

CARP Bay Area's Oakland, CA Chinatown give away of food and school supplies

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"I fell in love with the idea that people from different backgrounds, communities, and ethnicities can come together with one goal in mind: to serve with a true heart of love," said J. Chai, a young Unificationist from Northern California.

On May 29, numerous boxes, bags and crates of fresh fruit and vegetables were unloaded onto tables lining the sidewalks of Chinatown in Oakland, California. Chai, who leads the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles ([CARP](#)), Bay Area chapter, joined dozens of volunteers to give away food and school supplies to one of the city's most vulnerable communities.

"This project showed me that service is able to transform a complete stranger into a new friend," said Chai.



Teaming up with Youth and Students for Peace ([YSP](#)) and Generation Peace Academy ([GPA](#)), the group spent the day distributing food and school supplies to people in need. For the past year, backpacks and other school items were collected by various members of the American Clergy Leadership Conference

([ACLIC](#)), including Drs. Jasper and Veronica Lowery, Elder Mark and Rowena Ellerson, Bishop Andrea Jackson, and Dr. John Ching, among others.

In the early morning, volunteers and community members of all ages and backgrounds began unloading a truck full of food. Working together, they organized everything into giveaway bags at multiple tables.

"The spirit was lively with everyone moving around, working quickly and efficiently with one another to have the event prepared before 11 a.m.," said Chai. "Regardless of being strangers, our hearts of service opened each other up and created a sense of community."



Fresh produce, pastries, and granola bars were part of the food giveaway, while backpacks filled with assorted school supplies, masks, and socks were handed out as well.

"It was really fun interacting with the citizens of Chinatown," said Maddie, a volunteer. "Especially because we all have different cultures from one another. Trying to communicate was enjoyable because I got to try different ways to help people understand us and direct the crowd where to go... With everyone getting together, it was a great experience."

The service project was also a wonderful opportunity to put faith into practice by selflessly helping the Bay Area community, said Chai. A core tenant of the Unification faith is living for the sake of others.

"It was great seeing different backgrounds come together as well as pastors to feed many people," she said. "It was beautiful to see that despite there being a barrier in culture or language, we could all still unite in serving the community with a heart of love."

The group came together after the giveaway, offering prayers in multiple languages to bring unity to Oakland's diverse community.

