



Castaways Quarterly ISSUE 2



Hello There!

Welcome back!

by [Isaac Johnson](#)

Welcome to issue #2!

Woohoo! Thank you for taking an interest in Youth Castaways!

We hope the articles included help to give you a little insight into the awesome group of students and leaders we get to live life with every week!

It is such a joy to see all of the spiritual growth and fruit being produced in their lives that we can't keep it all to ourselves. We have to share a small piece of it with you!

Please keep us all in your prayers, that we would grow ever more into the likeness of Christ and to live every moment as His servants.


- Isaac Johnson
Youth Leader 



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THIS QUARTER'S
TOP STORIES



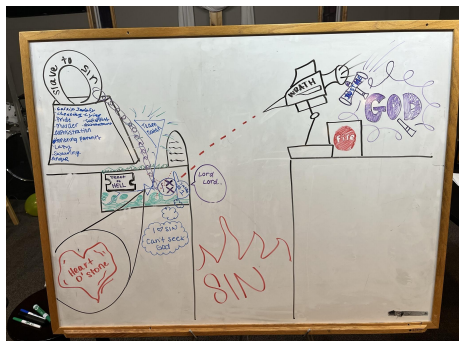
Summary of Summer Topics/Lessons

by [Annabelle Johnson](#)

Sunday Nights

The Youth Castaways have finished our study of church history, and have since discussed several different topics throughout the busy holiday seasons in the last three months. We skimmed 1 John for a short study of how Christians know their faith is genuine, learned the importance of respecting our pastors, what the bible says about aliens and examined how technology impacts our modern age and how Christians should respond to it.

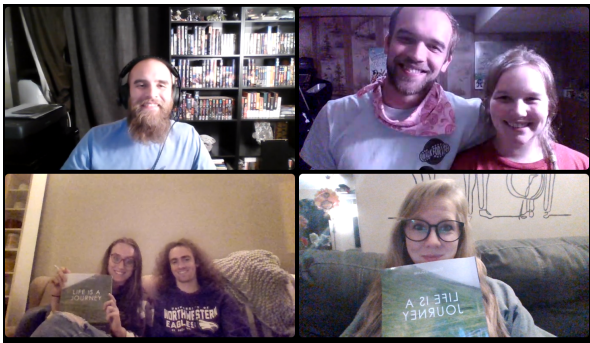
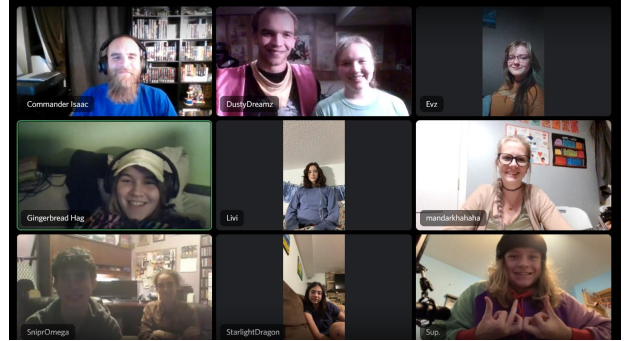
Isaac also expanded the classic “cross and chasm” illustration that is widely used in Christian circles today. While this drawing may be an alright explanation for brand-new



believers, Isaac wanted to flesh out salvation more by doctoring the illustration to include the total depravity of human beings (how we're dead in our sin; we love it and are objects of God's wrath) and our complete inability to do anything to assist in saving ourselves. It was only after Jesus' receiving of our punishment that we could be saved, and we can only be saved if the Father gives us a heart of flesh and draws us to Himself. We do nothing to achieve it.

The Lord's Prayer

For our Tuesday night studies over Discord, Isaac has been leading the Youth Castaways in analyzing the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15). We're learning how to properly use this prayer that Jesus gave us as a framework for our own prayers.



