Dr. Chambo, DS Rev. Phil Rhoades, District NYI Council, Convention Delegates, colleagues, family, and friends, welcome to this 66th NYI Convention of the Joplin District Church of the Nazarene. Here is my report for this past year.

Please allow me a moment to acknowledge and thank my wife, Angie, for allowing me to serve in this capacity.

It continues to be an honor and privilege for me to serve with each of you as we seek to join with the local NYI in equipping every youth for a life of discipleship and service for Jesus Christ.

It has been a joy to serve alongside each one of you this year. Joplin is the greatest district in the USA/Canada Region, if not the world.

I bring you greetings on behalf of the North Central Field Council as the Field Youth Coordinator.

I bring you greetings on behalf of the USA/Canada Council chaired by Shawn Evans under the direction of Justin Pickard, USA/Canada NYI regional director.

I bring you greetings from MNU and Dr. Spittal, President.

I also bring you greetings on behalf of Cameron Batkin, our sister Region Field Youth Coordinator from the Australia/New Zealand Field.

I would also like to recognize and thank our District NYI Council for their heart and commitment to our teens, they are to be commended. Sarah Fash, Vice President. Paige Moles, Secretary. Kurt Schmitt, Treasurer. Nick Sprague, Empower Sports Director. Kenzie Shipman, Empower Liberal Arts Director. Haley Freeman, CC/Young Adult Director. Cody Swearengin, Pk Director. Patrick Wheeler, Quizzing Director. Rick Pearson, Camp Director. Jordan Dages, College and Career Camp Director. Luke and Bethany Letsinger, Encounter Director. Cheratin Hunter, Missions Director. Kurt Schmitt, Max Director. Eder Aguirre, Hispanic Director. Neal Davidson, Ryann Gotschalk, Mark Eigsti, Katelyn Bills, Missional Area Directors. Wiley Hendrix, Mandy Smith, parent Reps. Bella Russell and Samara Smith, Sr. High Reps. Charlie Goodau and Kaitlyn Sanders, Jr. High Reps. Evan Knight, MNU College Rep. Emily Whitehurst, Non-MNU College Rep. Dennis Troyer our MNU Admissions Counselor, Phil Rhoades our District Superintendent, Allison Johnson, NMI President and Dustin Ledford, NDI Chairman. Thank You for all you do for NYI and our district.

I would also like to thank all the other youth pastors, NYI President’s and youth leaders not on the council for the tremendous job they have done this year in their local churches and in support of the district activities as we partner together to grow the Kingdom. Thank you again, for allowing us to partner with you.

We have had some amazing events, like NYI Training Day and Convention, 2 District NYI Council Meetings, 4 Camp weeks/weekend, Teen Bible Quizzing, Field Youth Leaders training, Fall Encounter, College and Young Adult Retreat, PK Retreats, Spring Empower, USA/Canada Leadership Conference, MAX@MNU 2023 and NYC 2023. All these events have led to decisions for Christ, Commitments, Re-commitments, Sanctification’s, and a stronger and deeper passion to serve our Lord Jesus Christ in every way.

I just want to share a challenge for us to think about for this next year.

Our DS always tells us that we are “Better together than separate”. It’s a true statement. Teamwork!!! Why is this so important? Teamwork builds trust. A team that trusts each other fuels comfortable communicating ideas, collaborating in ministry, and growing individual strength.

Not just that, but we also feel a sense of belonging within the group. With teamwork, trust is built relying on one another for the good of the group. When people work together in teamwork, we can reach the common goal.

There are many characteristics of effective and great teamwork. Good communication, shared talents, sense of belonging, strong leadership, clear structure, achievable goals, and a positive attitude.

Are you part of the district team of NYI? If not, why? Do you feel you don’t need someone else? We all need a team whether we realize it or not. We are like the team building exercise of a trust fall. We all need strength to catch another person. When we don’t trust each other and build each other strength we run the risk of the support system failing. Putting the person that needs to be caught in danger or injury.

I am often reminded of a section, in chapter 14, of a book “The Youth Builder” when it talks about developing a dynamic team. “Perhaps the most important (and often most overlooked) aspect of youth ministry is building a dynamic youth ministry team. In fact, we would go so far as to say that beyond your programs – and even beyond the students themselves – your most precious commodity is your ministry team.”

The writer of Proverbs reminds us that “for lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure” (Proverbs 11:14. The point is clear, the quality and quantity of our youth ministry directly depends on the quality and quantity of our volunteer leadership team.

More, often than not, leaders are the biggest are the biggest roadblocks in developing a dynamic ministry team. Sometimes it’s the guru mentality. “I am the youth leader. I need to do everything. If the students need to be ministered to, I need to be the one”. Other times it’s the Lone ranger mentality that believes, “I’m to busy ministering to students to develop others. I am the only one there is. I guess if you want to do something I’ll get to you when I need you”. We also fall into the trap when we look around and say there is nobody around. The issue may not be that there isn’t anyone, instead you may be looking for the wrong type of person. Or the wrong age of a person.

No matter our state of mind, we need to remember one fact; to minister to a wide variety of people effectively we must minister in the context of a team. To have an effective ministry today requires a team-oriented mind-set. It takes time and energy to build a team, but long-term results are well worth the investment.

We can not do ministry alone. Bringing a group of adults and teens together to develop a team ministry, is no easy task. There are no simple formulas or methods that will ensure instant success. If we want to see students become life-long servants and followers of Jesus, we need to gather a team of caring individuals that have the same passion to see students live transformed. A team that can shoulder the load, carry the vision, and walk together through the good and bad times of ministry.

If, we focus on keeping the students attracted to the ministry and keeping themselves entertained, we can get away with just having a few people run programs. These programs may draw numbers, but they will lack depth.

We firmly believe that on the day we stand before God, He won’t be asking us how many teens or adults came to our ministries. He won’t be delving into our programming. He’ll want to know what we did with the teens and adults He entrusted us with. Are we faithful with the teens and adults He has entrusted to our care?

So, this year, let’s continue to work together in teamwork, committed to seeing changed lives of teenagers and leaders. This is why we do youth ministry together. This is why we are better together than separated.

Respectively submitted,

Fred Toomey, your NYI President.