

Relaunching AACF USC

Written by Jon Liu

Kylie and I have been going to USC every week since mid-September. We have been laboring to relaunch AACF USC. We're picking up where faithful students and campus ministers left off.

This relaunch started when my colleague, Victor Quon the AACF Director of Strategic Relations, recruited two AACF students (Daniel Lui, from UCR, and Vera Cordeta, from UCSB) to promote an AACF relaunch. 15 USC students responded who wanted to hear more about AACF. At our first meeting, there were five young adults who were prepared to minister to these 15 students. We had a mini worship team, an icebreaker planned, enough snacks to feed 20 students, and I prepared a speech to introduce AACF. We had one student show up; he wasn't even one of 15 students who signed up for receive more information! Our plans were turned upside down. Instead we spent time in worship and prayer. It was an intimate setting to truly fellowship. That freshman, Leighton, said that evening was just what he needed. Since that meeting, Leighton has faithfully attended every AACF meeting. The three of us (Kylie, Leighton, and I) meet weekly for bible study.



AACF USC Bible Study

We open with worship integrated with prayer, study scripture, and then spend a few minutes talking about reaching the USC campus. Of course, we have snacks! I would describe our bible studies as intimate and mutual. Even though I am leading the bible studies and we're in different life stages, it feels like we're peers. Each person authentically shares; and we support one another. We leave refreshed and reminded of our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ.



AACF USC at an Overflow A Cappella Concert

In mid-November, our student attendance increased! AACF USC has seen a handful of freshmen and upperclassmen visit! We even have a new believer attending our weekly Bible Study. The Lord is leading students who need a community like AACF to our bible studies. Our prayer is that we can be a group that reaches the lost at USC. Please pray for Kylie and me. We both have other obligations to work, class (Kylie is clearing her credentials and I am taking a non-profit management class), church, and family. AACF is a significant commitment. Pray that we can continue to minister to college students at USC. Pray for AACF USC. As we begin to grow, may the students connect with one another and become a community of believers who will support and challenge one another.

Kylie and I are grateful for this opportunity to serve in the relaunch of AACF USC.

AACF South BAE

Written by Jon and Kylie Liu

Kylie and I sat as panel members for an AACF Relationships Seminar: South BAE (pronounced bay). A play on words, a portion of west Los Angeles is known as the South Bay; and BAE is slang for “before anyone else,” or a shortened version of baby or babe, another word for sweetie.” As one of the three couples on the panel, we shared about the lessons we learned about relationships, and our understanding of biblical relationships.



Jon's sharing: *I talked about family. I shared about my parents' divorce. It was hard to understand the divorce. I disconnected from my family as a defense mechanism. I compared this to my experience with Kylie's family. Before I asked Kylie to be my girlfriend, even before I told Kylie about my feelings, her mom was praying for us. Then while we were dating, Kylie's mom welcomed me to the family. My own family was very supportive. My brother and his wife often opened up their home to host dinners for us. I felt so blessed by family. It has been a season of learning to love family. The students connected with the experience of my parents' divorce. A small group of students gathered around Kylie and me during a break to ask some questions. They asked me, "how has my parents' divorce affected my relationship with Kylie?" This is something that I have thought about before. I know that I am like my Dad in several ways: I know that I have his temper. I didn't like his temper, but it is how I learned how to respond to conflict. I told myself that I did not want to be like my Dad. I said that he taught me what not to do. But I dug deeper. There were positive things I inherited: his entrepreneurial spirit and the importance of hospitality. I knew he loved us and did his best. I told the students that I don't feel as though my marriage is doomed to fail because I am a child of divorced parents. I believe that Christ not only redeems our souls, he also restores and reconciles people and systems. God's grace can break the cycle of sin.*

Kylie's sharing: *During the panel sharing, I explained how Jon and I were growing - Jon is learning empathy, and I am learning to express my needs clearly. We have had to practice this the last few months with more stressful and emotional situations at work. There are days when I come home with a dilemma that Jon can logically walk me through. Other times, his empathy looks like a simple hug, especially when words or actions won't fix the problem; I just need to "feel" - the good, the bad, and mostly the ugly. This resonated with a couple of the girls, who then suggested Jon and I should lead a workshop for guys: What To Do When a Girl Cries. After the event, another young lady approached me to ask questions about being in a relationship with someone older. Though an age gap may have its disadvantages when it comes to life experience and maturity, I encouraged her to openly examine the expectations in the relationship and perhaps adjust them to be more realistic. I had told Jon specifically that I did not want to feel left behind or less than because I am younger than he is. He has had to learn to respect that, to be patient with me, and to include me in positive ways. I have had to learn to admit when I don't know something, to gain courage to try new things, and to be okay with making mistakes. I reminded this gal that she is first and foremost loved by God, and in my prayer for her, I believe that God confirmed this and gave both of us a sense of peace and confidence. There's something pretty awesome about surrendering your insecurities to God.*