Leader's Study

The Youth Castaways' adult leaders and helpers went through Bill Mounce's "Life is a Journey" course on Wednesday evenings, over Discord. The course focused on ironing out foundational theology, and very meaningful discussions took place during the study sessions. *Yc*

Summary of Activities

by [Annabelle Johnson](#)

The last few months have been as exciting as ever for the Youth Castaways!



Many of our youth participated in the Church Camping Trip on August 19-21. Then, we had an end of summer party on August 26, complete with doughnuts and The Goofy Movie!



On September 4, the entire youth group visited the Renaissance Festival. For many of us, it was our first Ren Fest ever! We enjoyed food and jousting, and the girls got to take a picture with a mermaid! Talk about a dream come true (and may Connor Distad be gallantly rewarded for following the gaggle of females into Mermaid Cove and taking the picture)!

During the weekend of September 16, the Youth Castaway girls attended a small retreat led by Barbara Kochendorfer and Christina Hermann. The theme was “Identity”, and focused on who they are in Christ.



Isaac and Amanda hosted a Reformation/Harvest Party the last weekend in October. One of the highlights was a costume contest, with winners decided by popular vote. The champions were Samantha Johnson (Baby Yoda) and Ethan Anderson (Skateboarding Zombie)!



The Youth Castaways had the pleasure of attending the Reality Conference, which focused on teaching correct apologetics to students, in a compact and intense weekend over November 11-12!

Thanksgiving and Christmas were celebrated with the Youth Castaways’ Friendsgiving and Christmas Extravaganza, respectively. Friendsgiving took place on November 23, each youth bringing a food dish to share! And the December 11 Christmas Extravaganza included candy-cane games and dinosaur-ornament decorating.

Finally, most of us finished off the year by enjoying Christlife's Caroling and Game Night on December 16, where we handed out gifts and gospel tracts to the neighborhood. What a fabulous end to a wonderful year! *Yo*

Reality Student Apologetics Conference Summary

by [Jacob Jankowski](#)

This November, the Castaways got an amazing opportunity to attend the Reality Student Apologetics Conference, which was hosted by Stand to Reason, an organization dedicated to producing ambassadors for Christ and effective apologists. And in that aspect, I believe they succeeded.




I didn't really know what to expect from the conference when I first arrived, but I didn't expect it to be so much fun. Hosts Alan Shelmon and Tim Barnett had great on-stage chemistry, and illusionist Drew Worsham stole the show with his mind-bending tricks. (Remember Kujet, anyone?) And who can forget HERITVGE, the excellent musicians who led us in great worship.

But we didn't come to the apologetics conference for entertainment and music. How was the teaching? Well, I am happy to report that the speakers at the event went all-in on their subjects, delivering powerful messages on deep topics, including deconstruction, the meaning of suffering, and dealing with doubt.

A personal highlight for me was the third major sermon of the night, "Seeking Answers To Scripture", hosted by J. Warner Wallace. If the name seems familiar, Wallace also wrote the

best-selling book, *A Cold Case For Christ*, which recounts his personal experience coming to terms with his personal doubts about Christianity. He explained to the audience in a very logical way about how the bible is completely and totally accurate, and I really enjoyed it. I think his message will really help me witness to some of my more skeptical friends.

As much as I would love to keep talking about this great event, it would take too much time to cover everything about it. So, I'll pass the torch to some of the other Castaways for a deeper dive. Happy reading! 

Deconstructionism

by [Evie White](#)



One of the break-rooms at a Christian Apologetics conference that I visited in 2022 was “Deconstructionism”. What is Deconstructionism? By definition, it is the attempt to find and establish an ultimate meaning other than the text exactly as written. Have you ever heard the annoying saying “It is what it is”? For example, it was once a custom that a woman is to be courted by a man, and he is to pay her dowry. This doesn't apply to our current day anymore, but made sense in the past. The practice and statement made it clear what was

supposed to happen. A deconstructionist would put this sentence in cultural context and state the flaws and reasons why this practice was wrong or right.

