

Faith, Snow & Donuts: How 1 Man is Making a Difference

In the snowy hills of southwestern Pennsylvania, ministry is breaking free from tradition, embracing the thrill of snow sports while transforming lives.

Josh Knipple, a youth minister and ski shop professional, is using his passion for skiing and snowboarding to spread faith as part of Snowboarders and Skiers for Christ.

For Josh, the mountains are more than just a playground—they're a sanctuary.

"You have that peace when you're out here on the mountain—you get away from the noise of life, get away from busyness," Josh says. "A lot of days, I'll come out here and spend time in prayer, just ride up the lift."

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Each snowfall calls Josh and his family of six to the slopes, where they turn the mountains into both a place of fellowship and adventure. Balancing the demands of raising four children, serving as a youth minister, writing children's books, and working at a ski shop, Josh sees each role as an opportunity to shine as a beacon of light on every mountain he conquers. But for him, this isn't just about adventure—it's a calling.

"What do you think Jesus did? He spent time with people. He built relationships with them, ate with them, drank with them... that's ministry," Josh explains.

Christian ministries reaching out to the snow sports community are part of a growing movement. While exact numbers are hard to pin down, it's estimated that nearly 150 such ministries operate across the U.S. Skiers and Snowboarders for Christ alone shares the gospel in seven countries.

Josh serves the SFC mission on the slopes near his hometown in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Now closer to home, he focuses his efforts in Southwest Pennsylvania, particularly on Laurel Mountain. There, Josh's approach is simple: faith and donuts.

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Each Tuesday, before heading to the mountain, Josh stocks up on a dozen sweet treats. "It's like I said, who doesn't like a donut?" he laughs.

The donuts are more than just a snack—they're a tool to connect with strangers, break the ice, and build relationships on the mountain. He sees them as a chance to love others and share the transformative power of faith.

"Build relationships, share Jesus—the best way to say it is to be myself and allow people to see how Jesus has changed my heart... and let them know He can do that for them," Josh says.

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