



TRANSFORMING LIVES

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Summer 2013

OUR VISION...To provide a life-transforming fellowship with Christ

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Leader Profile



Bro. David Page grew up in the Ashram movement and now is making a profound difference in the hearts and lives of youth and young adults. They value the quality and content of the David's leadership in the California Ashram events so much that they ask to come back after they finish high school. David and the Ashram Leadership Team now have a track for young adults. If you would like to participate in an online conversation (webinar) designed for Local Ashram Directors and Youth Leaders to talk with Tom Albin and David Page, please email Lisa Chandler in the Central Office. We will schedule this event soon.

PRAY FOR THESE UPCOMING CHRISTIAN ASHRAMS!

June 30-July 5

[Redwood](#) in Boulder Creek, CA

July 5-7

[Saskatchewan](#) in Cymric, Saskatchewan CANADA

July 8-11

[Iowa-Nebraska](#) in Fremont, NB

July 13-18

[Atlantic](#) in Berwick, Nova Scotia CANADA

July 17-20

[Kansas](#) in Sterling, KS

July 19-21

[British Columbia](#) in Abbotsford, British Columbia CANADA

(Click on link or visit our website for more information on each of these)

A TRANSFORMING TESTIMONY

Lives were transformed and new directions established at the April 2013 meeting of the United Christian Ashram Board of Directors.

After the welcome by President Escamilla, Board



members shared in the same way we do in the local Ashram during the Open Heart; and, at the end of the meeting, we concluded with the Overflowing heart. I can tell you without hesitation that the Holy Spirit was at work throughout the meeting. The times of discussion were open and honest. The times of worship, singing and prayer were inspiring. The memorial service and the service of healing touched me deeply. I wish each one of you could have been with us.

As a result of our prayer and discernment, the following actions were taken:

- Gordon Ross of Canada was selected as the newest member of "The Four" who care for the soul of the Ashram (see above)
- Rev. Tom Nisbett will lead the campaign to match the \$100,000 anonymous gift received in December
- Revised Bylaws adopted, a Policy and Operating Procedures Manual approved, and new Board Members Elected
- A new local church 2-Day Ashram model was approved
- A planning team for the 75th Anniversary of the Ashram in North America was established with Rev. Jon Tellerio, V.P., as chair
- We celebrated the national story about "New Hope for Christian Ashrams" published in the Methodist Reporter (see page 2)
- We gave thanks to God for all the International Ashrams (see picture below)

God is at work in the Ashram movement and we need your prayers and participation now – more than ever!

Tom Albin, Executive Director

Japan Christian Ashram 2013



第44回城北アシュラム 池の上キリスト教会 2013.2.11

New Hope for Christian Ashrams

Reprinted and edited from the United Methodist Reporter, April 5, 2013 Posted by [Sam Hodges, Managing Editor](#)

The Christian Ashram began in 1930, when E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973), the great Methodist missionary, preacher and author, adapted a spiritual renewal practice he encountered in India.

At their height, when Jones was still helping to lead them, Christian Ashrams were occurring regularly over much of North and South America, and on other continents. But the movement has been in decline, and recent years have seen fewer than 40 events, with smaller and older crowds.



The California Winter Christian Ashram, Feb. 16-18, 2013 at Camp Maranatha in Idyllwild, CA, drew a diverse group, including several families.

Photo Courtesy Tom Albin

Now, a comeback may be in the works, thanks to two developments.

The first is that Tom Albin joined the United Christian Ashrams (UCA) staff as interim executive director (through a partnership with the UMC General Board of Discipleship).

The second is that Anne Mathews-Younes, granddaughter of E. Stanley Jones, arrived at a December meeting with news of an anonymous gift \$100,000 gift for UCA to help the efforts to kick-start the movement.

“We have interpreted this as God’s affirmation that we were moving in the right direction,” Albin said. “The gift is also a reminder that God can and does supply the needs of a ministry through the faithful and generous stewardship of ordinary people.”

“There’s no other event that I know that is as intentional about enabling lay people to go back into their local churches and make a difference in terms of evangelism, but also social concerns,” said Bro. Roberto Escamilla, board chair of the UCA, regarding the need for Christian Ashrams.

Changed Lives

Christian Ashrams generally occur at camps or retreat centers over a weekend, but can be longer and shorter. They are ecumenical (though United Methodist representation is generally strong), and families with children are welcome.

The structure is bookended, with participants stating a spiritual need to the group at the outset (such as for more patience or greater capacity for forgiveness) and at the end saying what they’ve gained from the experience. In between, there is Bible study, teaching, singing, a healing service, periods of silence and periods of working together to improve the facility where the event is held.

“People can manage to get themselves all fouled up, and the Ashram is a pretty good place to get all that sorted out,” said Russell Gregory, who organizes the annual summer Christian Ashram near Marshall, Texas. “I’ve seen people turn their lives around. I’ve seen families turn their lives around.” This Texas event has been going since the late 1940s, and last year drew 217 people.

There are many spiritual renewal events including as the Walk to Emmaus and the Academy for Spiritual Formation offered by The Upper Room. “The Christian Ashram is unique in the way it allows the leaders to listen first to the heart-felt need of the participants”, according to Tom Albin, “and the opportunity for the whole family to experience the transforming presence and power of God together.”

“It helps people to internalize and incarnate the answer to their needs,” observed President Escamilla. “Brother Stanley used to say, ‘We don’t give you an answer. We enable you to *be* the answer.’”

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**** Please send us photos and testimonies from your local Ashram!
We would love to feature them in the next issue of Transforming Lives.**

INTERNATIONAL ASHRAMITES... Please send us your email contact as soon as possible to assure that you will continue to receive your copy of the “Transforming Lives” newsletter. Send your name and email address to newsletter@christianashram.org.