

Subject: FW: A prayer request for Young Life
Importance: High

Friends and Family:

As many of you may know for the past few years I have had the privilege of serving with a Local Ministry called Young Life. Through this ministry I have had the opportunity to see God do amazing things in the lives of those around me, while at the same time He has shaped who I am in the process.

Today is a sad day for those associated with Young Life and for the Students who God has placed in our lives. Below is an email we just received concerning our ability to continue to work with the students of Sullivan County. Please take a moment to read and then join us in praying for the requests mentioned below.

-----Original Message-----

Subject: A prayer request for Young Life

Hello friends and family of Young Life,

We are just finishing what has been an incredible year for Young Life. This year Young Life has been growing and high school kids' lives have been changed because of it. It has been so exciting to see how Young Life leaders have given their lives away for the sake of the gospel and have invested deeply into the lives of teenagers. Also, we launched Wyld Life, Young Life for middle school students. Amazing is all that I can say to explain what has happened with Wyld Life. The beautiful thing is that we have trained high school students who are walking with Christ to invest in the lives of middle school students. This has been a wonderful thing for both the middle school and high school students. The middle school students have a high school student loving them with the love of Christ and the high school students are learning in a very tangible way how to give away their lives for the sake of the gospel. I am very excited and grateful for the year that we have had.

With that said, we have obviously been doing some things right. Today I received a phone call from one of the high schools where we have Young Life. A letter had been sent to the Superintendent of Sullivan County Schools from The Freedom From Religion Foundation complaining about Young Life's presence in the local high schools. The letter accuses Young Life and the schools of violating the separation of church and state. The letter states that YL actively evangelizes on the school campus, which is a false allegation. The FFRF took the things that YL states on it's

website that we do to reach kids and used it out of context and assumed that we did those things on the high school campus, ie. sharing the gospel.

In response to this letter, the superintendent has banned Young Life leaders and other Youth Pastors from the school campus during school hours, which would mean no more lunch visits. This ruling would not be the end of Young Life by no means, but it would be an obstacle for us to build relationships with kids. I spoke with two of the three principals today and they were both very encouraging and supportive of the role that Young Life has played at their schools, but they must now follow this policy. Today my heart has been full of a few different emotions, but I have constantly been reminded of Jesus' words, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matt 5:11-12) We plan to respond to this, but I want to do this in a very Grace-filled and loving way. I do not want to be reactionary in our response, but I want to be deliberate and seek the counsel of the Lord and hear how and when He wants us to respond.

So, would you please join me in praying for this situation? Pray that God would give us the wisdom in how and when to respond. Please pray for the superintendent. Pray that God will change his heart towards this decision. Pray for those at the Freedom From Religion Foundation that they may know Christ and His loving kindness. Please continue to pray for God to bless the ministry of Young Life and continue to provide the opportunity to reach kids in our community. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel,

Young Life
Area Director