



Christian Encounter NEWSLETTER

STUDENT PROFILE

Andrew

Andrew’s family uprooted from Kansas to move to California at the start of the pandemic in 2020. They had lived in Kansas for ten years, where they had established a faith community and Andrew had a good group of friends. He was baptized in front of this community at age twelve by his father, an associate pastor at the church. “I think I really did have a heart for the Lord back then. It was really good to be raised in the church.”

The cross-country move took place as Andrew was entering high school and the family was navigating several transitions. Classes were meeting online and social gatherings were limited. His friends back in Kansas had been an anchor, and he was drifting now. Though Andrew continued to attend church regularly, the words from the pulpit fell on deaf ears.

When classes began meeting in person again, Andrew gravitated toward the wrong crowd. His parents tried different measures to intervene, but Andrew was resistant and refused to engage with his

counselors. His parents began looking into out-of-home placement for their son.

Andrew arrived at the Ranch just after Thanksgiving. There were a couple of students at the time who were constantly pushing the bounds of the program, stirring dissension amongst the student body. Though Andrew was not an active participant, he assented to their attitudes and behavior.

One night he was lying awake in bed talking with one of his roommates. He had been distant from God for so long he didn’t know how to pray anymore. Spiritual practices seemed hollow and strange. His roommate said, “Just treat God as your friend and talk to him.”

Andrew began to build deep and meaningful relationships with the students and interns. “God started to work on me through these people.

(cont. on pg. 3)



DIRECTOR'S VIEW

Forgive

A couple of years ago, a girl at the Ranch shared with me how she felt wronged—someone in her life had failed her. She had tried to do the right thing and went to talk through it (there was no personal danger in this situation), but the other person did not make the changes she wanted. Along the way, she faced a decision: should she forgive this person?

She wasn’t sure what to do. These

days our society seems to say forgiveness enables abusers, doesn’t hold people accountable, is self-degrading, and mostly just inauthentic posturing. Forgiveness undermines justice. If she forgave, would she be feeding the problem?

But what happens if we don’t forgive? Resentment—the result of not forgiving—affects us

psychologically (unregulated emotions, anxiety, depression), relationally (loss of trust, built-up anger that redirects toward others), and even physically (issues with digestion, immunity, cardiovascular health, etc.). If we

don’t forgive, we get stuck at that spot, essentially trapped in a prison under the power of the one who wronged us, unable to move on. Nelson Mandela, Carrie Fisher, and St. Augustine are all credited with the famous quote: “Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”

(cont. on pg. 3)



How could she forgive without compromising justice or harming herself?

Events Calendar

Agony Kickoff Training Ride

Saturday, May 4th, 9:30am

See right for details

Spring Serve Day

Saturday, May 18th, 9am - 1pm

Year-end Celebration & Graduation

Saturday, June 1st, 10:30am

Family Camp

Friday, June 28th - Monday, July 1st

42nd annual Agony Ride

July 26th - 27th

Sign up today: agonyride.org



Agony Kickoff Training Ride

Thinking about riding this year? Join experienced staff riders for a morning ride on the American River Trail in Sacramento. All experience levels are welcome. Meet at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery at 9:30am.

Come and bring a friend!

Material Needs List

Consumable goods

Ultimate Frisbees
High-quality soft-touch volleyballs
Energy bars
12-16 oz Disposable cold cups
Heavy duty paper plates 8" & 10"
Paper napkins (every day style)
Heavy duty foil
Gallon & quart sized zip-lock food storage bags
Dishcloths
Potholders
Aprons
Lumber (2x4s, 4x4s, plywood)
Work gloves

Featured needs

Walk-behind trencher
Shipping container

Guys' Igloo Trip

One of the students hoped for a blizzard on their trip, and they received over two feet of snowfall during their four days. They had excellent snow for building igloos and tubing!



Andrew (cont. from pg. 1)

I slowly started to change the way I did things and the way I acted. The healing and growth was from Him.” Whereas before coming to the Ranch Andrew maintained a different image at school than at home or at church, here all pretenses began to fall away.

“Six months in I decided I really wanted to have a relationship with Him. I thought, ‘I literally have nothing else to cling to. What do I do?’ Getting drunk or high is an instant fix and you feel like you can cope. But clinging on to this strand of hope [in God] is ultimately more comforting - this comfort doesn’t run out.”

