



crossroads farm

Down on the Farm



The Quarterly Newsletter of Crossroads Farm
July, August, September 2024

Relationships of a Servant Leader



When student leaders and adult volunteers willingly give up their time, their focus and their preferences in order to win their lost world to Jesus Christ, we could be on the verge of a revival.

Nearly 100 Crew (student leaders) and Coaches (adult volunteers) started the first full weekend in September at their own branches for prayer, an overview of the year long training, Arms of a Servant Leader, food and fun together.

"I feel like I am walking away with a solid impression of both the weightiness and the beauty of the ministry and my future role in it."
- Shelby, Coach, 1st year

The next morning had branches on the road

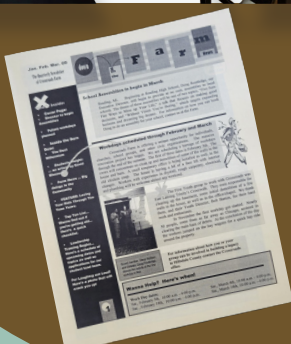
early and by lunch time, we were all together as one unified Leadteam.

Main stage sessions included topics like, Staying in It for the Long Haul, Student Needs and Your Roll. Breakout sessions included topics like, How to Fix Your Marriage in 30 Seconds, Discussion Group Effectiveness, and How To Share Jesus in the Bathroom. Of *(continued on page 6)*

"Love it - such a good refresher before another big year."
- Ellerie, Coach, 6th year



Scan here for Leadteam faces.



In case you didn't get the memo, Crossroads Farm celebrated 25 years in May! As a special feature, until we turn 26, we will be inserting one of our first four newsletters ever published in sequential order. Please enjoy these significant opportunities to see the past and the present side by side, and to pray into the future even while reading them. May we keep in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:25). 🙏



Kick-off



Scan Here
for a
Kick-off
Greeting

CRF The Shed - Hillsdale County, MI

Amidst a few hundred pounds of color powder, 150+ snow cones, walking tacos, a room full of new shoes, and a perfect summer evening, 116 students were challenged to consider "Would I listen if God spoke?" New 6th graders, like Alya (a 6th grader from an RCI church who was super nervous), found their care cell leaders and made immediate friends. Seniors brought classmates who hadn't been to CRF for years. Even the most reserved students couldn't resist the pull of the Color War and found themselves coated head to toe. Seven RCI (Rural Church Initiative for whom Crossroads Farm is their youth ministry) Pastors built relationships by driving the bus, greeting students, and handing out shoes. Crew (students leaders) inspired from the stage and led by example. All of this was done so students had the chance to hear about Jesus.



CRF The Lanes - Kalkaska County, MI

As the night wrapped up, a sweaty-headed 6th grade boy was walking out the door to hop on the bus. As I held up my hand for a high-five I asked, "Well, did you have a good time?" The high five came with an extra heavy slap as he broke out into a massive grin and replied, "Yeah, that was the best night ever. I can't wait until next week!" Our prayer is that all 99 students will be back to ask big questions of a big God who has big answers!

(continued on page 5)



Crossroads Farm at Camp

"I felt alive at Club. The singer's voice sounded like an angel. When we prayed, I felt like I heard God speak to me."
-8th grade boy (his first ever CRF experience)

July 7-12 found CRF students of all branches, together, for a week of summer camp at Spring Hill! Together is better. Thank you to those of you who prayed and gave towards this life changing opportunity. 100 strong learning, growing, and playing together for a week is such a gift. 🌟

(photos and quotes continued on page 3)

("Crossroads Farm at Camp" continued from page 2)

What was the most
impactful part of
camp?

What is something
you learned from
the Bible?



You don't
have to be
doing great
for God to still
be there for
you.
-10th grade
girl



Worship &
campfire.
-8th grade
boy



Scan here
for a
small glimpse
of camp life.

That we
are His
most
valuable
possession.
-8th grade
girl



I have a
purpose.
-8th grade
boy



I felt God's
presence and
I started
crying.
-11th grade girl



God
loves us
no matter
what.
-8th grade
boy





From the Desk of the President

September 2024

crossroads farm

Getting to the Other Side

Luke 8:22 One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out.

I have been preaching this passage for nearly two months.

