

I have been thinking about the movie, Forrest Gump recently, specially, the famous running scene. Following the heartbreaking departure of his close friend (the love of his life), Jenny, Forrest decides, "*for no particular reason*", to go for a run - and his run turns epic. He begins by just running to town and then decides, since he has come this far, to run across the county, then the state and eventually ends up at the coast. He then decides, since he has run this far, that he might as well keep on going. So, he turns around and keeps on running. When he got to another ocean, he turns around and keeps on running. The reason I mention this is that as Forrest runs, he begins to attract attention which leads others to join the run. They see him as a visionary, running for a purpose, they just do not know what that purpose is. Along the way, he makes contributions to history, unknown and unrealized by him at the moment, but impactful to others.

We are on a run here in North Iowa, but it is not without a purpose. It began in September with an idea and then began to take root in October at the community strategy meeting at the United Methodist Church. And since we had come that far, we kept on running. A small group then came together to do some dreaming (with more joining the run). Soon, the idea of the 1G (One God) Network (Community youth ministry) was born, with more people joining the run. On Monday, January 24, twenty-five people gathered to prepare for the 1G Network launch (with more people joining the run). And now, since we have run this far, we WILL run farther. The 1G Network kicks off on Monday, February 7. Will you join the run? We need volunteers, financial resources, and your support in order to make a difference. The impact may go unnoticed by us now, but by the grace of God, the affects will be noticed by the youth now and for a long time.

I understand that the thought and image of running may seem tiring; like this will be hard work and thus not appealing to you but hang with me here. This run we are on will not be easy. There will be ups and downs (and maybe a few shin splints along the way), but we do not run alone and we do not run on our own power. If we are seeking God's glory (and we are), then all that we need will be provided by our Father in heaven. So won't you join the run and make an impact on our youth in the North Iowa school district that will be felt for the rest of their lives. Get your running shoes ready. Here we go. To God be all glory, now and forever, Amen.