

## CARP in the Bay Area's Truly Alive Retreat - The World Needs God and Me

Naokimi Ushiroda  
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*Photo courtesy of CARP Bay Area*

"In the midst of all the highs and lows that life has to offer, God is always going to be there," says Judith, a new participant of CARP in the Bay Area. "We are limited beings without God."

Judith was among some 18 participants of a three-day CARP retreat held in Santa Cruz, Calif., in early April. The [Truly Alive](#) program, organized by CARP Bay Area and the Bay Area Family Church Young Adult Ministry (YAM), was a relaxing break for students during an otherwise busy spring semester.

"Our core leaders recognized a strong need within the community for spiritual revival and reconnection to a thriving relationship with God," says Young Joo, a local CARP member. "The Truly Alive retreat focused on topics such as 'I Need God,' 'God Needs Me,' and 'The World Needs God and Me.'"

CARP members and guests heard from the chapter's mentors, Markus Von Euw and Kazuya Morita, who gave insightful and thought-provoking presentations on each topic, igniting heartfelt discussions among the group. Feeling inspired and empowered, participants openly shared their reflections and realizations throughout the program.

"No matter how much faith we have, God is always with us and supporting us," shared Estephanie, a local college student who attended the retreat. "God's love is unconditional, and He needs us because He loves us."

As the retreat location was just a short walk from the beach, participants enjoyed nature's beauty while splashing around in the ocean and taking in the warm sunshine. Team-building activities such as charades, "Steal the Bacon," and "Ninja Wars" added to the fun, familial atmosphere which contributed to each person feeling welcomed and at ease.

The "Graphing with God" activity - a highlight for many - enabled participants to reflect on their lives and create a physical graph depicting the highs and lows of their relationship with God over the years.

"I have a rollercoaster of a graph, but I feel God's love now more than I ever did," shared Maria, a third-year CARP member.

For Judith, it all comes back to self love and care for others. "I was able to look back and truly rejoice on how far I have come in my life," she says. "I now feel so much joy because I was able to break out of my shell. I have allowed myself to be completely vulnerable to the love and kindness from others, which has filled my life with gratitude and humbleness."

The retreat left participants and organizers feeling refreshed, reenergized, and - truly - alive.

You can learn more about CARP USA [here](#).



# Truly Alive in Santa Cruz

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Contributed by Young Joo Scharf

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Group Photo of CARP & BAFC YAM Retreat participants

Reaching the halfway point amidst a jam-packed spring semester, [CARP Bay Area](#) and [Bay Area Family Church Young Adult Ministry \(BAFC YAM\)](#) core leaders recognized a strong need within the community for spiritual revival and reconnection to a thriving relationship with God. Thus, the "Truly Alive" retreat was born!

From April 1st to 3rd, 18 CARP members and guests participated in the "Truly Alive" retreat in Santa Cruz, California focusing on the topics, "I Need God", "God Needs Me", and the "World Needs God and Me."





CARP mentors Markus Von Euw and Kazuya Morita gave insightful and thought-provoking presentations on the above topics, igniting heartfelt conversations and discussions for all the teams.

"No matter how much faith you have," shared Chabot College student Estepanie De Lacruz, "God is always with and supporting you." She also realized through this retreat that, "God's love is unconditional," and that, "God needs me because he loves me."



Within just a ten-minute walk from the beach, participants were also able to experience nature's beauty through splashing in the refreshing ocean waves and soaking in the warm sunshine. Much laughter and play took place through team-building activities such as, "Steal the Bacon," charades, and "Ninja Wars," in between presentations, creating a familial atmosphere where each participant could feel at home.



A highlight for many was the "Graphing with God" activity which took place at the end of the first full day where all participants had the opportunity to reflect on their lives and create a physical graph depicting the highs and lows of their relationship with God through the years.

Reflecting on her experience with this activity, Maria Barragan, a third-year CARP member shared, "I have a roller coaster of a graph in the 'Graphing with God' activity but I feel God's love now more than I ever did".

For Judith Nyambega, being her first time participating in a CARP 3-day retreat, one of her main takeaways was that "[m]an is a limited being without God." She shared, "I completely felt this statement speaking to me, in the midst of all the highs and lows that life has to offer, God is always going to be there. I was able to look back and truly rejoice on how far I have come ever since I was born till now," and that, "...now reflecting, I feel so much joy because I was able to break out of my shell. I have allowed myself to be completely vulnerable to the love and kindness from others, which has filled my life with gratitude and humbleness."



CARP members ended the retreat feeling refreshed, re-energized, and ready to take on the remainder of the semester!

Share your story to [ryota@carplife.org](mailto:ryota@carplife.org).

Tagged: carp life, carp bay area, divine principle, retreat, Truly Alive

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