

Teen Factor Ministry Comments

December 2008



Director's Column

About two months ago we moved one of the bird feeders we have out onto a line running between our home and a tree so the squirrels couldn't get to the bird food. It took about three days for one of the squirrels to figure out that he can jump from a neighboring tree onto the line and balance himself to reach the feeder. It's one of the most amazing things I've ever seen. What's even more amazing, is the fact that only one squirrel has been able to accomplish this task. The other squirrels are content to gather the seed from the ground from around the feeder.

Over the years I've seen the same philosophy with some of our teens. Some are able to overcome the challenges of life with little difficulty, some are content to stand on the sidelines, yet others want to overcome but don't know what tree to climb.

Peter was challenged in many of the same ways our teens are. Peter asked if he could get out of the boat, Christ said come on, but he still sank (Matt 14:29). Teens always seem ready to try something new—but some are afraid, others rise to the challenge, while some struggle to do the right thing. Peter was always on the front lines with Christ, but when times got tough, he denied Him multiple times.

Some of our teens who are struggling with hurts and hang-ups in their lives, often struggle to do the right thing. They want to, but outside influences misdirect their perspective. Like Peter, they see the wind and the waves, and take their vision off Christ.

Over the few years with Christ, Peter was the most outspoken about his faith and he was also the most challenging. He was out there with his faith and yet he denied Him in the end. Yet, Christ still was able to use him to be His rock (Matt. 16:18).



TEENFACTOR
...that they may be restored.

Our teens who struggle today may be the ones who become the closest to Christ. We need to look at everyone through the eyes of Christ. Where we see a problem child or a teen out of control, Christ may just be seeing his next Peter. It's up to us to use our God given abilities to help lead them into a relationship with Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill".

William "Bill" Wheelhouse
Executive Director

Macy's Shop For A Cause

Teen Factor recently had the honor of participating as a local charity in Macy's Shop For A Cause Day. Every year Macy's holds this annual event for local, small business and non-profits. Customers are able to purchase 20% off coupons in advance via a donation to their local charitable cause. In this case, Teen Factor was able to not only sell Shop For A Cause coupons, but also provide its presence at Lakeforest and Montgomery Malls.



Varying shifts of people served throughout the day Saturday, Sept. 20, engaging shoppers, answering questions, and passing out packets of informa-

tion. Several shoppers stopped to converse and others signed up to receive our monthly newsletter.

faith communities and government can come together to fight against poverty in Montgomery County.



Also, those who purchased coupons had the opportunity to be entered into a \$500 shopping spree. We are delighted to report that one of our supporters, Mary Jo Ellis, won the shopping spree at the Lakeforest Mall location.

On Sunday, Nov. 16 a community dialogue was held, "Faithfulness Together: Conversations about Justice, Mercy and Self-sufficiency in a Diverse County." The program highlighted a variety of leaders from multiple faiths who constructively discussed ways to reach the needs of those who are hungry, emotionally lost, homeless and hopeless.



Small Group Update

Teen Factor is helping teens and their families discover, or rediscover, the power of Christ through a mutual support group.

Teen Factor was able to participate in this dialogue with many other faith leaders in our community.

"Our invitation to the event was due to the work we do with the local teens here in Montgomery County," Bill says. "The county liaison invited Teen Factor to come and dialog with other community leaders about underserved teens and how we can work together to overcome those challenges."



Our support group is targeted specifically for students in middle school through high school age, and is based on the Beatitudes from the Bible.

Teen Factor continues to be involved in supporting county-wide initiatives such as these.

New Board of Director

Teen Factor is proud to announce the newest addition to our board of directors, Mike Hoopes. Mike has been serving with Teen Factor since its inception. Currently he is employed at MedImmune as Director of Medical Information. He graduated from Ohio Northern University with a B.S. in Pharmacy and holds a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Duquesne University. He met his wife Janet, also a pharmacist, at ONU and were married in 1971. He and his wife have also been active volunteers at Church of the Redeemer since 1992. Join us in officially welcoming Mike the next time you see him.



This curriculum provides lifelong tools for students dealing with unresolved hurt and pain. Written by John Baker, Doug Fields and Megan Hutchinson, it was the result of seeing unmet pain in students from their youth ministry at Saddleback Church.

The Teen Factor small group now has a new time and place, meeting every Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. at the Wheelhouses. Please make note of the new change. For questions or more information regarding the small group, contact Bill Wheelhouse at billw@teenfactor.org or 301-948-3418.

Faithfulness Together Event

Montgomery County Executive Isaiah Leggett and his Office of Community Partnerships believes that

Teen Factor is a private, nondenominational Christian outreach ministry incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization in the State of Maryland. Formed in 2004 and based in Montgomery Village, Maryland, the organization is committed to rebuilding the lives of troubled teens in our community by providing the finest training, treatment, and care available within a Christian framework. We are also dedicated to building supportive family environments so teens can be reunited with their families. For more information visit www.teenfactor.org.