

## District 8 holds its first retreat for young adults ages 18 and older

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From June 4-7, 2015, District 8 held its first retreat for young adults ages 18 and older. Centrally located at the Y Camp in Boone, Iowa, 28 participants came from all over the district – Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas.

Being the first retreat, its purpose was broad and all-encompassing: to create a space for the young adults to connect to others their age and take time from their busy lives to think and discuss deeper questions about life.

All presentations and activities were optional and the schedule loose, offering plenty of free time. This was greatly appreciated by all the participants who felt they were able to fully relax and have more time to connect with each other.



Speakers from outside the district were also present, including Colorado state pastor Michael Hentrich, and Program Director of CARP, Teresa Ferrete. Teresa shared her life testimony and how CARP became a place for her to develop her skills and add value to society. She also shared the two-fold mission of CARP: how it can offer support and materials for local/ministerial chapters and be an instrument in self-betterment.

On Saturday night a Q & A session was facilitated by Michael. Together he and the participants discussed concerns and questions about challenging and controversial church topics. Michael also shared his personal quest of discovery on coming to terms with these issues. Everyone felt appreciative for

Michael's frank and sincere approach to the questions raised. After the session was over the atmosphere among the group was that of liberation. Participants shared that although exact answers for many questions seemed hard to find, being able to openly discuss without judgement or fear was very meaningful and unburdening.



Throughout the two full days of the retreat, participants were able to participate in spirit opening, muscle toning yoga sessions, short morning reading sessions and World Café styled discussion questions about four different life topics: Relationships, Family, Spirituality, and Work & Career. In the afternoon, exciting activities like zip lining, were offered. The cool weather had participants shy away from swimming on Saturday afternoon. Instead, participants occupied themselves with some intense board game sessions. On Friday night after dinner everyone gathered to hear two incredible sessions given by Mark Gungor via DVD on men/women differences and sex.



Though participants came at different times, some arriving late Friday night or Saturday, the group came together smoothly. It was moving to see people willing to drive hours to join the retreat even for just half a day.

Participants felt grateful to have the time to be together, hear each other's' stories, share their own, and create connections. They shared their highlights and experiences at the close of the weekend, most saying that they appreciated being with others their own age to feel free to express their concerns and questions. Many felt the retreat was a great launching pad for their summer. Participants and staff look forward to similar retreats in the future.