Now, for things in the Bible, where everything is believed to be true; that is where deconstructionism becomes controversial. Finding hidden morals and cultural aspects in a piece of text that is from God doesn't work. God may have chosen the human authors, but it is God's Word. There should be no undertones of human opinion. The main recurrence in this is that some words, especially in older texts are so over-analyzed that the author's intention is taken away from the original verse. Is deconstructionism useful when piecing apart the various texts of the Bible? There are two sides of this argument.

On the Deconstructionist side, a main argument is that the Bible comes in different translations for different branches of Christianity. There are literal bible translations, dynamic translations and paraphrased translations (OliveTreeBlog, 2022). Depending on the type of translation a reader is using, they can draw different conclusions from the text. They might not be wrong, but they will be different from each other. You can compare catechisms across various Christian religions (for example, Catholic and Lutheran catechisms) these catechisms are inherently different from each other, but reference the

same text (the Bible). Individuals who read the Bible or certain texts within, are going to interpret it in different ways; be it culture, language, or personal beliefs. A personal belief I see a lot is that God will point out to you certain things in the Bible or a sermon that you need to hear. Generally, depending on that person's situation they will translate it in the context of their life. That interpretation being God's intention or not, the verse sticks out to them.

The Bible in Christianity is known as an absolute truth from God, which is why deconstructionism can be a contradiction. It is true people interpret things in different ways, but once you piece those different versions together and look at the big picture the verse has a single point and a single meaning. In the long run, the goal is a common understanding of the full picture that we do not have yet. This touches on Bible stories of why we have multiple languages (eg, the Tower of Babel), and some very deep rabbit holes on postmodernism (which is the belief that some parts of the Bible don't apply now that we have new developments) that could go on for hours.

In short, some deconstruction is good, especially if the passage is lengthy, or out of date to common words or practices today. However, the goal must stay true to finding the meaning of the verse instead of shying away from it. 1 Corinthians 3:19 "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written: 'He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness.'" The goal should be to find the intended meaning, not the moral or cultural motives behind the writing. The Bible is God's Word, not Man's.

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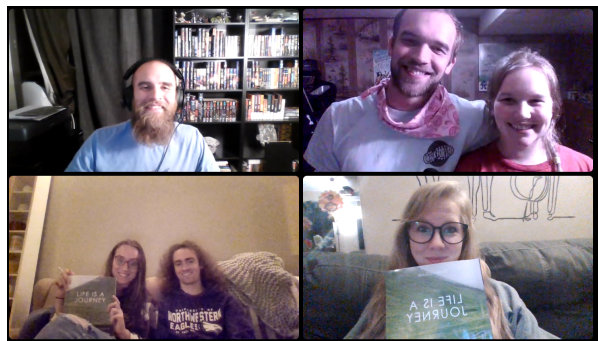
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“Life is a Journey” Leader Study

by [Connor Distad](#)

Over the past few months, the Castaway leaders have been working through a Bible study titled “Life is a Journey” by Dr. Bill Mounce. The study consisted of a workbook that walked us through 12 lessons aimed to introduce new Christians to various basic Christian concepts. Each day we would



complete a page of that week's lesson, and once per lesson we met over Discord to watch a lecture on that week's topic, given by Dr. Mounce. The aim of completing this study was to strengthen our understanding of these basic concepts, and to help us see our faith from the perspective of a new Christian. This way, we will be better equipped when we share the Gospel with people unfamiliar with it.

We walked through what it means to have converted into Christianity, what our relationship with God means, what Jesus accomplished, who the Holy Spirit is, and what our walk as Christians (in light of the previously mentioned topics) will look like as we grow in faith for the glory and purposes of God. A big takeaway from the study was the idea that "changed people live changed lives." We all have been called to a life of change, to a journey in which we will be used by God as he calls others to join us. *Yc*

Behold Our God

by [Amanda Johnson](#)

After leading the Youth Castaways band for almost a year, all I can say is please pray for those who have to decide on worship sets, either at church, or for any events you attend. (*Thank you for leading worship for so many years on Sunday mornings, Pastor Hermann!*).



