



# YOUTH *Krunk* for Christ!

By Rhonda Simpson

On the evening of Sunday, August 6, 2006, the foyer of the SJBC Corporate location was filled with dozens of youth anxiously awaiting spiritual renewal as well as the concert kicking off St. John's Annual Youth Conference, featuring guests such as the conference's yearly "Minister Extraordinaire", Rev. Matthew Watley of Reid Temple AME Church in Glenn Dale, Maryland along with newly featured Christian rap artists Trip Lee and Tedashii of Reach Records. After much preparation from our own Youth Pastor, Jeremy Butler and many youth workers and volunteers, the atmosphere was finally set. A boxing ring in the pulpit to represent the conference's theme, "It's Going Down," was among the most noticeable decorations for the event, not to mention, the dimmed lights and covered windows to give the illusion of a real concert arena. As the youth worship service attendants opened the doors to the sanctuary, the anxious teenagers rushed in to fill the pews.

The event was opened with a word of prayer then praise and worship led by our Youth and Young Adult Praise Team. Shortly afterward came a word of preparation from Pastor Butler entitled "After the Krunk" taken from **John 8:31**, when Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples" (NIV). Though this was a concert, Pastor Butler did not allow those attending to lose sight of the purpose of the week's events, especially amid all the hype. He emphasized that discipleship, no matter the circumstances, is the key to a victorious life with the Lord! He taught that God is more concerned about our lifestyles than just a moment of "krunkness" at a youth conference, and that they must continue to follow God after the thrill of the occasion is long gone. The moment of anticipation had finally arrived - youth from Dallas area churches, New Truevine, Concord Baptist Church, The Potter's House, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship and others made the two-hour trek from Mt. Pisgah, Palestine Baptist Church of Paris, Texas to join our own here at St. John in welcoming Tedashii and Trip Lee as they entered the sanctuary. They urged everyone to stand to their feet as they ministered the word of God through holy and wholesome lyrics in a way that youth can relate to while sharing testimonies of their own personal walks with Christ, between songs.

The conference officially began Monday morning with sessions taught throughout the week by our SJBC Executive Assistant Pastor, Jeremy Upton, Youth Pastor Jeremy Butler, Min. Glenn Simpson, and Min. Chedena Hayes. Guest speakers Rev. Von Minor and Bro. Daryl Jones of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, Rev. Robert Manning of Denton Bible Church, Rev. Stephen Brown of Concord Baptist Church, and Rev. Henry Batson of Friendship West Baptist Church, were among the prestigious group sent by God to minister to the youth at this year's conference. The "topic of the day" sessions included; "Called to Lead", "In His Presence", "Living with Your Parents Without Losing Your Mind", "On the Brink of Burnout", "Prepared for the Struggle", "Igniting the Flame", "Every Man's/Woman's Battle", and "Worship not Ritual". There were also games, contests, and prizes given away each day. Other guests included Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship's Youth Praise Team on Monday evening and Townview's Drumline on Wednesday afternoon.

Rev. Matthew Watley joined us on Monday and Tuesday night. He has blessed us for the past three years at our Youth Revival and this year was no different. On Tuesday, he preached, "It's a Dirty Job" taken from, **Luke 17:11-19** when Jesus healed the ten lepers. During that time, lepers were considered "unclean" and could not be touched by anyone. Rev. Watley reminded us of how Jesus took the time to deal with these dirty men and heal them of their disease, much like how he deals with our sin. He conveyed with conviction that the God we serve doesn't mind dealing with our dirt when we belong to him because he sees a part of himself in us. That night, over 50 people approached the altar in order to give their lives to Christ - some for the first time, while others rededicated their lives. The Holy Spirit "showed up and showed out" as there were youth and adults alike drawn into His presence. There were tears of joy, awe, and deliverance as we couldn't help but to linger for a while before the service continued with some youth being baptized for the first time.

On Wednesday night, the conference joined the rest of the St. John family at Nokia Theatre in Grand Prairie, Texas as Trinity Broadcasting Network invited St. John to be its featured church for a televised service that would air in the weeks following. Because of his "real" connection to and love for youth, when being interviewed by SJBC's Senior Pastor, Denny Davis, Rev. Matthew Watley received an affectionate applause from the youth as a token of their love as a result of his visit during that week and from years past.

The Youth Conference was definitely a huge success. Lives were changed and both teens and adults received much needed encouragement to continue to fight the "good fight of faith". Their response was nothing less than extraordinary - given that we live in a world where BET, MTV, and VH1 are "raising children" these days. It's safe to assume that next year's conference will be even more exciting with more participants. It was designed to reach the hearts of our young people and ended up touching everyone involved, no matter the age. This is evidence that our God is unlimited in what He is able to accomplish with those who are willing to be obedient and walk in faith.

krunk - a term used by today's young people that describes a high level of extreme enthusiasm or excitement





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# KOINONIA

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