

## 21 participate in the New Jersey Ocean Church's first Ocean Challenge Program

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Twenty-one Unificationists participated in the New Jersey Ocean Church's first Ocean Challenge Program. From August 22-28, the participants grew to love fishing as they challenged themselves to meet their goals.

Every day, the camp-style Ocean Challenge Program would start at 9 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m., with participants attending on whatever days they could. They received some basic first aid and CPR training, learned to tie knots, and cooked some simple fish recipes. The participants even had a chance to test-drive the boats on the first day.



Participants also had a chance to learn about the history of True Parents' Ocean Providence from Dr. Keisuke Noda, Professor of Philosophy and Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS). One of the program captains, Naria McGee, also gave a lecture about how taking ownership of the ocean is part of human beings' responsibility to fulfill the Third Blessing, in other words, to act as compassionate stewards and caretakers of the created world. To experience other aspects of nature, the participants also went kayaking and explored parts of the New Jersey Meadowlands.



On the last two days of the program, the participants gained a small experience of sleeping on the boat at sea in New York Harbor. Surrounded by a panoramic night view of New York City, the Statue of Liberty, and Jersey City, they caught some striped bass and several bluefish during their stay out on the water.

“Sleeping on a rocking boat can be a challenge,” said Naria. “But it still felt like home as we were greeted by the sunrise, had breakfast, and went back to fishing.”

At the conclusion of the program, many participants were able to take home some of the fish they had caught and share it with their families, in itself a highly rewarding experience!

For more information about the New Jersey Ocean Church and Ocean Challenge Programs, please contact the New Jersey Ocean Church team at [info@ocean.church](mailto:info@ocean.church).