I am not one to choose the most popular song on KTIS because not every "Christian" song really gives God the true glory He deserves! I was looking through songs for our next youth set and "Behold our God" was in my YouTube recommendations. I had heard it played on a podcast a couple years earlier and remembered really loving it! I felt the need to do more research into why this is not only a good, but a GREAT song!

Behold our God was written by: Stephen Altrogge while at Sovereign Grace Churches songwriting retreat, along with his friends Ryan, Jon, and Megan Baird. It was not written based on any sort of crazy vision from God or a dream in the middle of the night. Rather, it is based purely on the Word of God. Isaiah 40:12-14 was used as the foundation of this song.

Isaiah 40:12-14: *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man*

shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?

It was these ideas and the passage itself that led the writers to begin crafting the verses in the form of questions: Who has held the oceans in His hands? Who has numbered every grain of sand? Kings and nations tremble at His voice. All creation rises to rejoice. The final verse is written with a specific focus on the resurrection.

The Youth Band had a lot of fun working on this song. And everytime we sing it, I too think in awe of how amazing God is. God needs absolutely nothing from anyone. No one can compare to him. No one can give him advice or counsel.

He is utterly and totally sovereign.

He rules over all the universe.

Come let us adore Him.

Here are the full lyrics:

Verse 1

Who has held the oceans in His hands?
Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice
All creation rises to rejoice

Chorus

Behold our God seated on His throne
Come, let us adore Him
Behold our King—nothing can compare
Come, let us adore Him

Verse 2

Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?

Verse 3

Who has felt the nails upon His hands?
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man
God eternal, humbled to the grave
Jesus, Savior, risen now to reign

Tag

You will reign forever
Let Your glory fill the earth

Yc

Continue the Story Game

by Isaac Johnson

One opening activity we did was a *Continue the Story* game. Students were asked to stand in a line and write a couple of sentences of a story. The catch was they were only allowed to read the part of the story that the person in front of them had written. It is fun to see how goofy a story gets when the writers don't know most of the context!

STORY ONE:

- Bob was a martian. He came to earth to kill everything. He was going to kill all life because the martians were going to recolonize earth. The Martians didn't like humans because the earthlings were going to colonize Mars. (*Devin Goshaw*)
- Humans were evil and trying to steal technology from them. Nathan had to battle a martian which caused them to hate humans. Which made them want to colonize earth. (*Cullen Goshaw*)
- The martians decided not to kill us all and gave us all \$5 tans instead. (*Nathan Deboer*)
- And the \$5 tans felt great and looked great. After all of us got tans, we made the martians fall in love with us. The Martians let us go because we were too hot. (*Obadiah X*)
- Despite once again being free, my heart was not free from the deep love I felt for Jolena the Martian. We organized a wedding and the next week we were pronounced man and Martian. (*Connor Distad*)
- However as in the first 3 weeks I found out kids weren't quiet (or cute thx to Jolena's genes). So I made a decision I promised not to. I divorced and went back to Earth hoping never to return. (*Alex Kochendorfer*)

STORY TWO:

- The wind whistled through the grass. The ancient pines gently shook in the breeze. All was quiet. At least for now... (*Jacob Jankowski*)
- On a peaceful day deer roamed the fields, the birds chirping their usual song. The river would splash from the local wildlife...then...!! (*Ava Anderson*)