When I began, I was in the middle of a series of personal storms which had been pummeling my little boat for the better part of the spring and summer. My objective was simply to get across to the other side.

I had forgotten a few critical components of my weatherized journey.

1. I wasn't the only one in the boat.
2. I didn't know where the boat was heading in the first place.
3. I regarded the storm as either an inconvenience, an impediment or an enemy to be vanquished.

...But God has been doing a work on the way to wherever he intends for this boat to land. This fall has been one of new landing sites.



All three of our branches began their ministry year last week, and what a week it was. Almost 270 students arrived back into our ministries in one wave of anticipation. As I watched, I felt a certain thrill over the sense that without this brave group of leaders, these students could not, and would not be able to bash cars, colorize each other, mount an amazing game of 25 square, or any of the things that have become synonymous with CRF fall!

This should be a breakout year.

We spent the weekend with nearly 100 volunteers at our annual Leadteam Training Retreat. I was overwhelmed again by what these young leaders represent in the hope of student spiritual foundation. The time ate with no leftovers (a slang expression which means exceeded expectations...). You're welcome.

Days later, Dawn and I began our emphasis on the "Next" season for us. We drove to Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana to present the CRF vision to a youth ministry class, then to teach at chapel. It was an incredible lift for us. At our lunch, following the class, one of the students invited another to join us at our table. We spent the next two hours laughing, asking, exploring and sharing what God is doing with each of the seven students there.

Pray for the possibility of some of these students coming to join the CRF teams.

The next morning, just before chapel, one of our Crossroads alumni students surprised us. She had graduated from Grace the year before and seeing our name on the chapel schedule, took the day off work, traveled a few hours with her parents and boyfriend to be at the Chapel. Following the service, another CRF alumni came up to us. It is truly humbling to realize that years later CRF kids draw identity from this ministry. Pray for these young adults as they bring the influence of Jesus into their families, workplaces and classrooms.

We will be heading back to Grace in a couple of weeks to present our model to an upper level ministry class and present CRF to the student population at their annual missions conference. Our team will be attending small group activities as well as campus wide events in the effort to build meaningful relationships with students, faculty and administration with the college. Dawn will be attending a conference on benevolent giving in the Carolinas with one of our directors from The Lanes, Jerry Bernard.



Immediately before that, Jabin Umfleet, our Director in Training for Montana and I will be attending the Fuel Conference in Indianapolis. Along with a main stage presentation, we will be setting up our CRF info booth, leading a breakout session, and hosting a lunch discussion on rural ministry.

It'd be easy to look past each of these special opportunities as infringements on our sleep schedule, but instead we are excited about being in the boat with the master. When we look past the storms, boat mates and present conditions, we negate our acknowledgement of God being present in the NOW. Looking to the other side before we get there gives God a vacation He never takes in this moment. Sure. There is hope on the horizon, but what the disciples, and I contend most of us miss, are the miracles in progress. The miracle of birth is preceded by the miracle of pregnancy. The supernatural transformed person has been engaged in the miracle of transformation. God is working in the middle of our storms. He is not merely riding it out with us, but bound to the destination with us.

Romans 8:18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.



These next years for CRF will be a constant stress on the hull of our boat. I cannot help but to lean in as each wave breaks on our bow. How many rural students does God intend to reach. What a hope for rural America must exist for Him to take us to the deep water.

Anyone want a ride? We're in the boat and heading to the other side. Buckle up! 🚗



("Kick-off..." continued from page 2)

