Set Apart Space Program in Papua New Guinea

Written by Zebedy Bahude, served as a camp counselor at Caroline Furnace in 2023

The Set Apart Space program is initiated and pioneered by English Youth St Andrew Parish of Lae City circuit Yabim District ELC-PNG. This initiative is the result of the cross-culture experience of volunteers who was sent by ELC-PNG to Germany and USA to participate in a youth development program. The return of these volunteers has shared light among the fellow youth members through sharing of their experience in a new culture.

The initiated program called “Set Apart Space” is a special program that is designed to accommodate positive development of human psyche especially on children and young people, this development encompasses moral behaviour based upon Christian principles, it also encourages leadership growth and spiritual development. The primary focus is to provide a space where children and young people are given an opportunity to freely represent their thoughts and ideas through relational faith-centered activities.

During the initiation of this program Yanam Tamu and Zebedy Bahude have shared their experience to help develop this Set Apart Space Program. Yanam Tamu who was a volunteer who went to Germany for a year program said “One of the significant things he experience was the importance of life, especially the value of each and every human being on earth regardless of who you are or what you do, you may be the janitor or a plumber, a CEO or a carpenter each and every human being are equal, treating people as human is the foremost human interaction I came to notice. We preach about being a steward but we are not practically living it out, we are not caring for one another.” Mr. Tamu said we have been preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ for so long but we are not living the word we preach, it’s a huge challenge I see.

Zebedy Bahude who was also a volunteer went to USA to work as a summer camp international counselor shared some of his experience on how we can work in collaboration as a Christian community to foster the growth of our children and young people based upon Christian principle and moral values. Mr. Bahude said we have so many great youth development programs, both government and Churches, however our implementation approaches are poor. We are not being creative, and update with current change that is happening. On the other hand, we are not creating enough space for children and young people to take responsibility and exercise their Christian duty to be a better steward.

This initiated program (Set Apart Space) extends beyond physical infrastructure, it is a space were we care for one another and our environment, a space were we encourage moral obligation, a space were we feel alright to ask the most difficult questions for instance is God

real? Do you believe in God? My life has no meaning. A space were we discuss climate change, political injustice, corruption etc.

With this idea, we, the English youth, had piloted our first life changing faith-cantered Set Apart Space program which was held from 14-16 of June 2024.

Our Program begins on Friday 14th with an opening service and ends on Sunday 16th. We had over 20 participants including facilitators which we gather into groups and involved in various activities. We had a lot of fun with our activities like, nature walks, team building games, arts and crafts, storytelling, sky gazing, creek walk, taught provoking questions and many more.

Within this Set Apart Space program, children and young people have given an understanding and practicality of how they can become the SALT OF THE EARTH AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD MATTHEW 5:13-14 which is the theme of our 3 day program and is also the theme of ELC-PNG for next 1 year.

One of our activities was to have a nature walk, and we exposed children and young people to the trees and river and the surrounding environment. We had a moment of silent and felt the freshness of nature and environment around us. Those activities create awareness of the significant of environment and establish concern to be a responsible steward.

We have done so much within this Set Apart Space. We also encourage children and youth to represent themselves well within this space. We give the opportunity to each and every one of them to represent their taught and ideas through thought provoking activities, asking questions and discussing openly. We encourage leadership growth and confident within our activities.

Our program also aims to unite individuals as much as possible within the world of systematic injustice that is fragmenting our societies, communities and families. We uphold the Lutheran World Federation theme: ONE BODY, ONE SPIRIT, ONE HOPE Ephesians 4:4.

This is the Set Apart Space extend beyond chapel or cathedral or of any physical infrastructure, a space were we foster growth through relational faith centered activities. We encourage divine intervention through scripture reading prayer and discussion. All our activities are faith centered based on biblical principles and moral values.



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