- All of a sudden, a huge wildfire broke out! The deer ran as fast as it could! Finally, the deer... (*Iris Distad*)
- Ran out to the road nearby, and accidentally hit a car at a stop sign! The car didn't get hit, the deer hit the car! Then the deer scampered off into the woods until they got home to their mother. (*Merideth Distad*)
- "Mom, I'm a felon!" The little deer sobbed. "What if I go to jail forever?!" "Don't worry, dear." Assured the deer mother. (*Annabelle Johnson*)
- "Soon the cops will come and take you away, my child." The mother said. The child began to cry "I don't want to go to jail"! (*Samantha Johnson*)
- "Then you will have to hide!" Said the mother deer. "Run deep into the woods." "How deep?" replied the bab deer. "Run until you find shelter!" said the mother deer frantically. "Now go!" (*Clara Hermann*)
- So the baby deer ran and ran till he found himself deeper in the forest. It was getting darker by the minute and the baby deer was becoming more afraid. Suddenly he heard a strange noise. (*Olivia Distad*)
- He inched towards the strange noise. Finally he found the bush emitting a strange noise. He peered into the bush and saw something horrifying. (*Ethan Anderson*)
- ...A four-eyed, two-faced creature made almost entirely of black smoke. He tried to scream, but it was muffled by the creature's hand over his mouth. He thrashed around, trying to break free, but it was no use. He couldn't breathe. He couldn't see. And he blacked out...
The creature's mouth came towards his face. (*Lola Hermann*) *Ye*



The Girls Weekend

by Iris Distad

It was a Friday night, when Mrs. Barbara had her Girls Weekend. Everyone went to Mrs. Cristina's house so we could all gather together before leaving. Then, we split up into two cars. It was a long drive, so we had to supply ourselves with entertainment. Finally, we reached the cabin. It was nothing like I had imagined! I thought it would be like one big cabin, but it was two. It was a very comfy place. All the older girls were in the bunkhouse, while me and two others were in the actual cabin. It was all very exciting.



After checking out everywhere, we all got our bed situated so at night we would be nice and comfortable. Then we had dinner and did a devotional. After a night of movies and face masks, it was the most exciting part of the night: the midnight swim. Three people decided to take a jump off the dock and land in the water; I was tempted but said no.

Finally time for bed. We all got cozied up and went to sleep. The next morning we got up and we shared our exciting dreams. I had dreamed that we heard a knocking on like the window and so we asked Mrs. Barbara if she could look outside the window and see if anyone was out there, and there wasn't anyone in real life but in my dream there was. There was a flat evil cowboy. Now in

real life, Teagan and I were sharing a bed because there's only two beds, and so in real life she had rolled off the bed over top of me and landed on the floor.

I had woken up when that happened and I thought she had gone back up to the top bunk, but she hadn't. In my dream she was on the floor and then I saw something on the wall so I took my flashlight and shined it on the wall and instead of the evil flat cowboy it was an evil flat Teagan with pointy teeth and as soon as I shone my flashlight on it it started to the wall, and I just kept driving back and forth and back and forth. And then all of a sudden



we were out on the dock and there was this stonefish that looks more like a blob—but anyway, it was just flopping after us as we were trying to get back in the house and it just kept chasing and chasing us until finally someone slammed the door shut as it was trying to open it.

So when we woke up that morning we had the what if of: what if the evil flat cowboy, the pointy teeth flat Teagan and the stonefish were one being haunting us? After we shared our dreams it was time for breakfast and we ate a majority of things. Then we tried a Pinterest craft that Mrs. Barbara had found online and we were making these jars and then you would tape or glue these little bible verses and references and encouraging words onto it, and then you would have this little cup for you to drink out of.



Then Annabelle shared another devotional. Most of the time of the day, we just hung around the cabin and the dock. We did some painting too. Then we had lunch and some of us after that changed and went swimming and jumped off the dock—or in my case fell off the dock. After a while some people got bored and decided they would take a walk to the town with Mrs Barbara while about three of us stayed there at the cabin.

Finally, we had dinner and had a couple s'mores and then we got all our stuff together. We vacuumed, cleaned up, and left the cabin as we had found it. We all piled into the cars and drove off. Well, we were still on the dock right before we had left, we heard thunder and saw this ginormous cloud approaching us. It was actually very interesting. I was excited to see how the rain was coming down and it was quite fun to go over all the hills while it was raining. Finally we reached Mrs. Christina's house once more and there were piles of cars coming to pick up the girls, as we were driving home. The only thing we could do was wish that the weekend could be longer, but maybe look forward to next year for possibilities. *yc*



