logo is no longer a stick figure reaching out to the world. It is now a conversation bubble with an upward arrow signifying conversation moving towards Christ. We are excited about the upgrades, but our mission is as true as it's ever been. We desire to see every young person and their communities changed by God's love!! Please continue to pray for the hearts of the youth in Portage and sounding areas.

On the theme of change, a lot has changed in the last month. If someone would have told me a month ago that a pandemic like



Covid-19 would radically alter the way the world is operating, I wouldn't have believed it. But as our world is changing, we are also changing. Many of the youth we work



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with are still connected to social media and we are meeting them there. I think it is more important now than ever to try to reach out to youth that have lost so much of their connection with the outside world. Isolation, as I've said before, can cause a lot of problems like addictions, depression, anxiety and loneliness.

At YFC, we see the hope and potential in every young person. By God's grace that won't change. However, how we see that hope and potential may change. We are very thankful to have passionate staff, volunteers and partners work together to reach a generation in need! At this time we need your prayers and support as much as ever. Together we can make a difference and continue to see young people disciplined in the faith and connected to a community that will walk this difficult journey side by side. Thank you and God bless you.



FRASER RANDALL

## “DEAR DIARY...” A TRIP TO COSTA RICA

Dear Diary: Day one without Steve. It's hard, but I'll get through this difficult, difficult time. It was an honor to have a seat at the table, not only to talk about MacGregor and Area's - Project Serve opportunities in Costa Rica (CR), but also to be encouraged to be included in the work Steve is doing with Global Engagement.



I am excited to move forward with the ministry of Project Serve. This will be through a partnership that values encouragement through relationships and not tasks or projects that often become the focus of service opportunities ( short term mission trips). Practically speaking, it's partnering with YFC Costa Rica staff and volunteers in the ministry they are already committed to. Working alongside them, serving with them. Not ground breaking ideas, but excited that MacGregor & Area YFC and YFC CR are on the same page. I am confident in the relationship that has been established with CR and look forward to continuing putting the relationship before outcomes.

I felt that I was able to encourage the national movement of YFC Costa Rica, alongside celebrating with them by the evidence of the healthy steps forward they have made as a movement this past year. I came to appreciate the strategic planning that has brought them to a healthy place and cherish the time that Steve and Global Engagement has spent investing in CR. This planning also can be celebrated and trusted to continue to move the YFC ministry forward in CR and MacGregor! Over the years of ministry, I have been blessed at

different times to be part of casting - vision, mission, strategic planning - in order to move the organizations or movement forward. I was amazed at Steve's ability to move the discussion forward, still putting relationships first and outcomes second. This was done in a soft and gentle way that made everyone at the table comfortable and challenged at the same time. Like slapping someone on the bottom... and realizing they didn't play football in the 90's.

Steve and my relationship grew beyond my expectations over our trip. I had looked forward to the travel days for this reason and am not disappointed in the ways God has used Steve to speak truth into my life. I am humbled by the way Steve was able to share with me his friends, community (skate), cultures, and Costa Rica. I look forward to sharing some of my own experiences in CR with youth that make a commitment to be part of Project Serve and will allow us to continue to move this movement forward.

### Prayer Points

- Pray for the mental health of our youth, that they would be free from depression and boredom.
- Pray that our families would have the patience and grace they need for one another.
- Pray that those who were close to making a decision for the Lord would not fall backward.
- Pray for the summer programming we would normally be planning now.
- Pray for that summer staff would still be available when the opportunity arrives.
- Pray for the finances of both the staff and the office.
- Pray that partners will continue to find themselves in a position to support the work being performed.

### Ways To Donate

#### ONLINE

Visit the "Donations" page at [www.yfcportage.com](http://www.yfcportage.com)

#### MAIL or IN PERSON

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#### CREDIT CARD

Call the YFC office at 204.239.6763.

#### LEGACY & PLANNED GIVING

More information is available on our website at [www.yfcportage.com](http://www.yfcportage.com) or call our office at 204.239.6763

#### A note from Art

As a non-profit organization, we are seeing some of our funding opportunities fade with every passing week. This pandemic is having a negative impact on our operational income. We understand that we are not alone, as many families are also feeling a financial loss. Please consider giving towards the work of YFC if you can. Your partnership helps us to support the vulnerable youth and families that are hurting and in need of love and hope. Thank you and God bless you all.



### INTRODUCING...

## TIM HILDEBRANDT

Hey everybody, my name is Tim Hildebrandt, and I starting working at YFC MacGregor on November 1st of 2019.

My position here is as a student life worker, which means that I have the honor of engaging with students in multiple areas and help encourage and motivate them in their journeys of life and faith.

The first few months of my job I spent job-shadowing my co-workers and helping them with the ministries they were currently in. This was a wonderful introduction to the inner-mechanics of YFC and was a great way to build a foundation for future ministries that God might lead me into developing. On a weekly basis, I get to help my co-worker Kassy at our MacGregor drop-in and also help my co-worker Tyson with his after-school ball hockey and evening basketball programs. On top of those activities, I am also doing outreach into the Gladstone High school on Thursdays while my co-worker Joel is out of the country for a few months.

All in all, I have been learning basic foundations of YFC and their methods of contextualizing their ministries, in the hope and anticipation that I will be able to carry them forward as I plan on reaching out to the community of Treherne in the coming years. We see a need for strong Christian leadership and teaching in Treherne, and I believe that YFC is the perfect vehicle to bring that to them.

