United News WEEKLY
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. . . the Pursuit of Happiness

by John Elliott, President

It has been 250 years since Thomas Jefferson wrote these now-famous words into the Declaration of Independence: "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The founders enshrined a national ideal that recognized an individual's right to pursue a better life for himself, and Americans have been doing exactly that ever since.



But consider what those 250 years have not produced to the same degree. Searching the United States Constitution from preamble to final amendment, the phrase "serving others" appears nowhere. While it is a civil governing document intended to protect personal liberties, it does not build on a foundation of love for God and neighbor that Scripture does. When we compare a civilization organized around the pursuit of personal happiness with one organized around love for God and neighbor, the results move in very different directions.

We are ambassadors of that coming age, when mankind's pursuit will be the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33). That pursuit will stand in stark contrast to the world we have known.

Psalm 85:10-11 says: "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

The gap between serving others and self-focused pursuits has widened considerably. Recent studies indicate that a culture of increasing self-focus is

shaping behavior more deeply than most people realize, and it is starting earlier in life.

In contrast, our longstanding church culture of personal and organized service to others shines as a visible counterexample to what is happening in society around us. This makes what happens at Feast sites and at United Youth Camps quite noticeable to others. UCG camps operate on a service-oriented model with staffing that approaches nearly one adult volunteer for every camper served. These volunteers include older teens and young adults as well as married and single adults who give their time, energy, and personal vacation time to serve the next generation of the Church.

By sacrificing our time and resources to serve others, we practice Christ's command to love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:31). Serving others is at the very essence of Christ-like behavior. It is a matter of shifting our focus from ourselves to the needs of those around us. When we help others, Matthew 25:40 shows that Christ counts that service as done to Him.

Jesus reinforced this through His own example. He taught that whoever desires to be great must become a servant of others (Mark 10:42-45) and He demonstrated it by washing His disciples' feet. Then He said plainly: "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). The night He spoke that, He also said something that has never lost its directness:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34–35).

By Jesus' own definition, the identifying mark of a disciple of Christ is love expressed in action toward others. In a world increasingly organized around self—its comfort, fulfillment and pursuit of personal happiness—godly love is rare. And because it is rare, it becomes all the more visible when people see it practiced.

Every day presents opportunities to live this way. Within your family, your congregation, workplace and community, the simple act of stepping out to serve—consistently, quietly, without waiting to be asked—stands out in ways it has not in any generation. Hebrews 10:24 encourages us, "Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works."

Pursuing personal happiness for 250 years has not delivered what love for God and neighbor develops. The good news is that God's way of loving others has always been available, requires no constitutional amendment, and begins whenever you and I do it. May each of us be found practicing agape love—serving God, serving His people, and preparing for His coming Kingdom.

Ambassador Bible College







Bible Classes Held in Chile

by Benjamin Light, Senior Manager International Services

Beginning on Sunday, June 28, 65 participants came together for a week in Santiago, Chile to be a part of the Colegio Biblico, (a week-long Bible Course which brought together participants and instructors from seven different countries—Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala and the United States). We have greatly enjoyed the time together learning more about God's way, His word, and getting to know one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

We have received instruction in theology, doctrine, apologetics, prophecy, mentorship, servant leadership, discipleship, history, and much, much more. We've also been sharing meals, gathering together for breakfast, lunch and dinner at the Church hall in Santiago, giving us much time to fellowship and grow in relationship with one another. We are grateful to the incredibly hard work and love of those who are hosting us all.

It is encouraging to see so many dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ from so many locations in Latin America who have gathered to learn more about God, and what serving Him and His people requires. We're excited for the remainder of the week, and for the coming Sabbath together in Santiago.

Thank you for your prayers for continued success and safety for those traveling home at the conclusion of our time together.

United Youth Camps





Camp Report—Philippines

Eden Nature Park Resort hosted 49 campers, 44 staff members and nine mini-campers for this year's United Youth Camp. The daily Christian living classes were reinforced with daily quizzes and service workshop activities (including personality development, principles of public speaking, Bible journaling and notetaking, songleading and advanced public speaking for boys, unleavened bread making and flower arranging for girls, and a dance workshop).

The Seven Elements of "the Zone" were also demonstrated in the outdoor sports activities including basketball, soccer, volleyball and challenging sky rides.

Campers along with some staff and mini-campers eagerly hiked a 2.6-kilometer mountain trail during the wilderness and forest trekking activity, courageously crossing treacherous bridges, and experiencing how to catch and grill fish outdoors.

Campers learned from a selection of basic skills workshops including cooking and baking, keychain making, artificial flower bouquet making, bag charm making, basic sewing, basic carpentry, basic plumbing, basic car maintenance, graphic design and basic AI literacy.

Mr. Evasco remarks, "This year's camp with the theme 'Follow Me' was the most memorable UYC. The campers were keyed up with the Christian living classes so much so that the lessons spilled over the games and activities that followed, reflecting the lessons for each day!"

Richard John Macaraeg

(The full report, along with additional photos will be included in the print *United News.)*

Upcoming Events

July
5-12: Southwest Camp - Prescott, AZ
12-15: Camp Ironwood - Stewartville, MN
12-15: Camp Ochoco - Prineville, OR
19-26: Camp Woodland - Temple, GA
19-26: Northwest Camp - Rockaway Beach, OR
26-29: Camp Buckeye - Delaware, OH
26-29: Camp Seven Mountains - Spring Mills, PA

August
7-9: Women's Enrichment Weekend - Portsmouth, OH
14-17: Indianapolis Regional Young Adult Weekend - Nashville, IN
16: ABC Welcomes Class of 2027 - Milford, OH
16: Northwest Kids' Rodeo - Portland, OR

September
6: Gear Grinder Bike Ride - Twin Cities Minnesota
12: Feast of Trumpets
21: Day of Atonement
26-Oct. 2: Feast of Tabernacles