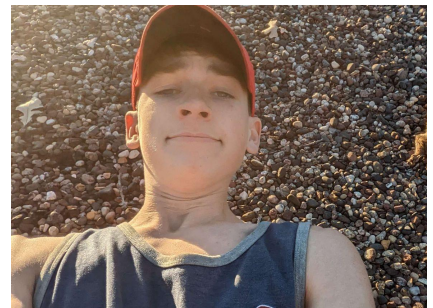
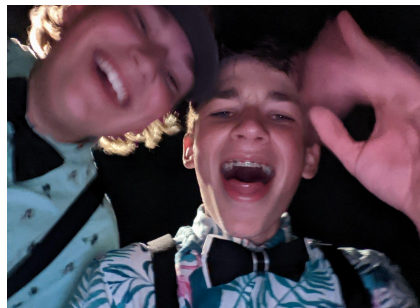
Youth Spotlight: Nathan DeBoer

by [Isaac Johnson](#)

We wanted to take just a minute to spotlight one of our students this month, Nathan Debor! In case you didn't know, Nathan does all of the lawn care at ChristLife during the Summer months! He does a fabulous job of taking care of the grass, picking up debris, mulching leaves and throwing away wayward trash! Nathan has demonstrated a servant heart by always being willing to dive in and help out around the church. He

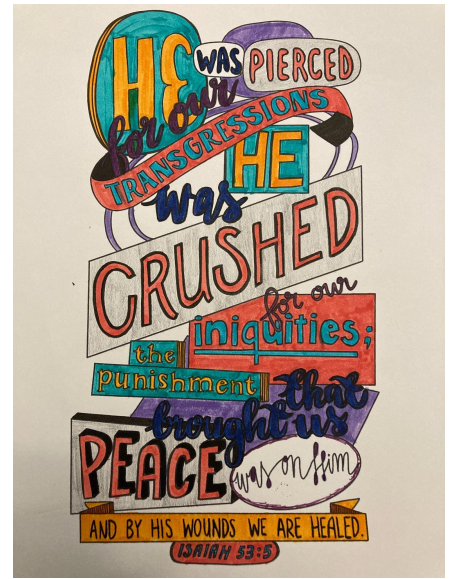
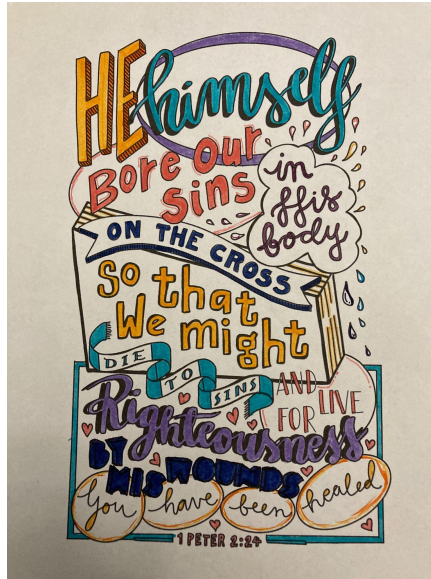
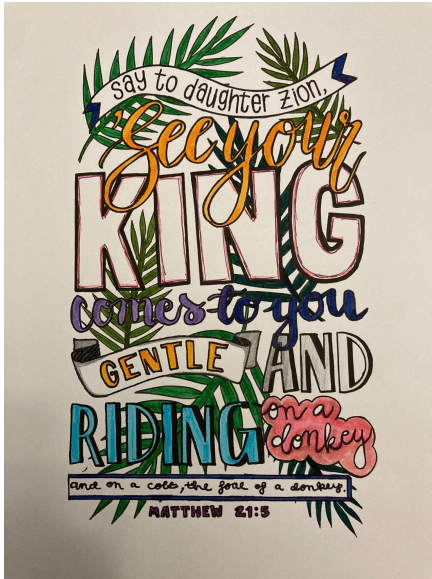


jumped in to help clean up a sewage backup in the church basement (after 50 teenagers using the bathrooms proved to be a bit too much for the plumbing), and is frequently helping his Trustee father with projects around the church! When you see Nathan around be sure to thank him for his hard work and using his gifts to help the church! *yc*