As the days got warmer and school was let out, Andrew spent long hours working outside, tending to the property. Summer evenings were spent fishing and relaxing. The pacing of the summer schedule allowed Andrew to build stamina and character. The 15-day backpacking trip signifying the end of summer provided more opportunities to grow in leadership and relationships.

With one more quarter of high school left, Andrew considered his options for his future. “If you told me a year ago I would be going to Bible college this year, I would have laughed in your face.”

Andrew cites Ezekiel 36:26 as a point



Andrew with trip participants and staff member Austin Sather at Downey Lake.

of prayer for his peers: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

“I think, ‘If it’s possible you did that with me, then you can do that in this other person.’ ”

Andrew received his high school

diploma last month with his family and extended family in attendance for the occasion. He returned home and plans to attend a discipleship program in the Greater Sacramento area in the fall.

Zoya Lee

Forgive (cont. from pg. 1)

How could she forgive without compromising justice or harming herself? As usual, the Bible helps us. In fact, forgiveness is at the very heart of the Gospel. The more we understand our own sin, the more we understand our desperate need for forgiveness. As we understand how much and how completely we’ve been forgiven, we are empowered to forgive others.

Matthew 18 shows us that forgiveness does not mean to stop pursuing justice or accountability. This means someone can call the police to arrest an abuser, and yet still choose to forgive the wrongdoer, releasing the resentment. Forgiveness doesn’t mean to enable or set no boundaries. In severe situations someone can forgive and also know they need to never even be around the perpetrator unless they demonstrate heart change and consistently different behavior.

The Bible also addresses the emotional turmoil we face with forgiveness. One

snippet: the Gospels show us forgiveness and anger can coexist. Jesus was angry. Each time, it was at the sin of the very people He came to die for. His anger was birthed out of His love for those sinning and those harmed by the sin. His forgiveness didn’t negate His anger, and His anger didn’t preclude His forgiveness. Everything flows from His love.

Jesus’s forgiveness is at the center of everything, because forgiveness is giving up the right to demand repayment for the wrong done. It requires sacrifice; the cost has to be borne. Ultimately, the cost of repayment for the whole world’s sin had to be borne. When we look to the cross, we see Jesus—the only one who could—paying that cost, and forgiving our sin.

The more we understand how much we’ve been forgiven, the easier it is to forgive. As we forgive, we are freed to move forward. It isn’t simple or easy, and it may take a long time. But on the cross, Jesus made it possible!

Nate Boyd, Executive Director

STAFF INTRODUCTION



Former intern Danika Young joined the staff as the new Girls’ House Leader in January. Danika is from Winchester, CA and studied Christian Ministries at Azusa Pacific University.

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In memory of Alison Arcadi, given by:
Michael Arcadi
Greg & Diane Boyd

In memory of William Boyd, given by:
Greg & Diane Boyd

*In memory of Jack & Margaret Haden,
given by:*
Greg & Diane Boyd

In memory of Florence Lucille, given by:
Reanna Valentine

In memory of Jim Parker, given by:
Doug & Anita Bellinger

In memory of Jane Sanderson, given by:
Steve & Leslie Harris

In memory of Joseph J. Storer, given by:
Wil Snyder

In memory of Virginia Tobias, given by:
Joy Maas

HONORARIUMS

*In honor of Mrs. Roy Amyx, given
by:*
Rex Amyx

In honor of Tom Kern, given by:
Lyndall & Cathy Propst

*In honor of Jim & Marion Parker,
given by:*
Grace Fujii

*In honor of Cassandra L. Peters,
given by:*
Marvin & Diane Dawson

*In honor of Mike & Susie Petrillo,
given by:*
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*In honor of Austin & Lindsay Sather,
given by:*
David & Vicki Datt

*Christian Encounter
is a non-profit, non-
denominational, residential
community helping 16- to
24-year-olds by providing
love, spiritual guidance,
high school education,
counseling, and 24-hour
supervision. Internships are
offered to young adults 21
years and older. We are a
member of the Evangelical
Council for Financial
Accountability, and all gifts
are tax deductible.*

