

## **SWID NYI President's Report**

Dr. Crump, SWID NYI Council, pastors, youth workers, students, family & friends,

I bring to you my eighth report as SWID NYI President. I continue to be humbled by the opportunity to lead such a great group of young people and leaders across this great district. First of all, let me give glory to God who deserves it all! His grace and guidance remain constant. The team of NYI Presidents, volunteer youth leaders, youth pastors, and pastors across our district who continue to imagine week after week how to remind young people there is hope in Jesus...you all are the BEST! And I am proud of our students; we have the best!

Below are a few highlights from the year:

- **QUIZZING** – Quizzing had another great year with 40 students from 10 churches participating! Congrats to Aengus McCullough who was our Top Quizzer and to Damon Spurgeon for winning coach of the year award. Thanks to Garrett Lee and Ian Hartsook and the team around them, special shout-out Nick Bebout, for continuing to pour so much time and effort into making our bible quizzing ministry flourish. This year's quizzing season begins Saturday, September 9, at our Brazil church.
- **SAMMY TAYLOR** – The number of teams we had participating in the Sammy Taylor Basketball Tournament doubled from last year. There's nothing like waking up the morning of the tournament to a phone call that the power is out at the gym that was hosting. Big thanks to Tim Ferrett and The Point for opening up their gym at literally the last minute. Thanks to Andrew Johnson for directing the tournament for us this year.
- **CELEBRATE LIFE** – Our district Celebrate Life event had a great turnout. Thanks to Nashville Parkview for being great hosts for our district event again. We had a great group show up at Olivet. We finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall! But the lasting memory will be the steps of faith and connections that were made and solidified from our time together. Thanks to the man, Bruce Marshall for his great leadership. Mark your calendars – May 16-18, 2024.
- **TEEN CAMP** – We had another great week at Teen Camp a few weeks ago! We had over 190 people total at Higher Ground. God met with us in special ways. A lasting memory for me will be hearing from one of my students, "This week, I finally realized God wants me. He actually wants me." Thanks to Josh Caplinger and Travis Stamper for their great leadership and to the great group of youth workers who made it happen.
- **NYC23** – We had over 190 participants at NYC23 in Tampa, FL! It was a great week of Spirit-filled services, fun in the rec hall, an opportunity to serve the communities in and around Tampa, and just a lot of fun. Many people responded to a call God had for their lives including 22 people responding to a call to ministry while at NYC! NYC takes years to plan. Jason and Amanda Riggle were rock stars as coordinators! We appreciate all their work. NYC26 will be in Salt Lake City, Utah!

I must thank a few people who make my job as NYI President both doable and much less taxing.

- **CRUMPS** – Thank you for your continued support of SWID NYI!
- **SWID NYI COUNCIL** - Thanks for your support throughout this year! Your advice and wisdom always have an impact on what we are doing and where we are headed. Thanks for your willingness to serve SWID NYI!
- **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** – Travis Stamper, Jennifer Caplinger, and Amanda Riggle. As with previous years, I have asked a whole lot out of these three talented, gracious and wise leaders. And I couldn't be any more grateful. Thanks for your great leadership!
- **RESTORATION CHURCH** – I said it last year and the same is true for us; it has been a unique year! I've been reminded how great of a home church God has blessed my family with.
- **MY FAMILY** - To Allyson, Asher, Levi...no doubt, the greatest sacrifice has been made by you. You've always handled the extra hours and days given to this responsibility with grace, understanding, and unwavering support. You are the best!

Exciting days are before us! We are going to show a video and then Michael Elliott will come to share some info about Teen Care Corps.

Exciting days are before us! We are looking forward to communicating some exciting things in the near-future. If you are not currently receiving emails from SWID NYI, there is a sign-up sheet on the registration table. You can also email us at [swidnyi812@gmail.com](mailto:swidnyi812@gmail.com).

To wrap up my time, I'd like to share a few words of encouragement. Recently, I had the opportunity to speak at our church for a Family Worship Sunday. On those Sundays normally, I take what our kids would have been learning together during children's church and edit it for our whole congregation. I was struck by this verse. Hebrews 10:23 says,

*<sup>23</sup> Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.*

How tightly are you holding onto the hope we affirm? Is there anything in your life and ministry that isn't possible without God? I shared the story of Rahab in Joshua 2 and 6. You may remember the story. Rahab, the prostitute, hides the spies sent by Joshua to scope out Jericho. She makes an oath with them in hopes that God would spare her and her family's lives. The sign and reminder of the covenant was a scarlet cord hanging out Rahab's window. With her house positioned on the city wall, can you imagine what's going through her mind as the people of God are getting their steps in around the city? How tightly was she holding onto that rope, hoping and praying that the God of the Israelites would not forget her?

I ask us again to consider...is there anything in your life and ministry that isn't possible without God showing up and showing off? God spared Rahab and her family because of her faith. And long story short, we see her show up in the lineage of Jesus himself and in the hall of fame of faith, Hebrews 11.

Students – “Hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm!” What is God calling you to? Our area is full of peers of yours, neighbors, that need Jesus. You have been uniquely planted for such a time as this right where you are. Our schools, neighborhoods, communities, your family and friends need you. **YOU ARE NOT TOO YOUNG!** At our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Pastor Tim shared our rich history. I was inspired to hear of teenagers planting churches in our past. Is God calling you to plant a church? It's in our blood! It's who we are. The local church that I am blessed to serve at was birthed out of prayer meetings full of teenagers. What is God calling you to? God can be trusted to keep his promises! He is faithful!

Adults – “Hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm!” What is God calling you to? Perhaps you are here today from a church without a NYI program. Or you have been asked to help. The thought of stepping up to lead scares you. Maybe you came as a NDI Delegate, but God is stirring your heart this morning to consider what it might look like to invest in the next generation. There's a new ministry opportunity, a neighbor that needs to know they are loved by God, a coworker that needs encouragement, a step outside of our comfort zone. God can be trusted to keep his promises! He is faithful!

Final thought - We are better together! The next verses in Hebrews 10:24-25 say,

*<sup>24</sup> Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. <sup>25</sup> And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*

We have been given a mission. But we are not alone! We are a part of a team. What might God want to accomplish in and through us together if we follow his instruction and guidance? If we hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm? I'm looking forward to finding out!

Will you pray with me? O Creator and mighty God, You have promised strength for the weak, rest for the laborers, light for the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love. O Creator and mighty God, help us to continue in your promises. Amen.

Thank you again for the honor to lead.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mark Thompson*