

In GPA Cleanliness is Close to Godliness

Roland Platt
May 14, 2014



Cleaning and gardening the outside of the Minneapolis family church-trying to make a difference starting in just our own back yard of the church, making the surroundings beautiful to inspire the ones around us and make a step towards a better community

No matter what the circumstances, wet and cold or sunny, it's all about the attitude you have. If you can do humble work like cleaning the yard or raking leaves with a joyful and serving heart you can become a person of humility and of responsibility.

On a number of occasions the Minneapolis outreach GPA group was about to clean around the block, and around the yards and streets.... it's a huge job, considering the church center is located in the middle of college town, so we pick up a lot of bottles and nasty trash. But seeing the caretakers of the community church so inspired really makes all the effort worth it.



Witnessing in Minnesota
May 14, 2014

Witnessing on the university of Minnesota campus is so astonishing. An incredulous amount of college student are actually searching, as we witness we have this survey we give asking people questions and one of the questions are " what question would you want to ask God" so many people want to ask God " what is the meaning of life" or " how do attain happiness" and these are things I feel as a unification I've been well educated on these things and have always taken it for granted or didn't realize how many people are looking for these things. Its very important to witness in a small church like in Minneapolis so you can expand but also you can really put yourself to the test. Witnessing really tests your own strengths, your own faith, all of your doubts and questions are answered. It really pushes you to reach out to people from all different backgrounds and remind them we all come from God. At the same time we must take God's point of view, God loves all his children so we must try to love them too. Just be there to listen to them and understand them, sometimes that's all people really want and need. As a group of kids just trying to do God's will, its inspiring just going out there with the pure purpose of letting others in on it as well.

"no judgement, God doesn't see our fallen nature he sees the good.. and that is what we must do when we witness"- Tomoko (witnessing director)



Blessing Workshop in Iowa
May 8, 2014



It was awesome to see representatives from all the districts, Minnesota , Kansas , Iowa and Nebraska come together at the Blessing level one workshop. All young adults really trying to cultivate a true sense of love with God at the center. Also to attain greater knowledge for the future and the blessing, which means including our parents, practicing faith and also means mostly working on ourselves. We all were able to spend time getting to know each other and even though it was just a weekend I feel closer to the district and got a taste of why our parents want this blessing for us. We shared in fellowship. Even though it was a short time so much planning and effort went into it, the place, the food, the speakers; we all had our fair share of work which made the time we had together even more fulfilling. The workshop included intriguing and powerful talks about the family breakdown in America and what we can do to become more prepared for our future family lives. Reverend Sun Myung moon once said ” you should first concentrate on perfecting yourself and then you think of the ideal mate”. That really was something we as young Unificationists and you png adult try to practice becoming mature, have self discipline, self awareness, pure heart, and self worth. During the workshop we shared in discussion of goals, lectures, sports, campfire, praise and worship and on the last day we were able to visit Iowa family church for service. We ended our day serving the community there by painting, tilling, mowing and overall helping the church’s up-keeping. The best part of the workshop was the positivity fun and faith you feel around the people.



Reverend Jensen was an enthusiastic and humorous speaker, he had some great insight as well



Samuel gets dedicated to his service work at the Iowa family church

**WFWP Bridge of Peace Ceremony
April 30, 2014**

Women's federation for World Peace (WFWP) USA is an amazing non-profit organization that was able to hold a moving event in the Minnesota Family Church. WFWP was founded by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to stand for peace and empower women to love and impact their communities positively. It is officially recognized by the United Nations. The WFWP Minnesota was graciously allowed to host the Bridge of Peace Ceremony which has been conducted on occasions before to create bonds of friendship and go beyond boundaries to create lasting peace. "It was a wonderful experience seeing all these different people wanting the same thing" says Halona, a fellow member of Generation Peace Academy. She was expressing the beauty of how so many women from all different walks of life and culture come together to spread positivity toward a world of peace. GPA members helped run the ceremony and set up the beautiful decorations. We had two ushers, two greeters, two for food preparation and two to control parking. Additionally Eri, a most appreciated and helpful member of the church, was able to teach all the girl GPA members a Japanese folk dance. We took a week to practice and perfect this lovely cultural dance to be able to add to the diversity of the Bridge of Peace Ceremony. It was so fun being dressed in kimonos and complete attire to match the occasion of dancing bringing even more light to this illuminating Ceremony. There was a tropical Haitian dance, a fun upbeat Hindi dance and even a traditional Mexican dance. So many different mixes of people all striving for a brighter hope in America. The participants come together



pledge to be encouraging sisters

**Planting a Seed in the “Twin Cities”
April 27, 2014**

After trudging our way through a random snow apocalypse in mid-April, we were warmly welcomed by the church members of the Minneapolis community. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Mr. Jim Bard, our wise public speaking mentor, by Scott, our good-humored choir leader and by Ben and Shizuka, the friendly youth pastors. And of course, we were more than grateful for the hospitality of the cooks who prepared us a delightful supper of spaghetti and garlic bread.

The next morning, we congregated at Panera Bread for breakfast and orientation. At first, our team unity seemed promising. After having our first meeting, we visited the Como Park Zoo & Conservatory without being readily aware that it was near a holy ground site. It’s strange to think that we would have our first outing there of all places, as if we were “led” there by some super natural force. Anyways, it was a great experience, as most would agree, as we toured the beautiful greenhouse gardens and visited the primate house to watch spider monkeys, orangutans, and gorillas behind glass windows. Then, on Saturday, we mingled with the youth group and competed in Easter egg contests. Even more splendid, we walked downtown later that night for a moment’s worth at a boba tea restaurant, and watched “Catching Fire” back home.



GPA and the Minneapolis college youth mingle

To be brief, it seemed like whenever we engaged in fun activities outside the church center to special places with the college youth, we had good times. But, when the time came on Sunday night for us first years to be responsible for spending quality time with each other by our own initiative, things were different. We discovered how easy it was to offend each other and how neglectful we were toward one another's differences. The evening resolved with us pretending to have fun on the surface, while harboring resentment within. There was especially a heated dispute and misunderstanding between the brothers and sisters. It was both the unintended consequence of playing Uno and Apples to Apples and the unavoidable byproduct of personality clashes.

Our team's relationship dilemma was made clear on Tuesday afternoon during the first official team meeting. After being questioned for an honest opinion about the type of culture we had in our group, the common response was that there was "insincerity," "disunity" (people often times dispersing into doing their own things), and "disrespect." There was especially disrespect amongst ourselves and to our central figures; in addition, we admitted to abusing public space, time, and utilities.



GPA team meeting on Tuesday of April 22

We were determined to right our wrongs, how we treated each other and how we handled public space after our sharings. We began the process through apologies and reconciliation within our group. On the next day, we arrived to the holy ground site at the zoo and held a meeting there to propose a clear goal that we could all unite on. We as a whole, agreed that we wanted to be inspirational role models for the Minneapolis community. We ultimately wanted to "ignite" spirit in our church community by inspiring the current members to be more active, and by spreading our faith to people in the local neighborhood through witnessing. But in order to change the community from being stagnant to one that is growing, we had to first change the culture we were practicing within our group. Our founder once said: "If you want something to change, be the first one to change and bring that change in the people." Therefore, the only way to leave a lasting impression on the community is to first overcome our immaturities and learn how to harmonize with one another. That is the foundation for our future success in planting the seeds of a lasting impact here in the "Twin Cities."