

## STORIES OF FAITH

### Wiser Than His Years

#### Jake Byrne

It is uncommon for young people in Generation Z to choose to attend church on their own. Jake Byrne stands out from his peers in this regard. Unlike many others his age, Jake not only attends worship services every week but also actively participates by serving with the music ministry team.



Jake fondly recalls his earliest experiences at Hope Lutheran Church. These memories have shaped his commitment and involvement in the church community, setting him apart as a young person who is truly wiser than his years..The people, music, and his family all play an important role in drawing Jake to his church

Jake discovered his passion for trains early in life. At around eight years old, he started chatting with **John Kroger and George Albright**, who were fellow train enthusiasts. Although he didn't immediately realize the value of these connections, they eventually grew into long-lasting friendships. Jake was delighted when George presented him with a train table and a cast iron steam engine; he cherished these gifts, feeling supported and

understood by his friends.

While trains captured Jake's imagination, his love for music was also evident from a young age. His parents nurtured this interest by taking him to drum lessons when he was five years old. Their encouragement during these lessons gave Jake confidence and a sense of belonging. He told them his goal was to one day take **Mr. Mike's** place as the drum set player.

Today, Jake plays the guitar and drums for worship services. He also plays the tenor drums in the University of Cincinnati Marching Band.

Jake's parents played a key role in his spiritual journey. They instilled in him the value of balancing hard work with ambition, as well as the importance of supporting and uplifting others. Among his family members, Jake holds a special admiration for his great grandfather. He believes his great grandfather possesses a deep closeness to God, which inspires Jake in his own faith and spiritual growth. Jake enjoys being with older adults, and his mother calls him an "old soul." He finds guidance through faith, prayer, music, and his train hobby.

Jake has been blessed by many talents and is very humble in recognizing that they are God given. He believes it is God's will that he brings love and grace to others and is grateful for all that he has been given.

Jake's journey reminds us of the profound impact that encouragement, meaningful connections, and spiritual grounding can have on a young person's life. Through his actions and outlook, Jake continues to inspire those around him to live with intention, humility, and love.

**Karen Schweinfest**