

THE PARENT INSIDER

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The Freedom of Forgiveness Received

by Joel A. Kime

In the Gospels Jesus tells the story of a certain servant who owed millions of dollars to a king. When the king requested an accounting of the debt, the servant couldn't pay. The king ordered the servant, the servant's wife, children and all his possession be sold to pay the balance. Horrified, the servant fell on his knees before the king, pleading for time. The king, filled with pity, forgave the entire debt. The man left rejoicing until he bumped into another servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. The first servant violently demanded that this other servant pay him immediately. When the man could not, he had him thrown into prison until the debt was paid in full. Word of this got back to the king who called in the man he had forgiven. How could he have his enormous debt forgiven and then go out and choose not to forgive the small amount this other man owed him? The king, astounded and angry, reinstated the large debt and threw the man in prison until he paid every penny. Jesus' concludes by remarking, "That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if

you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters in your heart." (NLT)

It is a story familiar to us; perhaps too familiar. All of us can share probably numerous personal illustrations of broken relationships, bitterness, and grudges. We wonder when we'll ever experience the full life that Jesus promised he came to give us. Jesus skillfully used this parable to illustrate that full life should never include grudges or bitterness toward people for anything they do to us. Symbolically, and certainly in reality, forgiveness frees us. We see in the parable the joy of the first servant, who, if he had not received forgiveness from the king, would have remained locked in a prison, despairing for his lost wife and family and everything he had. Sadly, like us, he returned to that prison as a result of his inability to receive forgiveness and show it to others. I know from firsthand experience that this parable is true-to-life. I am that first servant.

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Youth Beat: Youth Culture Statistics

-Random Issues teens deal with

- ◆ A majority (3 to 1) of teenagers prefer churches with teachings relevant to their daily lives rather than those that teach the background of their faith.
- ◆ When asked, only 45% of church-going teens said that making a spiritual connection with God at church was very important to them.
- ◆ Teenagers are more likely than their parents to attend church, but less likely to pray or read their Bibles.

Inside this Issue

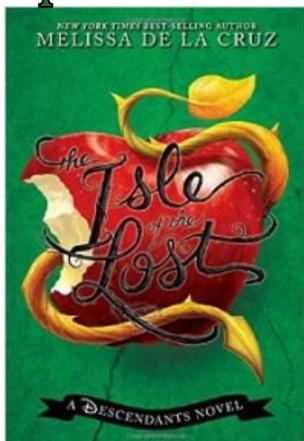
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Top Ten Books

Best Selling Books on Children's Middle Grade List 9/23/2015

1. *The Isle of the Lost* by Melissa de la Cruz
2. *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio
3. *Mal's Spell Book* by Disney Publishing
4. *Descendants* adapted by Rico Green
5. *A Long Walk To Water* by Linda Sue Park
6. *Max* by Boaz Yakin and Sheldon Lettich
7. *The Care and Keeping of You* by Valorie Schaefer
8. *The Princess In Black* by Shannon Hale and Dean Hale
9. *Counting By 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan
10. *Jurassic World* by David Lewman

Source: *The New York Times*



Youth Beat Continued

- ◆ One third of teens said their biggest reason for attending church is spending time with friends.
- ◆ 60% of twenty-somethings say that they were involved in church as a teenager but no longer are.
- ◆ Only 20% of kids maintain the same level of spiritual activity during their twenties that they did during their teenage years.
- ◆ Despite these numbers, a whopping 78% of young adults claim to be Christians.

Celebrity Quotes

“‘Nerd’ now is like someone discovering your favorite band. I was a nerd when nerd was nerd. OK? Alright? There was no reward. No one catered to us. We weren’t a demographic. We were a punching bag and a punch line. There was a movie called ‘Revenge of the Nerds’ because the nerds needed revenge because of all of the things that were happening to them. That’s a cultural artifact that people need to understand. ‘Revenge of the Nerds’ is proof that nerding has changed.”

