



Sharing the Good News!

Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Facing Your **GIANTS**

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Have you ever had a problem which seemed so large and fearful that you were sure there was no way to deal with it? Perhaps you are facing some kind of gigantic problem right now in your life.

At the recent PNEC Youth Winter Retreat, 45 youth and adult advisors gathered at Blue Mountain Retreat Center to name their giants and what it means as a Christian to face those giants in life. They also discovered the tools of faith and Christian formation, gifts of the Holy Spirit, which empower them to not only, face the giants, but to deal with them and overcome and defeat them when possible.

In small group Bible study and through a spontaneous melodrama called *Dave, the Wave, and the Giant Kahuna*, our youth stepped into scripture and lived out the story of David and Goliath. They discovered their everyday giants...things like expectations, anxiety, money and the economy, health issues, employment, self esteem, peer pressures, family and sibling problems, judgment and fear itself.

Do any of these sound a lot like those giants we as adults face also?

In an amazing serendipitous moment, I witnessed our youth respond to an altar call where by themselves or with a group they spent time in prayer and silence, remembering that Christ is their first resource

to turn to when troubled by the giants and asking Christ to renew their strength as they desired to face the giants in a Christ-like way. The tears shed and the stories told afterwards were a testimony to their faith and to the power of the Holy Spirit which is available to all of us when we make ourselves open to receive it.

Watching the movie, *Facing the Giants* and discussing it, watching video clips of contemporary Christian music from the movie and studying the words of the songs, participating in a Circle of Respect and in a spiritual discipline of awakening, creating their own personal slingshots, sharing in communion and creating the closing worship were other activities which aided the youth to remember the attributes of God and spiritual tools and disciplines available to them.

The highlight of the event was the youth creating a **gigantic** paper giant on which they had written all of the giants in life and then using a **3 foot slingshot**, they took aim and fired away at the giant! It was not only fun but a way to release the fears of the giants which they face.

On behalf of the youth of PNEC, I encourage you as you continue through these 40 days of Lent and walk from Hosanna to Alleluia, to engage in Bible study, in prayer and in worship so that you may rediscover and embrace the love of God, made known to us in our Savior Jesus Christ. My prayer is that you will trust and abide in Christ as our youth have done and know the fullness of Christ's joy as you face the giants in your life!

Many thanks go to the youth and adults who planned this event and helped to make it a giant success and joyful experience for all! DVD's of the event will be available and video clips will be posted on the PNEC website.

TO CONTACT US OR TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS

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