



# H2O

## CHURCH



## H2O City

By Dave Orweller

Since we first launched H2O Church, we've been all about raising up students at OSU to be disciples of Jesus who are equipped and prepared to influence their families, workplaces, and the world. And when we sensed God leading us to plant a city congregation, we knew that one of our big, unique tasks was going to be learning how to help students really flourish as they navigated the daunting transition from college life to whatever comes next. A year later, and we're still excited to see the ways God is teaching

us and helping us to grow in this critical ministry.

If you've talked to many people in the midst of this transition, you've probably noticed really quickly that most would say that they feel alone.

Life is simply very different in college than it is at any other time. And the new responsibilities and time constraints of life outside of college make it hard to feel connected

relationally... especially

for anyone who invested a large amount of their time in that kind of community in college, or for anyone who packed up their few worldly belongings and moved to Columbus for their first real job without really knowing anyone else at all. Many find themselves really needing and yet really lacking that relational connection and spiritual encouragement during their post-college transitions.

So we've been working hard to create authentic relational connections for the young adults in our City congregation, as well as to help them learn to pursue the Lord in the context of gospel-centered community even in the midst of that tough transition. Helping people connect relationally and forming gospel-centered community is the focus of our City Lifegroups, and this year, it's also the focus of our women's ministry: City Sisterhood. In addition, each year we form a "Rookies" City Lifegroup that is made up almost entirely of recent grads or grad students who can help each other navigate that transition and spur one another on to follow Jesus. And what we've seen, is that, yes, it is a really tough transition, but with some help, encouragement and a little direction, they are able to flourish as they begin to take ownership (more than ever before) of their own need to pursue Jesus together in community with others!



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## H2O Campus

By Kyle Riesenber

The beginning of the fall semester at Ohio State seems to always be loaded with a flurry of activity, and this year was no different. It all began with H2O's Kickoff Service in the Ohio Union, where students and staff connected with friends that they hadn't seen during the summer. Before and after the service also provided a great opportunity to meet new people (most of whom were freshmen) that are on campus and looking for a church to call home. Other highlights of Welcome Week included The Ohio State University Involvement Fair, H2O's The Plunge, and many of our campus teams getting together to meet and pursue getting to know people on their part of campus.

An overarching theme to Kickoff Week, and the weeks that have followed, is the involvement and leadership shown by students. It's encouraging and heartwarming to see so many students happily sacrifice time to serve. Seeing students pass out water bottles and ask people to fill out surveys at the Involvement Fair, set up sound equipment for our service every Sunday morning, play in the worship band, lead teams and small groups, and many other things that go unnoticed is a great picture of every part of the body of Christ using their gifts for the glory of God!

Another way in which students have taken ownership to pursue the campus is by passing out coffee and lemonade to tired, stressed out classmates on Friday mornings. The H2O Coffee Tent is becoming something of a staple on campus where many students go to get their caffeine fix before class on Friday. The Coffee Tent gives us an opportunity to connect with students that would never step foot in a Sunday morning service, but they will grab a coffee and have a conversation in between class. The Coffee Tent is primarily run by students that are passionate about pursuing their fellow buckeyes with the gospel. The theme of student ownership in pursuing the campus with the gospel has been exciting to witness this fall semester!

## MISSIONS

By Rachel Metz and Randi Zumbro

Throughout the Bible, we see God's heart for all nations to know and love Him. At H2O, we deeply desire to glorify God and follow Jesus in this way by living out the Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations! This semester our Missions Team started a new ministry called People Group Engagements (PGEs), where we are trying to live out engaging the nations in Columbus with the gospel. We've had two PGEs thus far, with one being a visit to a local mosque to learn more about the Islamic Faith Community in Columbus. At the mosque, we had an

opportunity to bridge cultural gaps (the women who went chose to wear head coverings to show respect to the community at the mosque) and start conversations that we dream will continue to provide opportunities for the gospel to go out.

Additionally, the Missions Team hosted a Prayer For The Nations, where H2O members invested their evening to pray for our local and international partnerships and missionaries. The night was a beautiful time of worshipping the Lord and engaging with His heart for the world!

Looking forward, H2O will be sending a team to Haiti in December for a week-long mission trip with our partners in Haiti. The team will run a Vacation Bible School program for youth with the goal of reaching individuals with the gospel, who can then influence future generations with the good news of Jesus Christ! We will also send a team to Guatemala in March, where the team will teach English at an impoverished school and engage in spiritual conversations with other college students with the goal of proclaiming the gospel. We invite you to pray with us, as we witness countless lives being transformed by God through these events as men and women from the Columbus community learn how to share their faith with others and experience God at work around the world firsthand!







# Community Engagement

By Mike Malone

At H2O, our desire is that every member would serve and meet the needs of the widows, orphans, immigrants and physically poor in Columbus on a regular basis through H2O's community engagement opportunities. We call it "community engagement" because we want people to see it as an opportunity to build relationships with those they are serving and serving alongside, not as a community service task.

We are excited about this because we want everyone to follow in Jesus' footsteps. Jesus lived a life that was characterized by His continual engagement with people, and we see in scripture

that it wasn't just Jesus who did this, but His disciples who lived this way too and continued to do so after Jesus was no longer with them. Therefore, our dream is that all members of H2O would build real, gospel-centered relationships with the poor, needy, and ostracized - visiting, praying, and meeting their needs on a regular basis. We want H2O to expand their view of our city, Christ's heart, and the life of a devoted disciple, and God continues to make that dream a reality.

