

## 24+ Connect Retreat for young adult singles

June 20, 2014



Many Unificationist young adult singles feel a contradiction as part of a faith community in which being a great spouse and parent are among the top values—especially as one nears the “ripe old age” of their mid-20s, 30s and so on. It can be and has been very difficult to feel content and at peace about being single, as some people need more time to discover themselves, to know what they are saying yes to, and to be confident in their ability to make a lifetime commitment. In addition, many people might not feel comfortable starting a matching conversation with a complete stranger; they would like the initial meeting to be more natural and with less pressure, getting to know each other as friends first.

This summer’s 24+ Connect Retreat is an opportunity for our community of singles aged 24 years and older to connect, grow together and prepare for their future relationships. It is just one effort, stemming from several previous events that have been created to support a population in our community that might feel out of place or stuck regarding future relationships.

“It is not a place to feel hopeless together or to vent, nor is it a place to speed-date and review profiles. It is a retreat that exists to get to know new people with similar life experiences, to learn more about oneself and make personal goals and action steps, while gaining connections to a larger community,” explains Wendy Fiala, program coordinator for the 24+ Connect Retreat. “We recognize that being single is a blessing in itself—a unique and crucial time to grow—and that it is a period of celebration as much as it is preparation. As a community we really need to support and encourage our single population to take their time and to wait until they do feel confident and comfortable.”

The Blessing and Family Ministry has found this retreat to be highly valuable over the years. Its goals are creating community, growing together and preparing for one’s future with plenty of opportunities for small group discussions, spending time in nature, relevant presentations and much more. The only requirements to attend are that one is single and between the ages of 24 and 39 years old.

Get more information or register for the upcoming 24+ Connect Retreat on August 21-24 along the beautiful California coastline near Santa Cruz in the redwood forest. <http://24plusconnect.com/>

### ABOUT

We are excited to be hosting the 24+ Connect Retreat for single 24+ Unificationists along the beautiful California coastline near Santa Cruz this summer from Aug. 21-24. The retreat will be held at a campground in a Red Wood Grove with plenty of hiking trails, a beautiful beach just 2-miles away, and delicious, local and organic meals. As your retreat planning team, we believe in good company, good food, and having a good time. We will take care of all the logistics and planning to make this retreat natural and relaxing. If you have any questions, please feel free to email us at [24connect.retreat@gmail.com](mailto:24connect.retreat@gmail.com). Sincerely, Your Retreat Planning Team

Mission: The 24+ Connect Retreat exists to provide the opportunity and resources for the greater 24+ Unificationist singles population to connect, grow together, and prepare for future relationships. Objectives for the 2014 August Retreat:

1. Connect: Participants will meet and get to know over 60 other 24+ Unificationist singles over the course of four days and three nights. They will have opportunities to connect and create community through engaging in various activities, conversations and discussions.
2. Grow Together: Through engaging in activities,

presentations and discussions, participants will have opportunities to reflect on their life experiences, and learn more about what they believe and what they want to achieve in their life. 3. Prepare for Future Relationships: Participants will leave with new ideas of steps they can take to create the marriage and family they desire. Vision Statement: Our 5-year vision is to see a healthy, sustainable and growing community of 24+ individuals of the greater Unificationist community who support each other in their individual growth and preparation for creating a successful partnership in the future. This population will meet regularly both locally and nationally to connect, share knowledge and develop useful skills for relationships, as well as a greater self-awareness. We envision that participants will feel empowered, excited and comfortable to share their views, learn about themselves, receive feedback, and make action steps for their future. They will feel this is a positive and important community for them to be involved in and naturally welcome and encourage their friends to be a part of it. Participants will also play an instrumental role in future 24+ Connect events. Who are the sponsors/organizers: The 24+ Connect Community is supported by Blessing and Family Ministry (BFM) and Blessed Family Association (BFA)

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Dates: 4pm Thursday, August 21 – 1pm Sunday, August 24

Who may attend: Anyone who considers themselves a member of the larger Unificationist community who is single, and between the ages of 24 and 39 years of age is more than welcome to attend. This includes international folks, previously matched/blessed individuals, Jacob generation, blessed children, first generation members, and those who don't necessarily identify as Unificationist or religious.

Location: 24+ Connect Retreat will be held at Monte Toyon campgrounds, just outside of Santa Cruz, CA.

Address: 220 Cloister Lane, Aptos, CA 95003

Cost: The actual cost of the retreat is \$400 (which includes meals, lodging, linens, activities, staff and speaker fees). The BFM would like to help offset this cost by offering a \$100 subsidy to all participants, as well as a 50% travel grant for those who will be traveling over 500 miles to attend. The cost breakdown as is follows:

Early Bird Fee (Before July 20th)

Local : \$300

Non-Local (traveling over 500 miles): \$150

Regular Fee (July 21-Aug 20th)

Local: \$350

Non-Local: \$175

Transportation: If you will be needing transportation from the airport to the retreat site, please make a note on your registration application. We will have a designated staff member organizing airport transportation at cost depending on need. If you will be driving to the retreat and can help transport other participants, please also make a note when you register.

## **SCHEDULE**

The complete and official schedule is still in progress. However, what we can tell you is:

Check-in and registration will begin on-site from 4pm to 6pm on Aug. 21 (Thursday), followed by dinner at 6pm and the beginning of the program at 7pm.

The retreat will conclude at 1pm on Aug. 24 (Sunday) after lunch. For those of you buying your plane tickets, we advise flying out no earlier than 4 or 5pm (depending on which airport).

Some activities, speakers and topics you can possibly expect include:

Conscientious Dating by Rev. Kevin Thompson, Pastor of the Bay Area Family Church

How Functional Are You Right Now? Presentation by Robert Brem, Psychotherapist and Professor at Alameda Community College.

Nonviolent Communication and Relationship Communication Skills Training

World Cafe Discussions

Afternoon Beach Trip

Story Sharing

Skill-Sharing amongst participants

Low-Ropes Course Team Activities

Open Mic/Entertainment night with a fire pit

Opportunities for:

High Ropes Courses

Board Games

Hiking

Relaxing

Basketball

Volleyball

Climbing Wall

## **LOCATION**



24+ Connect will be held at Monte Toyon campgrounds, just outside of Santa Cruz, CA.

Address: 220 Cloister Lane, Aptos, CA 95003

Driving Times:

From San Francisco: 2 hours

From San Jose: 1 hour

From Oakland: 1 hour 45 min.