– Stephen Colbert, talking about how he was a nerd before it was cool, *Time*, August 13, 2015

PRAYER CENTRAL:

Things to pray about with and for your kids

- Pray for our youth as they deal with peer pressure
- Pray for our youth that they learn to forgive and be forgiven
- Pray for parents as they teach and model forgiveness
- Pray for our friends, family and even strangers as they deal with difficult times

These are just suggestions to pray about. The whole idea is for you to pray with your kids so that it is always modeled in their life. Talk with them about the importance of a rich prayer life!

Verse of the Month

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

-Matthew 6:14-15

These words were spoken by Jesus while teaching His disciples to pray. Obviously forgiveness is extremely important to our Lord so it must be for us. Talk with your teen about forgiveness. Even better show them forgiveness by forgiving someone!

Cutting Edge Music:

Lana Del Rey- "Honeymoon"



Background: Elizabeth Woolridge Grant (born June 21, 1985),^[1] better known by her stage name Lana Del Rey, is an American singer, songwriter and model. Grant began songwriting at the age of 18,^[2] and signed her first recording contract with 5-Points Records in 2007. In 2015, she released her fourth studio album, *Honeymoon*. Del Rey's music has been noted for its cinematic style and its references to pop culture, particularly that of 1950s and 1960s Americana. The singer has described herself as a "gangsta Nancy Sinatra". She has claimed to draw influence from artists she deems to be "masters of their genre," as well as from poetry and film noir.^[4] Del Rey is the most streamed female artist on Spotify in the United States

What Parents should know about her new album: "Honeymoon" begins with a not-so-subtly cloaked message to those who would criticize Lana Del Rey's carefully cultivated coolness: "We both know that it's not fashionable to love me." Responding to her haters, the studiously detached Del Rey wraps herself in *meta*, commenting on critical comments that have surrounded her drama-queen persona since her career's inception. In his *Honeymoon* write-up, *New York Times* reviewer Jon Caramanica says, "She's been angry, and then bored of being angry, but now she's just bored. ... And so after four years in the limelight, here lounges Ms. Del Rey, immune to the gravitational pull of the discourse about her. Once a careful invention, she is now glassy-eyed and glassy-voiced, too cool to care." Caramanica adds, "She's not an ornate singer, but she achieves a great deal with only the many shades of exhaustion." Yes, *the many shades of exhaustion*. That's an apt summary of the weary emptiness brought on by Lana Del Rey's worldview. "It's all a game to me anyway," she brags breezily. But it's not really. Not for her. And not for those who listen to and identify with her fractured, injured and nihilistic take on life and romance.

For the full write up, visit www.pluggedin.com/musicreviews. Also, visit pluggedin.com for other music

Christian Artists

Christian Music Scene



Moriah Peters
New Christian Artist

Moriah Castillo Peters (born October 2, 1992) is an American contemporary Christian singer-songwriter born in Pomona, California and raised in Chino, California and Ontario, California. In 2012, Peters released the album entitled *I Choose Jesus*, her first full-length studio album. Peters was on *The Hurt & The Healer* tour with MercyMe and fellow artist Chris August, where she was the opening act for the two.^{[15][16]} Peters also toured with Tenth Avenue North, Audrey Assad, and Rend Collective Experiment in 2012 and 2013, during the "Struggle Tour". In August 2014 she was on the Air1 Positive Hits Tour. During the writing phase of the album project *I Choose Jesus*, Peters wrote 50 songs.^[16] Her inspiration for the album came from a myriad of places "including her family, her own relationship with Christ and experiences she's walked through with other young girls while leading her high school Bible study.

Featured Film: Newly Released in Theater



SYNOPSIS– The Martian

During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon) is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. Millions of miles away, NASA and a team of international scientists work tirelessly to bring "the Martian" home, while his crewmates concurrently plot a daring, if not impossible, rescue mission. As these stories of incredible bravery unfold, the world comes together to root for Watney's safe return. Based on a best-selling novel, and helmed by master director Ridley Scott, *THE MARTIAN* features a star studded cast that includes Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig, Kate Mara, Michael Pena, Jeff Daniels, Chiwetel Ejiofor, and Donald Glover.

