

Ministry News

FROM Len Evans

Does networking work?

This question is answered with an emphatic YES! in the newly-published book: Better Together: Discovering the Dynamic Results of Cooperation,

authored by Paul Fleischmann. The book is full of stories from 30-plus years of ministry, and highlights 11 compelling networking principles.

What happened last month in New England is a fresh example of three of the principles.

Twelve churches and organizations in the Fairfield County, Conn. youth network joined together for a weekend youth summit.

Due to an outstanding response, they had to go to upstate New York to find a retreat center big enough for the 380 youth and leaders who came!

As NNYM New England regional coordinator Mark Orr exclaimed, *“Indeed, great things happen when ministries work together and don’t care who gets the credit...other than Jesus, of course!”*

A brief weekend recap from youth pastor Jake Kircher, one of the Fairfield County network coordinators, who worked incredibly hard to organize and give leadership to the weekend:

- About 40 students made first-time commitments to Christ.



- Another 80-100 students made re-commitments to Christ.
- One of our participating partner ministries ran a prayer room. He quite literally prayed with and for kids and adults for six hours straight on Saturday... and then for a few more hours on Sunday.
- Jake shared, “Numerous students expressed powerful encounters in the prayer room! My favorite was passing a middle school girl who was holding her head and whimpering. I quickly asked her if she was okay, wondering if she had slipped on the ice. She responded through sobs, ‘I just came from the prayer room.’ I smiled and asked if that was a good thing. And she again responded through sobs, emphatically, ‘YEEEEAH, it was sooooo good.’”

Jake wrapped up his report, exclaiming, *“The weekend just could not be any more of a success! We are SO grateful to God for His amazing grace and blessing!”*

Won’t you be praying for Jake and the Fairfield County network, and other networks around the country, striving to

do so much more together than they can do alone?

What *Better Together* principles does this story illustrate?

Principle #1: Shared Purpose

When churches and youth organizations in a community come together to meet specific needs, God-sized things can happen. That was the case with the Fairfield youth network. Each church could have done their own retreat, but look how God honored their unified effort!

Principle #2: Humble Leaders

It's amazing what God can do through leaders who don't care who gets the credit. A well-known motto at Network meetings is "Let's check our logos and egos at the door."

Won't you be praying for humility among youth leaders? Pride is a constant temptation; for leaders to establish themselves, write the best blog, have the biggest youth group, etc. God calls us to die to ourselves and our egos.

Next month, we will host 50 or so national leaders for the annual Youth Ministry Executive Council. We invite these leaders to see what God wants us to do, united as brothers and sisters in Christ. **Please be praying for that purpose and humility to be evident.**

Principle #3: Grassroots Impact

The Network was born in meetings of national leaders who had a vision for reaching every young person. But our lifeblood is for youth workers in communities across America to participate and thrive in local youth networks.

To meet the growing number of networking opportunities, NNYM is adding to our team of staff leaders. In addition to launching two more staff in the Great Lakes region, and one in Idaho, we are in the

process with three more potential staff members in the Southeast, North Central (Iowa), and Northeast regions.

We sense that God is answering Jesus' admonition for us to pray for laborers, because "the field is white unto harvest." **Please join us in praying for these new staff members.** It's a long road to becoming a fully-funded NNYM staff person. We know that God calls, and is able to provide all that is needed.

If you are interested in reading more, we would love to send you a free copy of the *Better Together* book. Just call or email me with your request and I will get it on its way to you!

Pressing On

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3: 14

It can be easy to grow weary and lose sight of God's purposes in our lives. Because of your prayers, I'm able to press on to what God wants to do in Texas and New Mexico.

Keep Lovin' Jesus,