CRF The Mine - Harrison County, OH

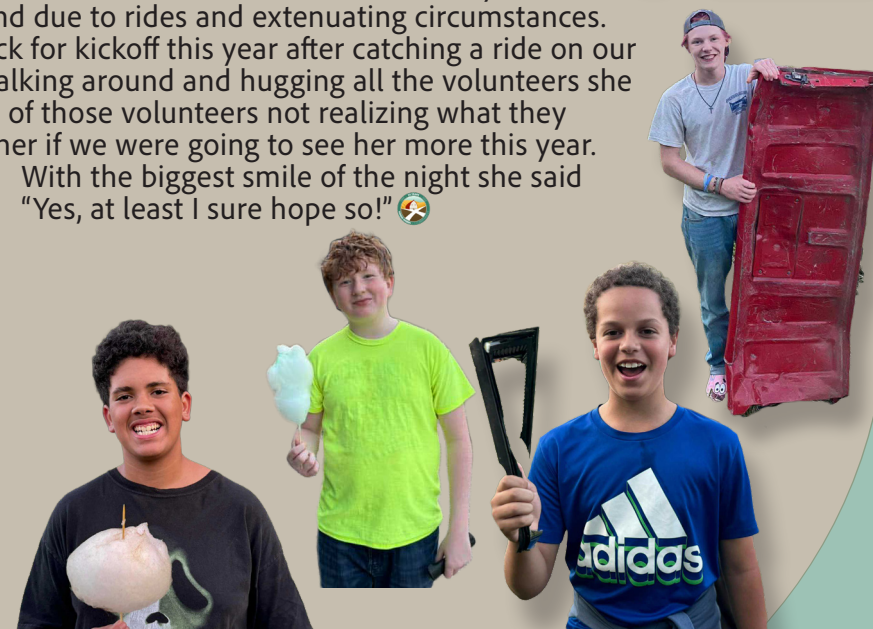
Throughout the night, many students had large smiles. Some smiles were because we gave them a sledgehammer to hit a car, and some smiles were due to the unlimited supply of cotton candy being served by our volunteers. The smile that hangs in my head is the one of a particular 8th grade girl's face. She came every week the first semester we started, but last year she wasn't able to attend due to rides and extenuating circumstances. Thankfully, she was back for kickoff this year after catching a ride on our new bus route. After walking around and hugging all the volunteers she missed last year (some of those volunteers not realizing what they meant to her), I asked her if we were going to see her more this year. With the biggest smile of the night she said "Yes, at least I sure hope so!" 🚗




Working for Sunday: Student Spotlight



Scan Here for an interview with Emma.



("Relationships of a Servant Leader" continued from page 1)

course there was a good dose of play and simply sharing time with one another, connecting with those from other branches, growing in relationship and "spurring one another on to love and good deeds" (Heb. 10:24). There was even an Amazing Race filled with CRF trivia. The highlight of the weekend was the Commissioning Service with a challenge from God's Word and prayer with an anointing of oil. 

"I really felt the presence of God in the building. I am so blessed to have this opportunity to become more equipped by you guys."
- Jesse, Coach, 2nd year



For the ongoing work in the lives of rural youth, special gifts were given:

In Memory Of
G. Douglas Routledge, Sr



Crossroads Farm
5520 W. Card Road
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Loving The Rural Teenager



Prayer Closet

Yahoos:


- A great summer of ministry with rural youth
- The provision of luggage trailers for all branches of the ministry



- The Leadteam and missionary staff God has provided for this school year

"Everytime I get the newsletter, I immediately read the Yahoos and Take it to Jesus and pray in agreement."
-Donor/Ministry Partner

Take It To Jesus:

- The funded vans to be realized for each branch (manufacturer delay)
- Student and staff growth through the teaching theme this school year: "Monster Questions That Eat Your Faith" as we tackle hard questions through God's Word
- An Administrative Director for CRF The Ranch, Rosebud County, MT 

Jan. Feb. Mar. 00

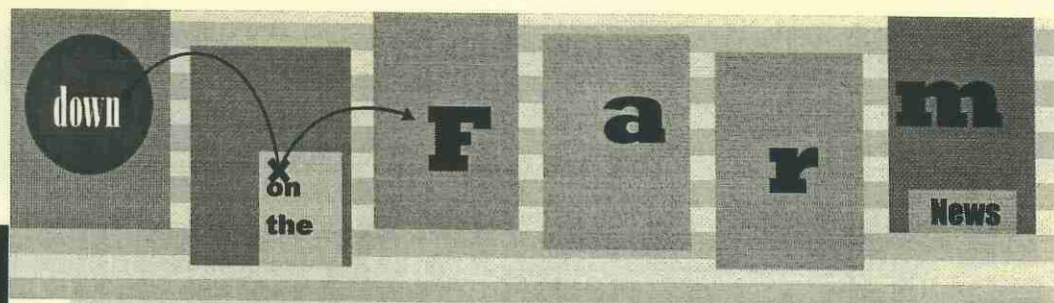
The Quarterly Newsletter
of Crossroads Farm