Rated PG-13 for Injury Images, Brief Nudity and Some Strong Language

For more information on the movie check out www.Christianitytoday.com under their media section

Check out www.Christianitytoday.com for more information on new movie releases

Other Movies in Theaters

Title	Rating	Red Flags	Genre	Starring
Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials	PG-13	Extended Sequences of Violence, Action, Language, Some Thematic Elements and Substance Use	Action/ Adventure	Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Giancarlo Esposito, Aidan Gillen
The Walk	PG	Language, Brief Drug References, Thematic Elements, Perilous Situations, Smoking and Some Nudity	Drama	Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ben Kingsley, James Badge Dale, Ben Schwartz, Clément Sibony
Pan Open Oct. 9	PG	Language, Fantasy Action Violence and Some Thematic Material	Fantasy	Hugh Jackman, Rooney Mara, Amanda Seyfried

Cont.

In the fall of 1991 just eleven months after passing my driver's license test, I thought I was the best driver in the nation. I remember how much fun it was trying to push the limits. My parents' drive to church, for example, took about fifteen to twenty minutes; I did it once in eight. It was a video game to me rather than the responsibility it should have been. I hadn't gotten into any trouble, no tickets for speeding, no accidents because of recklessness, though I had a few close calls. But don't we all? On Sunday November 3rd, 1991, I went to church with my family and couldn't wait for it to be done so I could rush home, shovel down dinner, and leave to play football with the guys from church, our Sunday afternoon tradition. After lunch, my brother, Jeff, and I hopped into my parent's early 1980s AMC Concord station-wagon. Yellow with imitation wood grain paneling on the sides, it is a model hardly seen on the roads now twenty years after its manufacture. We picked up his friend, Chad, my friend, Dave, and sped over to Lancaster Christian School for the game.

I knew the back way to LCS very well because my brother, sister, and I all attended there through 8th grade. Part of that back way took us south on Kissel Hill Road just to the east of the Lancaster Airport. It was a beautiful fall day, cool, clear, and crisp. I clearly remember driving on the section of Kissel Hill Road between Millport Road and Oregon Road. As I came over the crest of one small hill, I hit the gas and we felt the car lurch into high gear. Sounding like I knew what I was talking about, I made some inane comment about the car "doing good today because it hit third gear at 70 mph." Dave, who hadn't yet put on his seatbelt, responded that he'd better do so! Little did he suspect that his caution might have saved his life. As he fumbled with the belt, I saw an Amish buggy about 100 yards in front of us in our lane, heading the same direction as us. I said to everyone in the car something like, "I'm going to blow by these guys." I thought I was so incredibly cool.

For those of us in Lancaster County, accustomed to the Amish community within our borders, the sight of Amish horse and buggies is commonplace. Lancaster is known world-wide as a hotspot of Amish culture. Thousands of tourists visit each year hoping to catch a glimpse of gray horse and buggies on the roads or of Amish families in their traditional black and blue outfits. Subject to religious persecution in Europe, the Amish journeyed to the New World in search of their own promised land. Their culture and customs have remained, for the most part, exactly as they were centuries ago when they first came to America. The Amish know English, for example, but talk amongst themselves in their Pennsylvania Dutch/German dialect. All Lancasterians can tell you stories about how their culture is changing incremen-

tally, but there is no denying that the Amish have maintained a traditional culture in the midst of a progressive one. The changes and pressures of a farming county that is rapidly blossoming into a wealthy suburban county have, however, over the last few decades, soured many Amish to their Lancaster County soil. As neighborhoods and business parks cover farmland, hundreds of Amish families have migrated to quieter farmlands in such places as Indiana and Mexico.

