

## FFWPU USA: One Heart Camp in California - An Amazing Camp Experience

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June 24, 2022



"I learned that no matter what level of faith I have, God still trusts me to direct His children to God and believes I am capable of doing so," shared a group leader of One Heart Camp in California.

As summer forges on, a number of youth camps have already taken place for Unificationists across the country, while other summer camps are just beginning. In Santa Cruz, One Heart Camp inspired some 56 participants who joined the program from June 19 to 24.

"We had an amazing camp experience right by the beach," shared Gabby, the YAYAM West coordinator, in a report to FFWPU USA leaders. "A lot of the camp was focused on our gifts that we can give to God, and what God has given to us and how much God loves each and every person."

Camp participants, including 20 group leaders and 13 core staff, as well as one non-Unificationist, culturally represented some 40 nations coming together. The camp's theme, "God's Gift to Us, Our Gift to God" addressed the relationship between human beings and our Heavenly Parent and Creator. Two main speakers, Rev. Kevin Thompson, FFWPU USA West director, and Bay Area Family Church Assistant Pastor Kouki Tamura, delivered inspiring and empowering presentations.

"They spoke on how we are a generation of peace and God has a plan for everyone," said Gabby. "They also talked about being ourselves and shared very practical guidance and tips on how to strengthen our conscience and be happy."

While Pastor Kouki zeroed in on tapping our unlimited potential and the blueprint of the three great blessings - to be fruitful, multiply, and have dominion over the natural world - powerful testimonies from different youth leaders touched the heart of campers.

"God has created a clear blueprint for how to be a happy child of God," said one participant. "God and my parents need me, and God loves and cares about us. He created us with so much potential, so we have to find it and work hard; and be able to accept the joy and love God gives to us and spend it on others. In doing this, we also return joy and love to God."

Testimonies addressed gratitude, recognizing God's love, being filial toward our parents, and cultivating friends of faith. "[The takeaway] was to take off our 'life sucks' glasses and put on our 'life is amazing' glasses," shared one participant, who echoed the words of Rev. Thompson's presentation.

One Heart Camp also featured a worship night and a variety of activities. "We had to be really creative because the campsite was small," said Gabby. "Throughout the weekend we had a lot of time at the beach, which was a big highlight since it was a 10-minute walk away, and we also went to the beach for a night under the stars with a campfire."

Camp Lone Star in Texas, Camp Journey in Idaho, and Camp Aurora in New Hampshire all concluded in early July, while the EPIC high school workshop is currently underway in Gloucester, Mass. Camp KOGAPE in Iowa and Camp Shehaqua in Pennsylvania will take place in the coming weeks.

Stay tuned for more reflections from the 2022 summer camps.