

FFWPU USA: *Glimpse of a Blessed Life* Young Adult Retreat In California

Naokimi Ushiroda
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Photos courtesy of YAYAM West

More than a hundred Unificationists recently enjoyed a regional young adult retreat in California focused on faith and relationships in the new year. "We wanted to have an opportunity for young adults to feel nourished and connected," said Gabby, YAYAM West regional coordinator.



From Jan. 20 to 22, participants of the "Glimpse of a Blessed Life" retreat in the Bay Area prepared for life after the matching and Blessing. The intentions of the retreat was to address what blessed life looks like and the ways in which blessed couples are living a principled life. "[This] glimpse of a blessed life [helps] to bridge the gap between the ideal and the reality, and that's exactly what everyone got," said Gabby during a Jan. 31 leaders' meeting report.

With various featured speakers and a retreat staff of five, local participants, as well as many who joined from around the country and Canada, received education on God's "three blessings" to be fruitful, have dominion, and multiply. "The first day was focused on the first blessing," said Gabby, with presenters "sharing about God's love, and how we have to practice this inside out, and how we can do better."

Among the speakers, former BFM Director Yun-A Johnson shared about experiencing God's love through raising a family and personal growth. A panel of seven couples also addressed topics surrounding blessed culture, contributing to the community, different fears and concepts in marriage, and other related subjects. Gabby said hearing the personal testimonies of couples inspired participants to take ownership in their lives and their faith.



"[One couple] shared about stewardship and how they're teaching their children about taking care of the environment and experiencing God's love that way," she said. "Rev. Kevin Thompson also shared how important it is to put God first, and that was a common theme through all of the testimonies - putting God first, and that through Him we can overcome challenges."

Participants were able to deeply connect by discussing the ups and downs that come with marriage and children, while learning and inheriting from each other as well. "Seeing real couples and real families made this workshop absolutely different," shared one participant. "I can see that blessed life is much more attainable for me."

"This [retreat] reminded me of the importance of knowing and trusting that our Heavenly Parent is a loving Heavenly Parent that loves me and wants the best for me," shared another participant. "I want to strive for harmony within myself, with my future spouse, and in the relationships in my life. This weekend gave me comfort, support, and solace."

Retreat organizers said the workshop concluded with participants feeling hopeful and uplifted as they navigate their relationships this year. "It was quite an inspiring retreat," Gabby said. "It made people excited moving forward."