This small second exodus has done little to change the face of the Amish in Lancaster. Buggies are still regulars on country roads like that one I traveled. By and large, the American culture in Lancaster treats the Amish just as they do their slow-moving buggies, taking them for granted and passing them by. The standard legal practice for passing buggies is to slow down behind them, put your left turn signal on, verify that the left-hand lane is clear ahead, pull over the double-yellow lines into the left-hand lane, pass the buggy, put your right-turn signal on, and move back over the double-yellow into the right-hand lane. For some this drill is a nuisance: "They slow our progress. Their metal rims wear ruts into our roads, and their horses make a stinking mess everywhere." This minority view with its accompanying round of Amish jokes can be contrasted, as most Lancasterians will tell you, by the accurate description of the Amish as extremely hard-working, peaceful, and prosperous.

I stomped on the gas again, now doing about 70-75 mph and steered the car into the left lane to pass the buggy. As we raced closer to the buggy, I will never, ever forget seeing the nose of the horse turn out in front of me. Instantly I knew they were trying to turn in front of me. I hadn't looked for, nor had I seen their turn signal or the small country road they were attempting to turn left onto. Instinct took over as I pounded the brake pedal with my foot. The brakes locked and the car skidded forward, tires screaming. We smashed into the buggy, and I heard the POP of my windshield shattering into tiny pieces of glass. The buggy flew over top of the car and we rumbled to a stop in the field to the left. My hands, gripped tight to the wheel, were streaming with blood, but only from shards of windshield glass that grazed my knuckles. I still have a tiny scar in between two knuckles on my left hand, a constant reminder that basically nothing happened to me.

Dave never quite got his seatbelt buckled. When I hit the brakes, he grabbed the shoulder belt and held on with both hands. The belt locked and swung him around like Tarzan and his left shoulder hit the windshield. Possibly his shoulder, but maybe the buggy, broke the windshield. Other than soreness, though, neither he, Jeff, nor Chad was hurt. Dave's father, who visited the scene that evening after it was cleared, later told us that the skidmarks from the car quite visibly ran off the road, missing a telephone pole by about 12 inches. It all happened so fast, I do not even remember seeing a telephone pole.

After making sure everyone in my car was okay, I tried to open my door but the collision had jammed it shut. Just then an Amish man came running up to our car yelling frantically, "Does anyone know CPR? Does anyone know CPR?" At 17, I was the oldest in the car. I think Dave had a bit of training, but we were not prepared for what we saw after we got out. We walked down to the crash site, and there the Amish man was holding from behind the crumpled pile of what looked like his mother. She was severely injured, convulsing, and definitely missing teeth. I told Jeff and Chad to run to the nearest homes, which in that area were all farms, to find a phone and call 911. They sprinted across the fields, so riveted on getting to a phone that my brother never even saw the Amish lady. He remembers that the fields were recently plowed, as though he was running sluggishly on a sandy beach. A very frustrating prospect when all you want is to get to a phone as fast as possible. My brother's race to the phone is the first instance of many in which I realize the extreme pain my sin brought not only to the Amish family, but also to my family. Imagine being a 13 year old, running with all your might to get to a phone to call 911 because your older brother had caused an awful accident? Dave and I stayed and flagged down cars hoping someone might have a mobile phone, which at that time was still a rarity. I tugged at his shirt in desperation saying something like "What do we do?"

Eventually cars stopped, and a policeman and an EMT/ambulance crew came to scene. That was a huge relief for me. A family friend who was driving by picked Jeff up from the scene and dropped him off at our home. He was the first to inform my parents, and together with my dad returned to pick me up. On their way back to the accident they could see from a distance the car in the field, the buggy unrecognizable. Imagine the dreadful feeling of driving to the scene of devastation that your son caused. How that must have felt for my dad! As my dad and I sat in the back seat of the police cruiser, I don't remember much except fear and an overwhelming desire to tell the truth, to get what I knew was a weighty burden off my back. The officer gave my dad and me a few moments alone after I had blurted some initial details. We figured he left us to ourselves then so we could go over the details of the story together, possibly to come up with a spin that didn't make me so culpable for the accident. I knew it was horrible, so I told him exactly what happened, even that I was going at least 70 mph. They were able to confirm that later anyway by the length of the skid marks. I came to find out in the coming weeks that the officer was really impressed with my honesty. At the time I was simply scared to death of any further trouble. Lying was not an option. I didn't know if I was going to jail, the local juvenile detention center, Barnes Hall, or some other awful place. But the cop let me go home with my dad clearly stating that there would be follow up.

