

Opening: Where are all of our youth?

- Within the church we often look around, wondering where the youth are in our church.
- Well I think it's safe to say that we found them- at least 5,000 of them that is
 - They are a part of our church, and while you may not see large numbers of them every Sunday, FPC supports them
 - And in doing so we help our young people develop amazing leadership and spiritual growth.
 - Never was that truer than this past July 16 through 20th, as this church sent a delegation of 4 youth and 1 adult to the Presbyterian Youth Triennium, held at Purdue University for an amazing opportunity to gather with 5,000 high school youth to worship, eat, serve, and play together.
- On Monday, July 15, we joined with 70 youth from the presbyteries of Northern Kansas and Heartland for a long bus ride to West Lafayette, Indiana.
 - The journey was long and uneventful and rather heavy downpour arrived just in time to welcome us to West Lafayette.
- The theme for this year's Triennium was "Here's my heart," based on the hymn "Come, thou fount of every blessing"
- Drawing from the words of the hymn, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing, the theme expresses our deepest desire to be part of something bigger and more beautiful than the tiny flicker of our own candles.
 - It speaks of passion and identity. It speaks of purpose and action.
 - A variety of sub-themes were developed from the feelings expressed in the hymn's lyrics.
 - Day 1: Tune My Heart- asking God to tune the heart of each person to sing out the praise of God's wonder and glory
 - Day 2: Jesus Sought Me- Used the story of Zacchaeus as a reminder of how God knows us and pursues us as we truly are, not as we want to be or pretend to be.

- We were reminded that Zacchaeus made a promise to Jesus to give away half of his possessions to the poor.
- In response, the offering that day raised \$26,213 to assist with the rebuilding of a Presbyterian camp in Puerto Rico.
- Day 3: Prone To Wander- A reminder that on our faith journey, we are prone to get lost and yet God still pursues us out of abundant compassion
 - The ancient prophet said, “All we, like sheep, have gone astray”
- Day 4: Here’s My Heart- As Jesus Walks on Water and Peter Steps Out of the Boat, offering his heart to Jesus, we are reminded of our calling to offer Jesus our heart and to place our lives in his.
 - We shared Communion as a group-
 - Here at FPC, we experienced that Communion by intinction can be a bit of a confusing process.
 - Well, that pales in comparison to doing Communion by intinction with 5,000 people jammed into an auditorium
 - That my friends, is a fire-drill.
 - Another cool thing about worship on day 4 was the balloon backdrop
 - Each small group had built a small panel of balloons with prayer written, which where fit together to display the “Here’s My Heart” Triennium logo- that was totally cool!
- Day 5: Take and Seal It- We enthusiastically open our arms wide and say “Here’s My Heart”
 - Our Triennium experience marks the beginning of our adventure.
 - Words of commissioning: “So go from this place and sing out the song that is your life. Go from this experience and refused to be defined by what you have done or who others think you are. Go, and know that God seeks and welcomes us back when we lose our way. Go, and take heart, trust and have courage. Go, and be witnesses of the love that has encountered, embraced and transformed you this week. May you rediscover and recommit your heart to the very heart of God.”

One of the many amazing experiences of Triennium is the daily worship

- Each afternoon the entire assembly would gather and explore one of the sub-themes of Triennium

- There is something rather energizing about thousands of young people lined up to get into worship
- And it is heart-swelling to experience 5,000 people on their feet applauding and cheering as a preacher delivers God's message.

Another amazing thing about Triennium is the friendships you gain

- There are no strangers at Triennium.
 - Anyone at any time may walk up to you and ask "Where are you from"?
 - We all trade souvenir pins representing our area of the country and that provides a great opening for getting acquainted.
- We all begin the week not knowing each other and end the week as friends

The music at Triennium was as always, awesome

- The band "The Nettletons" were awesome.
 - They were part folk, part contemporary Christian blended together in a vibrant and creative sound.
- On one particular day the singing group known as the "Soul Children of Chicago" were brought in for worship and also for a concert later that evening
 - This world class performance group, under the direction of Mr. Walt Whitman has one purpose: to utilize music as the motivator and catalyst to inspire young people throughout the world to have faith in themselves, each other and God.
 - And they totally rocked the house with their Gospel and Soulful sounds

Our group shares their experience

- I would like to invite our delegation members to come forward and share just a little bit about their experience
 - What did you guys like best about Triennium?
 - What will you remember most?
 - Is your world any different now, having experienced Triennium?
 - Getting to know new friends
 - Experiencing God's presence through new and exciting worship
 - We can carry those with us along our faith journey

Close with music

- You know, the music in the evenings as we were sitting together in the stairwell was heartwarming and awesome!
 - Sitting there, listening as Samantha played the guitar and our group sang along, was a peaceful and relaxing conclusion to the day
 - And it really brought our group closer together
- As we close this message, we'd like to end with a little bit of music, reminiscent of the time we shared at Triennium, just hanging out and singing.
 - The song is a contemporary version of our closing hymn for today's worship
 - It serves as a reminder that while our styles of worship may change over time, we still worship the same God, who's compassion and grace, never changes.
- **Sing Come Thou Fount (I Will Sing)**