

January highlights from American Youth Ministries

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February 17, 2017



Tempe, Arizona

We spent time planning for the upcoming year! With the success of last year's consistent execution of Phoenix Club and Teen Night, we are looking to enhance our education plan for high schoolers in our community with a new seasonal workshop focusing on Divine Principle.

– M. Fukuzaki

Little Rock, Arkansas

For this month I hosted the Youth Bash with the theme "Expand." For our activities, we watched the Ted Talk "Expanding Your Circle of Compassion" by Robert Thurman and played games like "Question Your Neighbor" and "Expanding My Heart," and for dinner we had a fun salad bar. The youth had fun and I hope these monthly Youth Bashes can continue.

– B. Rigsbee



Minneapolis, Minnesota

We went in-depth with the youth as to how they reach out or connect to people on a deeper level. We also had other opportunities throughout the month to connect with each other through our God's day celebration and young adult bowling with some District Pastors.

– M. Muyongo

Kodiak, Alaska

A while ago, pastor Greg Odlin visited us from Maine. We asked him to give guidance to

our youth group. He talked about the principle of creation, specifically about individual purpose and whole purpose, as well as subject and object position. I think what the youth needed the most was learning directly from the Divine Principle, and Uncle Greg explained everything really well. This even inspired them to plan a cleaning schedule, which we began after Sunday service.

– A. Whitmore



Kansas City, Kansas

A highlight from this month was going to an escape room which we all escaped! We invited new people and reached out to those who don't often come. Had a nice turnout.

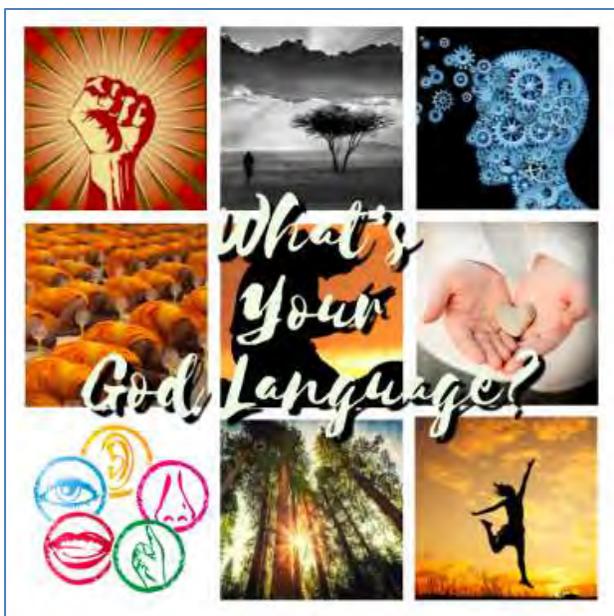
– G. Melgarejo

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We focused on the idea of being able to share who we are. We held a youth group where everyone was able to share about their life of faith. The theme was also incorporated when the youth held a youth

service and shared their winter workshop testimonies. It was the first time for many of them to share their experiences with the entire community. However, it only showed how everyone has a powerful voice that can deeply move others.

– K. Suzuki



– K. Enami

Saint Louis, Missouri

Benroy made a powerpoint presentation of what we had done in the past year, what we have learnt, and what we want to do this coming year.
– S. and B. Renaze-Shimotani

Chicago, Illinois

In our Sunday School classes, we did a trivia game. In that game, everyone came up with several questions for the whole pile, and I randomly selected one for each team to answer for a point. The winning team got good quality candies. Basically the topic was “how would you explain our teachings to a stranger.” We did not judge by right or wrong, but we judged by how much you knew and how well it was explained. I got this idea from the II Shim packet.



to become role models after that!

– M. Manor

Bowie, Maryland

This month we used the national theme of “Expand” to create our own theme of “Be a Compass.” Middle schoolers and high schoolers both were challenged to think about how they can be a compass for others and help guide others to their true north or to God and True Parents. For middle school we focused on doing this through being a good role model for others. Each youth decided on a person they wanted to be a role model for and what they could do to be that. Then they declared it to the world and ran blindly into a bunch of cushions and pillows. They all felt excited



– T. Hagiwara

Tarrytown, New York

Through January and possibly through February, we are focused on our theme of “Empower.” So far we’ve discussed how we can grow ourselves through developing healthy habits. We also spent time discussing how setting goals about who we want to become helps us see the value of spiritual tools that help us to grow. We have guest speakers lined up who will discuss the topics of spiritual habits and the matching and Marriage Blessing.

Clifton, New Jersey

To start off the new year, our theme for the month of January was “your personal relationship with God.” On the second Saturday, we had the high school small group go on an outing while the middle school small groups came to the GO program, and vice versa the third week. During these weeks the staff prepared six stations on how the participants can connect to or discover God through exploring different the God languages.

-Y. Ozawa



Northern Virginia

We had a fantastic Divine Principle half-day workshop led by Toya Nomura. It was actually really refreshing for myself and wonderful to get to know Toya's enthusiasm for the Divine Principle as well as his lecturing style. The youth were really engaged and the turnout was really wonderful. Also we are now committing to bringing our middle school students to Maryland's monthly Dash event. We had such a great time last Saturday!

-J. Jenkins

Columbus, Ohio

Youth pastors got together to plan a new weekly youth event on Thursdays. It will be called "Thank God it's Thursday" (TGIT for short). We will have good games and a talk to help bring our youth back together as a community, to help them understand their identity as young Unificationists, and to help them overcome challenges in their spiritual growth.

- R. Kanazawa



Indianapolis, Indiana

I will share two highlights from this past month: our God's Day celebration and our monthly youth event. On Sunday, January 29, we celebrated God's Day, True Parents' Birthday, and Foundation Day, and after our morning service we had quite a handful of celebratory events, including door-prizes, an UNO tournament, a Billiard's tournament, and lastly a get-together dinner at a local restaurant. As for our monthly youth and

community event, we had a wonderful bowling night on Friday, January 27. It has been a while since we have had a large gathering outside of holiday-based events and good amount of people were able to come despite our initial expectations otherwise.

-N. Nishikawa