I'll never forget what my dad said in response to my rather tepid apologies as we drove away, "You've been through enough. We're not going to make it worse for

you." He was right, and I'm very glad for it. It was already bad, about to get worse. When we arrived at our house, less than five minutes away, my mom met me at the door. I must have spent the next half hour just crying on my mom's shoulder. As the news got out many family and friends showed their love and support by coming over to do nothing and everything at the same time: be there. The friends from church who we were on our way to meet stopped their football game and came over, dirty and disheveled from the game. Gradually a herd of my school and church friends migrated to our house to show support. That in itself was meaningful because I had rarely attempted to mix these two groups of people. I think they even prayed together.

As I was with my friends huddled downstairs in my basement, my parents called me upstairs to my bedroom to tell me that the police officer had just called with a report about the Amish lady who had been taken to the hospital. Due to permanent brain damage, she needed life support to stay alive. Since the Amish don't believe in life support, she died that night in the hospital. The horrible news began to pile on top of me. The Amish lady, the officer told us, wasn't the mother of the man. It was his wife. More than that, it was his newly-wed bride, and they had been on their honeymoon. They had only been married for 5 days, he was 21 years old, and she was 19. Traditionally, November is the Amish marrying season, and they were on their customary Amish honeymoon travels, visiting a few days in one relative's home then moving on to another and another and so on. In the midst of that bliss, she was dead, and I had killed her. It was, and still is by far, the worst day of my life. My mother recalls that she held me crying in her arms while my dad and brother sat next to me on the bed, and my 9 year old sister Laura was convinced I was going to jail! Eventually everyone left our house, but God and I talked long into the night.

The next day my parents let me stay home from school, and actually, one of my friend's parents let him stay home with me. He picked me up and we watched Monty Python videos to get our minds off the disaster. In the middle of Live at the Hollywood Bowl, my parents called. They had found out from my uncle, who had connections in the Amish community, that the viewing was going to be that day, and they told me that I was going. It was extremely frightening news. Yet it signals the depth of my parents' character. I know my dad later told people that it was the hardest thing they ever had to do. As a parent of a 6 and 5 year old now, I can hardly imagine what I would do if I was in their shoes. How would I handle this horrible thing my son did? How responsible would I feel? And what would my reaction be? Step by step through the process of dealing with my sin, my parents did everything right. In a world where so many want to shift blame, especially when their children mess up, my parents stood by me and guided me through handling this situation in a God-honoring, responsible and truthful manner.

That evening, my parents, my youth pastor (who had only been at our church for 3 months...it still amazes me that he came...another example of godly commitment), and I went to where we thought the viewing was going to be. I felt so nervous there was actually pain ripping across my guts. I didn't know what these people were like (shows how much this Lancastrian cared about the Amish sub-culture as I grew up around it) or what was going to happen. Would they come pouring out of the porch of the house with shotguns? That was literally the image in my mind. We got to the house and it didn't seem like anyone was home. We had mistakenly been given the location, not of the viewing, but of the husband's family's home. Some of his relatives were inside, and my mom remembers his grandmother coming out to meet us, hugging me and expressing her forgiveness. This kind gesture I do not recall, most likely due to the fact that in my mind the worst was yet to come. Amazingly the husband's father was there and needed a ride to the viewing. So we took him with us, and he led the way. The father, while very reserved, wasn't mean to us, and even expressed his forgiveness. But can you imagine driving to the viewing of your son's new wife with the family of the guy who was responsible for her death?