Art Submissions

by Clara Hermann



by Lola Hermann



THE TIMEQUAKE ISSUE NO.2

by [Jacob Jankowski](#)


THE TIMEQUAKE ISSUE NO.2

Following the mysterious stranger, you quickly go down a side street, barely getting out of the eyeline of the soldiers still dealing with the dinosaur. The figure pulls out a small silver hoop and throws it to the ground, a smaller version of the portal that opened on the street suddenly looms in front of you. Before you get the chance to protest, your rescuer grabs your arm, pulling you through the rift.

A vista of black sand opens below you, and to contrast your new acquaintances' perfect landing, you plow headfirst into the soft earth. Looking around, a vast purple sky casts dim light onto this beach. The figure removes the lower part of their mask and speaks for the first time. "Sorry, that was one of my rougher extractions, and we must keep going. Do you have any questions?"

[A] "Where are we?"

[B] "Who are you?"

(Vote for your choice at www.christlifechurch.com/youthcastaways) 




Riddles

by [Jacob Jankowski](#)

Q: Forwards I am heavy, but backwards I am not. What am I?  (answer on last page)

Beacon of Hope Work Day

by [Isaac Johnson](#)

In September, the youth volunteered to help out during a work day at Beacon of Hope Church in Minneapolis. We painted, pulled weeds and did lots of organizing and cleaning. Only one piano was destroyed (on purpose) and we all survived some of the plants fighting back. Major props to the girls who cleaned the gross freezers, and to the boys who got a mysterious green substance on them moving one of the fridges. 



Yummy Recipes

by [Merideth Distad](#)

Chicken Curry


Serves: 4

Ingredients:

1 large onion (chopped)
3 garlic cloves (chopped)
2-3 chicken breasts (cut into bite-sized pieces)
4 Tbsp. tomato paste
3 tsp. Curry powder

1 tsp. Cumin
1 tsp. Paprika
½ tsp. Cayenne pepper
Salt and pepper to taste
¼ cup fresh cilantro (chopped)
1 can coconut milk

Instructions:

1. In a large pan, saute onions until translucent. In a separate pan, cook chicken.
2. Add spices and garlic. Once combined, add tomato paste.
3. When chicken is done, add it to the pan with onions.
4. Add ¼ cup water, stir thoroughly.
5. Cover and cook for 5-7 minutes on medium heat, stirring occasionally.
6. Add cilantro and stir.
7. Lower heat to simmer, and add coconut milk.
8. Simmer for a few minutes, then serve with rice or naan. 



by [Merideth Distad](#)

Homemade Alfredo Sauce

This is very easy to make and tastes great with pasta!

Ingredients:

½ cup unsalted butter (softened)
1 ½ cups heavy cream
3 cloves of garlic (minced)

½ tsp. Italian seasoning
½ tsp. Salt
¼ tsp. Black pepper
2 cups parmesan cheese (grated)

Instructions:

1. Melt butter in skillet
2. Add in garlic and heavy cream, simmer for about two minutes
3. Whisk in seasonings
4. Whisk in parmesan cheese until melted and combined.
5. Serve immediately over noodles with chicken!




yc

Ask a Gen Z

Scott Johnson Asked: **What single world event has impacted your life the most?**


Samantha: Covid-19

Annabelle: My Birth 

THANK YOU!

We did it! Another Quarterly down! Thank you for taking the time to read the Castaway Quarterly! This was so much fun to put together and the youth jumped at the opportunity to include articles of things they have learned and art they have created!

All past issues will be available to read at: www.christlfechurch.com/youthcastaways
If you want to send in a question for the Ask a Gen Z section, there is a form you can fill out at the bottom of the castaways page on the website!

Thanks and Love,
Youth Castaways <3 

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Riddle Answer (page 17) 1: A Ton



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