



## December 2023

### Camp Update

*Fall seemed to crash through our summer with amazing speed this year and now we are already headed into winter! So please allow me to play catch up, beginning with our 2023 Camp programs. Our last newsletter featured the joys of Camp Fiesta, but three other great camps, made possible by our sponsors, are also newsworthy.*

Camp My House (ages 8-12) and Camp One Another (teens) were both held at Angeles Crest Christian Campground which offered an array of activities for our campers like a pool with water slides, a zip line, a climbing wall, hiking trails, canoes, laser tag, and archery. The children learned how to be a “house” that God dwells in and the teens learned how to love one another. Both the counselors from The Way Out Ministries and Angeles Crest gave these campers a lot of love, planted seeds of faith, and brought a lifetime of memories!

Bragging rights are in order for these two camps. Our teens were awarded Camp Champs for Bible memory and team competitions and received special camp tee shirts! We are also proud to announce that My House camper, Ezra, from The Way Out Ministries was awarded Summer Camper of the Year by the Angeles Crest director for demonstrating grace, kindness, honesty, and an exemplary camp spirit. Our campers and counselors made The Way Out shine!

Our summer finale ended with Family Camp where families shut off their electronic devices and turned on to one another for an outdoor camping adventure in the San Bernardino Mountains. Hiking, fishing, lake play, campfires, and a worship service under the trees were all a part of this great weekend. *Thank you sponsors for making all of these camps available this past summer! Please be sure to visit our website at [thewayout.org](http://thewayout.org) to see all of our camp videos and special highlights.*



*Ezra with counselor Frazier at Camp My House -- Friends at Camp My House – Nicole is ready for the zip line at Camp One Another!*

*Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at [kgilmore@rca.org](mailto:kgilmore@rca.org) to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.*

## A Community Treat

Halloween can certainly be a hollow celebration when left to the Devil, but The Way Out Ministries brought fun and the light of Christ to this year's Trunk or Treat community outreach. A dozen themed cars featured games, candy, and conversation—and we had a lot of guests to invite to our church and weekly programs. A taco plate and soda were also given to our guests. It was a great time to interact with the community and to remind them that Jesus is still here—offering light in the darkness.

## God Is Working

It seems as though the modern-day teenager is lost—looking for something more than they can see, feel, and hear. They are taught that nothing is more important than their identity, feelings, and school. Youth today are more educated, publicly supported, informed, and entertained—yet more conflicted and depressed than ever before. Working with a middle school or high school student can be challenging and sometimes heartbreaking. As a pastor and Youth Director at The Way Out Ministries for 15+ years, I have the opportunity to meet with many of these kids every week. God is at work in them and He gives constant reminders of that hope.

I have learned that faithfulness, consistency, and relationships produce life-long disciples of faith. It brings me such joy to see many of our youth now leading small groups, serving at outreaches, and living for Jesus day by day. David, who was once in my youth group, has even become one of our team members here at The Way Out.

There were many times, when working with these same kids in the past, that I felt exhausted and defeated, but by the grace of God, I pressed on to invest in them, and the harvest was well worth the labor! I want to share a random note that I received from one such teen who is now a young adult:

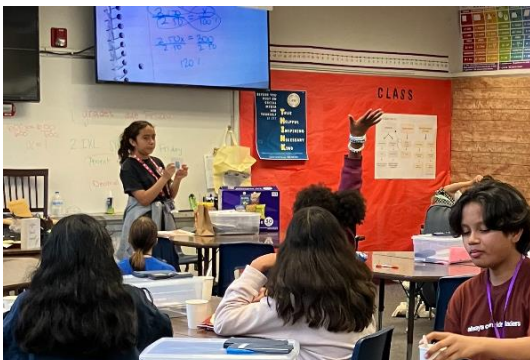
*Hey Ryan. Just got to thinking and I'm so thankful for y'all. I don't think I'd get this close to God if it wasn't for the ministry. I've been to other churches before, but this one is the only one that really got me closer and brought out my belief and trust in God. I'm closer than I've ever been. Again thank you and all the people at The Way Out.*



*D. Jesus Revolution comes to Trick or Treaters.*



*David, once in youth group, now works at The Way Out.*



*Reylenn, teaches weekly Bible club at her school.*

Small moments like this are God's sweet reminders that He is always at work, even when we don't realize it. I was also blessed recently when one of my new teens, who had transitioned from our Children's programs, came to me and said "I want to start a Bible club at my school. I don't know what to do, can you help?" Her mom later told me, "She takes notes every Monday night so she can be ready to teach a Bible club she's starting." Reylenn is a sweet girl who is naturally timid and shy, but she stepped out in faith to bring Christ to her peers. I am so proud of her willingness to be bold! Reylenn is now leading that weekly Bible club on her school campus. I was able to teach this past week, and it was such a blessing to see her excitement to build healthy relationships and share the truth with her classmates.

*RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.*

Be encouraged, whether you are a youth leader, a parent, a friend, or a teen yourself. God is always at work in your life and in those around you. Look for Him. He is certainly at work at The Way Out Ministries. Please pray that God will give them a relationship that brings hope, peace, love, and guidance in a world that is so hard to navigate. Don't give up, but *"press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us to in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14)*. Thank you for your faithful support that continues to provide the way out for so many and allows me to give my all for the call.

- Ryan