When we finally made it to the viewing, we saw Amish buggies parked all over the farm property, heightening my fear. This was a tragedy in the life of Lancaster's Amish community, drawing many to support the family and attend the viewing. A loss in what was supposed to be a joyful season made the front page of the local paper. Then the moment came. We got out of the car and walked into the dimly lit house. My mom mentioned that because the father-in-law was with us we didn't have to go through the painful process of knocking on the door, we were immediately ushered into the house. I had never been in an Amish home and was surprised at how similar it looked to my own. The family, through the grapevine, knew that we were coming and met us in the front room. The parents of the Amish lady who died, Melvin and Barbara Stoltzfus, walked up to me and put their arms around me. Through tears I muttered how sorry I was, and they spoke some of the most incredible words that I think are possible to utter, "We forgive you; we know it was God's time for her to die." Unbelievable. It was totally, absolutely amazing. But they went even further than that! They proceeded to invite my family to come over for dinner! And they wanted us to come soon, within a few weeks' time! I cannot express the relief that flooded over me.

Then someone led me to a back room where the husband, Aaron Stoltzfus, stood beside the open casket of his wife, Sarah. To my surprise, as I nervously glanced at her, I was looking at a beautiful young woman. Aaron, like her parents, came to me with open arms. I said, "How can I ever repay you?" He simply forgave me. We hugged as the freedom of forgiveness swept over and through me.

As I read and reread the previous few paragraphs, I feel extremely limited in my command of the English language to evoke the feeling of what took place. When I tell the story live, it seems to carry a greater impact. Maybe the audience reads my face. Maybe the emotion can't help but flow through me. All I know is that the Stoltzfus' concise words of forgiveness rushed through me with power. Some people have said that Amish are able to forgive like that because their theology leans toward fatalism, meaning that they believe everything is determined, is bound to happen, so there's no reason to get all bent out of shape about something bad. God is in control. They become somewhat emotionless about all the pain and suffering in life and are much more capable of dealing with it well. I don't know how true that is for every single Amishman, but I do know that this particular family is very emotional. In a positive way. They are incredibly upbeat and warm people. And I know the accident, Sarah's death, was very, very hard for them.

My mom, recalling the events said, "I will never forget what Pastor Jim told us the next day. He watched Joel during this entire night. He said he started out as a young teen with an incredible burden of guilt on his shoulder but walked out of that house with a tremendous weight taken him through forgiveness."

The Stoltzfus' did have us over for dinner sometime in that next month, an event I recall with wonder. There we were sitting in that same Amish home with Sarah's family, Aaron, and some from his family too. The table was loaded with delicious food, and never once did they show any kind of resentment. Never once did they attempt to make us feel bad. On the contrary, it was a kind of a get-to-know-you session, an intentional beginning to a meaningful relationship.

We exchanged stories comparing and contrasting the Amish sub-culture with mainstream American culture. They were so kind. They had opened their home and hearts to us! The larger Amish community in Lancaster was also very impressive to me. I still have the pile of at least 50 cards that I received from various Amish people across the County. They were constantly encouraging and pointing me to God.

It was also in this time that I clearly recall a striking visit from my soccer coach. I remember meeting him at the door one evening, probably just a few days after the accident. I will never forget what he said. "Joel, you will be compassionate from now on." How true. Since that time I have never had trouble forgiving people. Not that I have worked on it and have become talented at it. On the contrary, I think God must have changed my heart, because I don't have to try to forgive anymore. It flows out as naturally as my heart beats without me having a say in the matter.

