

Dallas Fort Worth Family Church's Project Phoenix experience with David Young

John Jackson
November 30, 2018



On November 30, 65 people gathered at the Dallas Fort Worth Family Church for a Project Phoenix experience. Most of the participants were from the local area with a few exceptions. They were greeted and welcomed by the local church leadership team of Southwest Subregional Director, Rev. John Jackson and Rev. Mark Hernandez.

After introductions, the evening began with a presentation by David Young. David engaged the audience in a number of exercises designed to help them understand the different ways of listening and how important it is in creating relationships that are meaningful. He also shared his experiences relating to the "games we play" and provided thought-provoking examples and opportunities to practice communication and self-exploration. The participants were assigned groups for the weekend and this allowed for time to share and listen in a safe, and confidential environment.

Saturday turned out to be a full day of activity beginning with a session called "Honoring the Generations." This session separated the group into the elders and the youngers. Each group answered questions which revealed perceptions of the other group and how each group is perceived by the other. Reconvening together and sharing what each group came up with engendered insight and emotion in participants both young and old. This exercise served to open the door to the conversation about the generation gap and how it is experienced in the community.

Following this, four testimonies were offered in a session called "Through Our Lens." This was a special opportunity for honest and vulnerable sharing on the part of two elders and two younger, both male and female. The testimonies were heartfelt and revealed the challenges of both parenting and growing up in the Unification Movement.

Through the testimonies, the atmosphere was created for deep sharing in the family groups and people are often comfortable sharing experiences that perhaps they have never revealed before. This has often been a time of reflection and healing.

Afterward, everyone gathered for a session called Community Weaving. This was a time for members of the community to mingle together to both fill a need they may have and to be a resource for someone else with a particular need.

The last session of the afternoon was called Going Deeper and it involved a younger person and an elder answering questions in front of the entire room designed to bring out feelings and create opportunities for connection not found in routine conversation. In this case, Jonathan Golden and his mother were the example. They asked and answered the guided questions and in doing so, were able to understand each other on a deeper level. People discussed insights gained from this exercise in their family groups.

After dinner, the evening concluded with a time of group appreciations where each member of the family group offered a comment of appreciation to the other members of the group. For many, this was a rare experience of hearing how others appreciate who they are and what they bring to the group.

There were many expressions from those who attended and reflected in the survey which conveyed a sincere feeling of gratitude for the experience and of new hopeful attitudes towards each other and the future of the Dallas community.

For more information on Project Phoenix, visit their [website here](#).

If you would like to host Project Phoenix in your community, send a message to projectphoenixusa@gmail.com.

Reflections

What did you get out of this event?

"I believe Project Phoenix is a divinely inspired project where Unificationist families can review generational experiences with each other to open the way to understanding, acceptance, and valuing each other in families where Heaven wants love to reside." -Participant

"I learned that the first generation actually admire some qualities of the second generation, which was nice because I feel that a lot of the good in our generation comes from the way we were raised. I feel like I was able to get to know and talk with people from the older generation and really begin to see them as people I could develop positive relationships with, instead of just seeing them as 'first gen'. I also learned ways to be a better listener and how to have more meaningful conversations." -Participant

"I received so much more than I had expected. The experiential aspect of PP and the opportunities for genuine heart to heart communicating made it rich. It revived a deep sense of hope for the future of our families and the possibility of leaving behind a lasting, sustainable legacy of intergenerational and transgenerational love, honor and vision. Personally I want to utilize the going deeper cards with both of my sons who were present here, and soon with my other children." -Participant

a space for
authentic
relationships.

GET STARTED

Purpose

The purpose of Project Phoenix is to have a place where the older and younger generations can truly connect and learn from one another.

[Learn More](#)

Our Events

Project Phoenix events are the place where the generations connect, share their stories, their hopes and dreams, and challenges within a safe, embracing atmosphere.

[Learn More](#)

Projects

Project Phoenix projects are the natural expression of finding people with common interests and ideas and working together to create opportunities to serve the community.

[Learn More](#)

Our Vision

What kind of community would you like to live in? Prosperous and successful. Yes, but everybody wants that. What about life-affirming, supportive, optimistic about the future, a place for families to flourish and nurture each other. Is such a thing really possible? How could we create that? How can we actually create a space that allows us to make such dreams into realities?

Cheon Il Guk means two becomes one. It's the place where people can share openly and honestly; where we can all experience not only being listened to, but being heard. It is, simply, the place that we cross the barriers between us and the spirit and love of God rushes in.

Contribute

We are a group of passionate volunteers. Your contribution can help keep Project Phoenix alive.

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