It was a small group of students who attended the seminar. I believe that God knew that there were students to needed to hear the stories and lessons from the three couples. I want to encourage couples to share their insights and the lessons they have learned about themselves and God from their marriage to others. Take 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 to heart, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

Speaking for AACF LB Mens Retreat

Written by Jon Liu



Jon speaking at retreat

From Friday to Sunday, a handful of young men from AACF CSU Long Beach gathered in a house in Santa Ana, CA. It was their annual men's retreat. This was the first time they met in a home, but the second time that I have spoken for their retreat. It was a small group of men, nine of them. But it was a full weekend of fellowship: meaningful sharing and exploring Scripture. Rather than give a weekend of messages, I wanted to have more interaction so I shared two sermons and led two Bible studies.

The focus of the weekend was to develop a stronger sense of self through Scripture. We opened the retreat by talking about being made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Humanity is uniquely made in God's image; nothing else in all of creation is made in God's image. Men and women have a unique capacity for relationships, creativity, morality, physicality, spirituality, critical thinking, and much more. We must

recognize that every person was made in God's image. We affirm the dignity and respect of each person. But sin has blemished that image within us. The image is not destroyed, but it is distorted. Faith in Jesus Christ is the first step to completely restoring God's image within us. It is a lifelong renovation, and it will only be finished when we are in heaven with God. We continued with a Bible study the next morning to explore our strengths. We used Gallup's StrengthsFinder 2.0 to assess their strengths. A paradigm of StrengthsFinder is "talents + investment = strengths." So we looked to Scripture to understand what it means to be a mature Christian; what it means to invest in our talents so that they become strengths. In the evening we continued to explore the restoring work of the Gospel. As Christians, we understand that the Gospel completely heals and restores us. God doesn't just absolve us of our sins; He also transforms and reconciles. We closed the retreat with a message on being authentic. Authenticity is more than being transparent and honest; it is embracing our true purpose and true nature. We are made in God's image. We acknowledge our sins, and we embrace our calling.

I asked the group to share some takeaways from the retreat. One of them mentioned that they were blessed by the StrengthsFinder assessment. Others agreed and were excited to name their strengths and work on developing them. They saw themselves differently. Another person shared that he was blessed by the openness of others. They felt blessed to be able to share so deeply. It was a good weekend of fellowship.

I continue to pray for those nine men. That they would see themselves as God sees them: beloved and redeemed. God names each of their sins so that He can forgive all of them. He is doing a good work in their lives, and Scripture promises that He will bring it to completion. My prayer is that they would look beyond the circumstances of their lives and see Jesus working in their lives: to seek after a blessed life rather than a perfect life; a life that seeks to glorify God.



AACF LB Mens Retreat 2016

THANK YOU!!!

Kylie and I would like to express our deep gratitude to each of you: our friends, our family, our supporters. Your prayers and your donations have sustained us and stretched us. Our apartment is starting to feel like home. We have accepted that there will always be traffic. We are laying down roots in our community and embracing new opportunities to be life giving members of our community. Each of you has increased our capacity to pursue our passions and fulfill our calling. Thank you so much!



Become a ministry partner and support Jon Liu's ministry with AACF!

Name _____ E-mail _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Cell Phone: () _____

I will partner with Jon...

Through prayer:

Add me to your prayer list.

Through financial giving:

**Monthly pledge: \$200 \$100 \$50 \$ _____

A special gift of : \$1500 \$1000 \$500 \$ _____

Make the check payable to **AACF** and on the memo line include Jon's account number: **#37010**. Mail this page along with your check to: **JEMS/AACF 948 E. 2nd St, Los Angeles, CA 90012**. **You can give a monthly pledge through an **Electronic Fund Transfer** or **Credit Card**. You may submit an **EFT** by completing the form and mailing it to JEMS/AACF with a voided check. You may also give by credit card by going to www.aacf.org/ionliu/.

EFT AUTHORIZATION

I, _____ (print name), agree to contribute monthly to JEMS/AACF to the account designated below through the Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) program. I authorize my bank to pay JEMS/AACF the amount below on the 1st or 15th work day of every month. This authorization will remain in effect until I notify in writing JEMS/AACF that I wish to change/finish contributions.

Starting the month of: _____ on the **1st** or **15th** day (circle choice) of every month.

\$ _____ monthly as my preference to the support-raising account of Jon Liu.

Designation: Jon Liu, AACF Director

Enclose a VOIDED CHECK from the bank account to be used for EFT.

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

As required by the IRS, all contributions are solicited with the understanding that JEMS/AACF has complete discretion and administration over the use of the donated funds.