In the ensuing months, I did not drive again, handing my keys over to my parents. My trial was set for February 5, 1992. Because of the severity of the accident I was charged with vehicular homicide, a charge that indicates the accidental, but irresponsibly reckless use of a vehicle that caused the loss of life. I'm not sure where it falls on the murder/manslaughter scale, but I do know that if I was one year older, I could have been facing jail time, which is another facet of the whole story that points me to the grace of God. I was 17, a minor, and was therefore dealt with under the juvenile justice system, saved from a much harsher penalty in the adult courts. Soon after the accident, I was assigned a probation officer and a public defender to walk me and my family through the penal process prior to the court date. The standard punishment for juvenile vehicular homicide at the time was a suspension of the offender's driver's license for 3 years, 200 hours of community service, payment of all court costs (only about \$100), and probation until the community service requirement was completed. To me, with Sarah's life gone because of my actions, it was an extremely generous sentence.

My trial and punishment served as another instance for the Amish family to demonstrate the freedom of forgiveness. They wrote letters to the judge begging for my pardon, asking that I be acquitted on all counts! Imagine the character it would take to write that letter! Because of the severity of the crime, however, there was no way pardon was possible based on the law. At the trial the only thing my dad asked the judge was if it might be possible for me to get my license back sooner because I would be going to college soon and would need to drive. I hoped that maybe I could have more community service in exchange for a short suspension, but the judge held firm to the standard. A wise decision that was completely rational and acceptable to my thinking. As we walked out of the courtroom, my probation officer met us in the hallway. I will never forget pulling out my wallet and handing my precious driver's license over to her that day after the court appearance.

Our relationship with the Stoltzfus' family has continued ever since (both Aaron and his in-law's surname is Stoltzfus.) Over the years they have come to our house and we to theirs, about once each year near the anniversary of the accident. Once when they came to our house, I remember playing ping-pong with Aaron. We must have played 10 games and I beat him every time, which was to me an awkward situation. Here I am, I thought, an irresponsible kid who killed his wife, and now I'm playing ping-pong with him. He really seemed to enjoy it and wanted to keep playing. I wondered if I should have let him win, but what would that do? I came to realize that our relationship with Aaron and the rest of the Stoltzfus family, though it began under the most horrible circumstances, had grown into a legitimate, normal relationship. They had forgiven me, and never, ever, went back on that decision. And they backed it up with a real relationship. Consider this: five years after the accident, Michelle and I invited them to our wedding, and they came--for the ceremony and the reception, bearing gifts! Some may read

this and think, "How insensitive! You invited them to your wedding? Isn't that a slap in the face!?!?" On the surface, it certainly looks like it. It does seem odd to me that we would invite the Stoltzfus' to share in our celebration when only five years earlier, I had totally shattered theirs. But that viewpoint fails to realize the depth of the relationship. The past had been forgiven, and we were actually friends. People invite their friends to their wedding. I particularly like the idea of trumpeting to the world their brandy of forgiveness. To me, having the Stoltzfus' at my wedding was not to show off the fact that I had friends in the Amish community, it was to display for everyone who knew us the glory of God that results when people obey his commands! To accent this further, when we moved to Jamaica to be missionaries three years later, the Stoltzfus family supported us financially. Forgiveness, they taught me, is not always a one-time event. Perhaps this is one angle of what Jesus intended when he replied to Peter that we ought to forgive someone not just seven times, but seventy times seven. In other words, Jesus said, in order to follow its purpose of freedom, it requires follow-up, the rebuilding of a relationship or, as in my case, the creation of a new one.

God blessed the situation even further as Aaron eventually remarried Sarah's younger sister, Levina. To me it was as though God allowed the family to be whole again. They now have a beautiful family, full of children.

This past year when we visited Melvin and Barbara (Aaron and Levina live in a house on Aaron's family's property in Leola, so we don't see them as much) on their farm/bakery in Lititz, it was the first we had seen them in a couple years. We missed one year when we lived in Jamaica, and the next year because we had just returned home, so it was good to see them after a 2 or 3 year gap. For the first time in 11 years we talked about the accident frankly, but very kindly. Again, they were never condemning, just admitting how hard it was. How they miss Sarah. I had the chance to express my gratitude and share with them how the freedom of forgiveness they gave me impacted so many people whenever I share the story. I cried then as I am now as I type this.

