



United Youth Camp and Ambassador Bible College Sampler, South Africa: 24 to 31 December 2017

Following on from the success of the UYC Camp held in 2016 the 2017 camp was planned. The 2016 camp combined pre-teens and teens into one camp allowing parents of pre-teens to attend with their young children. This also raised the idea of an Ambassador Bible College Sampler being done in conjunction with the 2017 camp. Allowing the parents to be occupied during camp activities as well as any other adult members wishing to attend.

No one could have anticipated the success of both a combined camp (pre-teen and teen) and ABC Sampler all in one. Yet the week went off highly successfully.

The 2017 UYC Camp and ABC Sampler was held at the Amanzi Private Game Reserve just 13 kilometres north of Brandfort in the Free State in South Africa. We had 84 registered in total, made up of 20 campers, 6 staff and 57 ABC attendees and 1 bus driver. 10 of the ABC attendees were Portuguese speaking brethren. Two from Brazil and 8 from Angola.

The UYC activities and the ABC Sampler were run in parallel with breaks and meals coordinated.

ABC Sampler attendees enjoyed 8 hours a day of ABC presentations on the Book of Acts and the Epistles, presented by Darris McNeely and Steve Myers. Simultaneously the UYC Campers enjoyed 8 hours of activities comprised of dancing, Christian Living, soccer, volleyball, French cricket, art, swimming, horse riding, archery, a trail walk and game drives.

The **ABC Sampler** attendees were also able to go on one game drive during the week while the presenters alternated the same class at those times as only half of the ABC attendees could go on the game drive at one time and therefore the group was sent on two separate game drives on alternate days.



Question and answer sessions also formed part of the ABC presentations allowing the attendees to ask questions on the specific topics of difficult scriptures to the benefit of all attending.

It was joked among some of the attendees that the 8 hours a day and the volume of information given would result in them receiving a degree at the end of the week.

With two presenters and 8 hours a day for five days allowed for classes, each presenter gave 20 hours of classes during the week.

As we had 10 Portuguese speaking brethren at the ABC Sampler, Jorge De Campos was translating the presentations in real time via a short-range FM transmitter for the Portuguese speaking members. The same was done on the Sabbath for the sermons given by Steve Myers and Darris McNeely. As a result, Jorge De Campos spent 42 hours live translating the presentations, question and answer sessions and sermons during the week.



A bible study was included on the Thursday evening by Darris McNeely as a request from the attendees wanting to have a better understanding of prophecy and current world events.



The mix of pre-teens and teens for the **UYC Camp** does create a challenge for the activities. However, the camp resulted in a huge success as those young and old were able to engage very well. The younger children challenged the older ones while the older teens encouraged and helped the very young children.

The children truly showed what it is to be “childlike”, to get along and to be able to enjoy everything. The variety of activities meant each child was able to express their characteristics, strengths and abilities. The

children ranged in age from 1 year old to 19 years old.

With the time of the year that the camp is held it meant that on the night of 25 December that we had to braai our own meat and serve our own dinner. This turned into a good serving opportunity as we had an African-American braai with Darris McNeely and Neil Wallis who did the braai. Dinner this evening was followed by marshmallows on the fire which was something that our Portuguese visitors had not experienced before.



Except for the days where we had game drives for the children, each day was started with dance class and a Christian Living class. As the hall was to be used for the ABC presentations, the dance classes were held first to allow the children to vacate the hall in time for the first ABC session of the day.



The Christian Living sessions were held next to the leopard, caracal, meerkat and monkey enclosures. Before the Christian Living session would get into detailed discussion, interesting facts of each of the animals was discussed with the children as an appreciation of some of God’s beautiful creation.

The Christian Living sessions focused on three basic points to be practiced at the camp and to ultimately become a part of our daily lives. Session one focused on Luke 6:31 – treat others as you like to be treated, even if they are not treating you as you wish to

be treated. The second session focused on 1 Thessalonians 5:18 – in everything give thanks. In everything, as even the negative situations give us lessons to learn and grow from for which we can become stronger and learn. Session three focussed on 1 Corinthians 10:13 – God is faithful to not allow you to be tested beyond what you are able to bear. As we learn in dance class or the progression of grades at school so God helps us through life to be able to graduate through the tests of life as we get stronger and more able.



Kathy De Campos planned and prepared the art classes, and with the help of Kathe Myers and Debra McNeely graciously gave art classes for the campers. The campers completed four art projects – silhouette savannah scene, giraffe stationary holder,

“alcohol paint” coasters and bead bracelets. All of which was beautifully displayed for their parents and other ABC attendees on the last day.

Horse riding was an activity that the older children or those wanting to try could do. While they did horse riding the remaining children enjoyed archery sessions. The first archery session was sunny and dry while the second one (although under cover) was carried out during a lovely South African thunder storm and involved getting a little wet and muddy.



To add to this as the rain lifted but still continued lightly we were all able to enjoy a walk back to the dorms in the light rain. This only helped to make it more memorable with the hot days we had been experiencing for most of the camp.



Some quick thinking allowed for the older boys to catch a lift on one of the venue’s golf carts as it came past in the rain. The rest of the children still enjoyed the thrill of a walk in the rain.

To alleviate the heat on most days swimming was held mid afternoon or at the end of the day. No formal swimming lessons were held but this did not stop some of the older or experienced swimming campers from showing those that had not swum much if at all before, how to do it. This

did result in several having improved swimming abilities by the end of the camp.

Another favourite in the pool, due to the oval shape of the pool and its shallowness, was when the campers would go around in the pool in the same direction creating a “water tornado”.

The big favourite of the campers and some of the ABC attendees was the game drives. The two-hour game drives allowed the viewers to see; Warthog, Impala, Springbok, Giraffe, Waterbuck, Lechwe, Zebra, Kudu, Nyala, Lion, and tortoise. The giraffe had recently had babies so there was a 6-month-old baby giraffe and an 8-week-old baby giraffe to be seen.



The game drives also include a stop off on top of a hill where the campers could get off the vehicles and enjoy a snack and a drink while watching the giraffe and buck nearby walk past them in the trees and fields below



On the Friday evening at the end of the camp and sampler everyone went up to the viewing deck which overlooks the watering holes. We enjoyed a drink and snack with fellowship and a view of the variety of God's creation at the start of the weekly Sabbath.



On the Sabbath, the service and song leading were conducted by one of the senior boy campers – Jesse Schuller. With the sermons given by Darris McNeely and Steve Myers. Four visitors from Klerksdorp also joined us for services.



One highlight of the Sabbath fellowship and treats were two cakes prepared by Mariana Simons especially for the camp. The one cake had the Ten Commandments on it printed on rice paper in both English and Portuguese. The other cake had a wildlife scene on it with animals and two campers wearing the camper shirt colours of this camp. Definitely a lot of thought went into both.



Mariana had also been delegated the role of organising biscuits and rusks for the duration of the camp. She did this so well that there was an excess of biscuits and rusks at the end of the camp which were then donated to the various areas to take back for services the next Sabbath.



As an added highlight to the Sabbath, the baptism of Calvin Enslin occurred in the afternoon, with the elder from Gauteng, Arthur Fisher conducting the baptism.

Feedback from those attending the camp has been positive with constructive suggestions for the next camp to be incorporated where possible.