What's Inside:

- **Cover Page:**
- **Director to begin Assemblies**
- **Future workdays planned**
- **Inside the Barn Door:**
 - **The Next Millennium**
- **Students Insight:**
... an article by David Blossom
- **Farm News ... Big doings in the Community**
- **FEATURE: Loving Your Kids Through The Teen Years.**
- **Top Ten List...**
Wanna find out if you're getting old... Here's a quick checklist.
- **Leadership Training Begins...**
Here's a schedule of upcoming dates and topics as well as applications for our student lead team.

For Laughing out Loud!
Here's a photo that will crack you up!

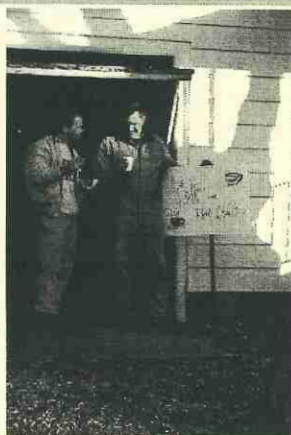


School Assemblies to begin in March

Reading, Mi. Beginning at Reading High School, Doug Routledge, our Executive Director, will begin to provide at no cost, assemblies to local schools. The theme of these assemblies will be one of two topics, "Five Sure Fire Ways to Mess up Your Life," a talk that focuses on making good decisions, and "Without Vision You're Boring," which targets expanding horizons and dreaming big dreams. For information on how you can book Doug to do an assembly for your school, contact us at the Farm.

Workdays scheduled through February and March

Crossroads Farm is offering a unique opportunity for individuals, churches, school groups, and other civic organizations. The massive renovation project has begun. We are scheduling a barrage of workdays through the end of the summer. The first of these dates is February 5th. The crews will concentrate on clean up and demolition of some of the walls in the house and barn. A small temporary office is being installed as well, in the old chicken coup. The house is having a bit of a face lift with interior changes. Workers with experience in drywall, rough carpentry, electrical, and plumbing will be welcome almost any weekend.



Board member, Steve Mattson, and Director, Doug Routledge, discuss the activity at the first workday in Nov.

The First Youth group to work with Crossroads was East Lansing Trinity's Crosswalk. They were responsible for cleaning up the basement, some initial demolition of a few walls in the house, as well as in the office/chapel. We thank them, and their Youth Director, Bob Barton, for their hard work and enthusiasm.

In November the first workday got started. Nearly 50 people, some from as far away as Chicago, assisted in clearing the main barn of debris. At the conclusion of the day the workers jumped on the hay wagons for a quick hay ride around the property.

For information about how you or your group can be involved in building a legacy in Hillsdale County contact the Crossroads office.

Wanna Help? Here's when!

Work Day dates:

Sat., February 5th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sat., February 19th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sat., March 4th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sat., March 18th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Next Millennium

SPEAKING AT
A SCHOOL
NEAR YOU!



It has been said of William the Conqueror that he had the ability, "to appraise the true significance of events, "and that he never failed to make good on the fickle promises of fortune."

Einstein was recently named the man of the century by Time magazine. Among those most noted for their great achievements in the second millennium A.D. were William the Conqueror, Genghis Khan, and Martin Luther. These names bring me to consider the measure of true greatness. In the next thousand years, what will the most notable accomplishments of man include?

As Dawn and I begin our own assault on the next thousand years, we have determined this one thing; the measure of a person's greatness is determined by the greatness of their vision. Truly great vision is vision that can capture the imagination of the masses. The Bible states that "without vision the people cast off restraint." Whatever the next thousand years hold, they must hold to a great vision. Without a vision that captures the imagination of man, we will throw off any rules or conformities. The vision that carries humanity through the next thousand years is a God sized vision. Crossroads is offering a motivational talk series called, "Setting Your Sights On The Impossible." Call the Crossroads office for booking information.

You Know You're getting old If...