In this land of liberty, that kind of freedom I received often eludes us. We have so few pictures of what it actually looks like. God glorified himself in my life, however, by blessing me with a wonderful picture of how people can handle terrible crimes against themselves. My uncle, Jim Ohlson, when commenting on an early manuscript of my story added, "What I have seen in you is that the forgiveness of the Amish gave you the confidence to live life to the full." Jesus said "I have come that they might have life, and life to the full!" That full life is only possible through the freedom of forgiveness received.

For more articles go to www.cpyu.org

youth Group News

Events

- We will be going to Tom's Corn Maze on October 10th. Meet at the church at 4pm and we should be back around 10pm. This is a great even to invite friends! Cost- \$15-\$20. Sign Up is in the Youth Room
- There will be a movie night on October 30th at 7pm. Movie has yet to be determined. This will be at the church. Another great opportunity to invite friends!

News

- The youth had the chance to vote on a new youth group name. It was a close vote but the name is now Flipside Student Ministry or Flipside Youth. This name is based from Colossians about us becoming a new creation. So we are the flipside of our old selves.
- There is also a new logo to go with the new names:



- The youth room has had a recent remodel. It is still in process but come by and see the progress. It now features a platform for the youth praise team to lead worship and a snack area where teens can purchase snacks on youth nights.

On the Horizon

November 13-15: Fall Retreat- Cost is \$40. Sign up is in the youth room.

December 11: Flipside Youth Christmas Party at FFC.

December 28: Ice Skating

January 17: FFC Flipside Lock-In at FFC. Cost is \$5.

Youth Culture Music Artists Top Ten

All information for song downloads was for the week of 9/23 from Itunes.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Albums</u>	<u>Downloaded Songs</u>
1	Drake & Future – What A Time To Be Alive	One Direction – Infinity
2	Lana Del Rey – Honeymoon	Drake – Hotline Bling
3	The Weeknd – Beauty Behind The Madness	Justin Bieber – What Do You Mean?
4	Mac Miller – GO:OD AM	The Weeknd – The Hills
5	David Gilmour – Rattle That Lock	Taylor Swift – Wildest Dreams
6	Shinedown – Threat To Survival	One Direction – Drag Me Down
7	Ryan Adams – 1989	City – Locked Away
8	Taylor Swift - 1989	Drake & Future – Jumpman
9	Luke Bryan – Kill The Lights	Shawn Mendes – Stitches
10	Andy Mineo - Uncomfortable	Fetty Wap – 679

OCTOBER 2015

S U N	M O N	T U E	W E D	T H U	F R I	S A T
				1	2	3
4 Sunday School @ 9:30 am Youth Group @ 6:00pm	5	6	7	8	9	10 Corn Maze 4pm-10pm
11 Sunday School @ 9:30 am Youth Group @ 6:00pm	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Sunday School @ 9:30 am Youth Group @ 6:00pm	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Sunday School @ 9:30 am Youth Group @ 6:00pm	26	27	28	29	30 Movie Night@ 7pm	31 Halloween

A NOTE FROM PASTOR JOSH

The summer has officially ended, school has started and Fall is upon us. This past summer we had the privilege of working through the book of Colossians. What a great book of the Bible! Like the book of Colossians, that warns of things that distract, lie and distort the truth, this newsletter is designed to better equip you, a parent, to the dangers of what is going on in youth culture. BUT, it also, like Colossians, is here to encourage, inspire and equip you with ways to connect with your teen. I know it's a tough job and I want to assist you in that. I hope you will also find this newsletter informative on what is going on with the youth group! There will be a new edition every month! If you ever have any questions or concerns please let me know. I can be reached by email at joshtaylor@goffc.org or on my cell at 618-960-6835. Thanks for trusting myself and the youth team with your teen!

In Him,
Pastor Josh