This semester we have had an average of 93 people serve 7 different organizations on our once-a-month community engagement days, and we had 42 students tutor refugees and underprivileged kids each week. It has been a privilege to see the members of H2O step out of their comfort zone in faith and through this have their understanding of God and His heart expand! Please join us in praying that every member would serve on a regular basis and that many would come to know Christ through our service.

## Fall Retreat

By Abby Lewis

During a beautiful fall weekend in October, 340 Ohio State students gathered together at a campground to seek the Lord together. The theme for this year's Fall Retreat was, "The Crown and the Cross" as we dug into who Jesus is and what that means for our lives. It's always a highlight of fall semester as we continue to see God use it for His glory. It helped returning H2O students to grow in leadership as they served and loved new faces. For people who had just started coming to H2O, it was a chance for them to build new relationships and connect with the body of Christ. Additionally, a few people brought their non-believing friends, allowing them space to hear the gospel multiple times and ask questions. Furthermore, Fall Retreat provided students an opportunity to get away from the distractions and stress of college life in order to meet with their Heavenly Father.

The weekend included three different teachings on the book of Mark, a couple sessions of powerful worship and praise, s'mores and games around the campfire, time spent alone in nature with the Lord, spaces for teams to share what God was teaching them, and some friendly H2O Olympic competition amongst teams. Through all of these things, we saw the Lord open students' eyes to a greater understanding of Christ's love, as well as forge deeper discipleship relationships. It was incredible to hear how God intimately met with the students during their two hour time with Him-- an idea which intimidated most initially! Some shared how quickly it went by because they felt so connected with God in prayer. Others were surprised by how God spoke to them personally through His Word. And still, others voiced a desire to carve out more time with the Lord in their daily life on campus because of how refreshing it was for them. Praise God for moving so mightily at Fall Retreat, and please pray for students continue to live out what they learned so that they may grow in their love for Christ!



### INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Visit our website at [www.h2ocolumbus.org](http://www.h2ocolumbus.org) or email us at [info@mail.h2osu.org](mailto:info@mail.h2osu.org) for more information regarding H2O Church.



## ABOUT ME

**Name: Zach Hounshell**  
(pictured 2nd from left)

**Age: 22**

**H2O Campus Team:**  
Off-Campus King

**Hometown: Greenville, OH**

**Major: City and Regional  
Planning**

**Favorite Food: Homemade  
Chicken and Noodles**

# SLICE OF LIFE

I grew up in a Christian household. And though I was baptized as an infant, I never really understood why. Therefore, I would complain and beg the question "Why are we doing this? What's the point?" each week as my family and I would attend church. I believed in God and that Christ died for my sins, but I "believed" it more because I taught this is I should believe, and I went with it.

So, I lived according to what being a "good child" meant, and I held tightly to the image that everything was great in my life. However, I hit a wall just before college started--an identity crisis--and my image began to unravel. I started distancing myself from longtime friends, and I began getting involved with a different crowd that pushed me to party and drink. Slowly, I found myself overwhelmed with guilt from the constant lies I told in order to keep my image clean and the lies I told to my parents that everything was fine. Yet, I was ultimately feeling a deep sense of loneliness I had never felt before. Nobody really knew how I was, and I continued to mask everything I was feeling and masked the guilt I was experiencing.

My feelings of guilt and loneliness continued through my first two years of college as I isolated myself from any sort of community on campus, despite a few close friends who were a part of H2O and invited me to events. Instead I rejected their invitations, and I put all of my effort into pursuing women and relationships that never panned out, which devastated me.

Despite my efforts to push away, my friends' pursuit of me continued, and I ended up attending Winter Park Leadership Training (LT) during the summer of 2016 after being asked to take a "leap of faith" by a few leaders within H2O. Honestly, I didn't know what I was really getting into when I joined LT. Mainly, I wasn't sure if I was going to be accepted by this new community, or if I was just going to feel like an outsider for the entire summer. Thankfully, these thoughts were quickly put to rest as I was accepted with open arms and shown grace by the LT community. They brought me to truth, brought me to learning and loving the gospel, and loved me unconditionally--something I will never forget.

So much happened over that summer, but I noticed something change when some of my closest friends were baptized during LT. Feeling pulled toward baptism, I spent months after LT ended conflicted as to what I was supposed to do. I listened to sermons, researched baptism and asked the pastors of H2O a lot of questions. It took me nearly a year to figure out

what was going on, but when I finally understood, everything seemed so clear: I am now living my life according to Christ, not just thinking I believe in Christ. See, for the first 21 years of my life, I didn't truly understand what I believed. But God had fully gotten a grasp on my heart and was giving me an invitation to publicly declare my faith and visually demonstrate His gospel through baptism. So on October 8, 2017, I accepted His invitation and was re-baptized in my reconquered faith.

If you were to ask me where I would be currently about a year ago, there is absolutely no way I would have guessed that I would be here. Truly, this is not by my own doing, but by God's. God now has a firm grip on my life, a grip of which I know that He won't let go, and that is one of the most freeing feelings I have ever known.