10. The flares on your pants are on the beltline.
9. You remember taking the S.A.T. in Latin, on stone tablets, or never did.
8. You believe the print in the newspaper is getting smaller.
7. You are sure that they are making stairs steeper these days.
6. You think Willard Scott is a funny man.
5. Your waist size is greater than your inseam length and you don't care.
4. Two words...Miracle Ear
3. You still use the words, records, type, and trousers.
2. You exercise without relying on an on-board computing system.
1. You remember when the 10 commandments first came out.

I'm down with those
DixieChicks, by cracky!



Students Perspective

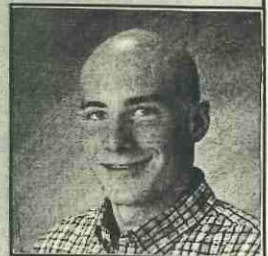
Giving Hillsdale County Students a chance to be heard

Here To Help

Returning home after visiting friends last Friday night, my friend Scott and I were about a mile from home when we came across a person standing in the middle of the road. Scott swerved to avoid him and as we drove by, I looked down in the ditch by the side of the road and saw a minivan on its side with the roof crushed. Realizing what had happened, I told Scott to turn around and go back.

We parked the car and quickly ran to the van. Lying in the ditch was the driver. When we arrived, there was only one other person at the scene, a waitress from a local tavern, the only person the crash victims knew, as they were from Chicago.

Sliding down the snowy slope, Scott and I took our coats off and threw them on the driver to help keep him warm. We stayed with the man, talking to him to keep him conscious, as we shivered in the freezing temperatures.



David Blossom is a junior at Reading High School. He is also a new member of Crossroads Farm Student Lead Team. For more information about Lead Team, keep reading.



The Bible reminds us that children are to obey their parents. The student's job is to obey. The parents job is to guide and love.
Eph. 6:1-4

"Raise up a child in the way he should go and in the end he will not depart from it!"
Proverbs 22:6



Loving your Kids Through the Teen Years

Give me Help! I can't handle them anymore! I don't know how you can do the job you do. It's better you than me. You must be very patient.

These are a few of the statements that I hear from parents as I explain what I do for a living. You'd think that I had just described working with pit vipers or wild lions. Some parents seem to have an aversion to their own kids. Others feel hurt and ignored. Some scratch their heads a lot. Can I pass on a few timeless secrets of not only surviving your kids teen years but actually enjoying them? Before you lock your kids up in a box only to be released at their 18th birthday, as Mark Twain suggested, read this!

Moody and Irrational: A recent U.S. News and World Report described some of the bio-chemical factors in a teenagers growth. It detailed that by early adolescence kids have a fully developed limbic system. This is the part of the brain that gives us the ability to feel extreme emotion and to enjoy thrill. At the same time however, kids have an underdeveloped pre-frontal cortex. This is the part of the brain that directs traffic in the brain. It gives us perspective.

Essentially, this means that kids are going to be far more moody than adults, (perish the thought) while being unable to put their moods into perspective. This would be why a zit on picture day may as well be a death in the family, or why a kid is likely to beat someone up over a stolen twinkie. Your kids don't quite have all the pieces of the adult puzzle yet. But the good news is that you can help them develop that Pre-frontal cortex! Don't allow this to be an excuse for bad behavior.

But How Do we do That?: The answer is that we as parents need to be a bit better prepared for the confrontations with our kids. Here are some great ideas:

1. Time will give the perspective your kids need. Give them a few minutes to express their emotions. Set rules for their expression. As a parent you can explain that although you will try to understand how they feel, they, like you, have a responsibility to assist in the peace at home. Destructive blow ups will not be tolerated. Many times we as parents desire to get the quickest possible resolve to a situation. After all, our kid is hurting. The reality is that a few minutes alone might help our child put some perspective on this crisis. Obviously, some crises will need to be solved right away, but most often, a little time can't hurt. Don't wait until the next blow up though. Begin to work on these things in advance.

2. Remind yourself that for your son or daughter this is a time to test independence. Remind them that this is a time for you to protect them. Kids still want that. They need some firm barriers that they cannot break down. Don't be surprised when they test them. This step will take some very clear principles that both of you must agree on. You as a parent set them. Your child must agree to live by them.

Trust is the product of their conduct. What they are trying to build in you for themselves is trust. They will benefit more freedom as they build trust with you.

Start them out early. Give them chances to build trust when they are in their early teens. Set up times for them to call you when they are out. Establish homework rules. Explain what you expect on a report card and then help them get those grades. Become an acquaintance with their teachers and friends' parents. Let them know that a curfew, or how they spend an allowance, helps to build the most valuable commodity in parent/student relationships: trust!

3. Stick to the plan. Consistency and unity are the most important tools in the parents tool box. Make sure that you live up to your own expectations. Keep your promises. Agree as parents whenever possible. Once it has been established that you (you) are serious about the rules they (they) will get serious about the rules.

4. Invest in the fun side of your kids. If they are involved at school, then go and watch them! Let them know that you are proud of them. If they are funny then laugh at them. That's what clowns want. If they are studious then study with them or ask to see what they are working on. Don't miss these opportunities for deposits into their lives.

As you learn to love them for who they are becoming they will become the people that you love.....more next newsletter!



CROSSROADS FARM

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Adult Training Dates and Topics

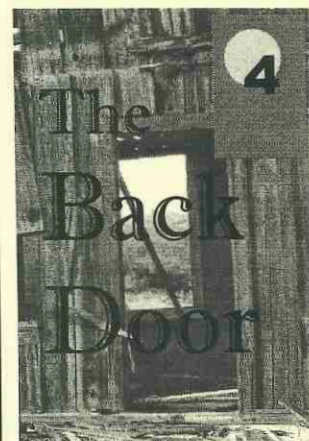
1:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 26th ...Why Bother?
Saturday, March 25th ...Getting Started

Student Lead Team Training

10:00 a.m.

Saturday, February 26th...What is This!?
Our first session together!
Saturday, March 25th...Making it real.



Continued from "Here To Help" p 2

After almost ten minutes, the police and ambulance finally arrived.

It is an awesome feeling to help someone who is in dire need of your assistance. We did not have to stop that night, but because we understood that someone needed our help, and because we had compassion for them, we chose to stop. I know that Crossroads Farm will be able to demonstrate to other students in Hillsdale County that love and compassion for others is extremely important. Just as God loved us enough to give his Son, we need to learn to sacrifice for the benefit of others.

If you are a high school or junior high school student and have an idea for an article - write or email it to us. You may be in the next newsletter! (IBM windows or microsoft formats on floppy disc are helpful.)

Doug's Speaking Schedule

Sunday, Jan. 23rd, Mason 1st Baptist Church
Tuesday, Jan. 25th, Hillsdale County Exchange Club
Wednesday, Jan. 26th, Southfield Christian School
Jan. 28-30th, Crosswalk High School Retreat
Sunday, Feb. 6th, Mason 1st Baptist Church
Feb. 11-13th, Camp Barakel
Feb. 18-20th, Camp Barakel
Sunday, Feb. 27th, Mason 1st Baptist Church
Saturday, Mar. 11th, North Reading Baptist Church, Sonlife Foundations Training
For information about this special seminar and it's cost - call the church.
Wednesday, Mar. 29th, Reading High School Assembly



Workdays and Training Days...For You? YES!

If you are interested in helping us build a miracle then please come out to one of our workdays. Bring a group!

We also are offering free training for anyone interested in working with teenagers! Please call the Crossroads office in order to reserve a spot! Please check out the dates above and then come on down to the Farm!

For Laughing out Loud

We stand Corrected! In our Top Ten list in the last newsletter, we stated that one of the ways to tell that you are a city slicker is that..."You accidentally saddled a cow". One of our readers, Doug Sanford Sr., has proven to us that not only city slickers saddle their bovine. Here is an old photo just in case you're skeptical.

We wonder what Mr. Sanford would get pulled over for if he used his bull to get to work. Well, of course it would be a "MOOOving" violation!

If you have a funny story that you'd like to share, mail it to us and mark it "Attn. Laughs"



Hey! Watch for our new logo and design! You'll be seeing it in the next couple of mailers!

The Foundations Seminar is offered by NRBC in conjunction with Sonlife. There is a cost for materials. It is a study based on the first year and a half of Jesus ministry. The course will give you practical tools for growth level ministry with teenagers. It is also suitable for student leaders. (517) 283-3185. Speak to Pastor Jeff Conolly.