

## Built Different

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2*

As believers in Christ, it is so important for us to remember that we are built different. We are a new creation - the old is gone and the new has come. Being built different means we live different, love different and serve different. In short, **we are to be salt and light to the world.** Why? Because we are to be transformed into Christ-like living and attitudes and not be conformed to this world. Despite all the rhetoric and division, **at no time in recent history has our ability to be light been more needed than it is today. It's a great time to be the church that is built different in Christ!**

**And our community desperately needs the church.** A recent article in the New Orleans Times Picayune shared some startling statistics of life in New Orleans. One in 14 young black men will be murdered before they reach 35. One in eight 15- to 24-year-olds will end up in the emergency room with a gun shot. For many, this is just a number. **But think about this, one in 14 and one in 8 as being someone you know, someone you love. That's what we face at UIM.** We hear statistics like this, and the faces of our young black youth race through our minds.



Youth and young adults serving their community

We think of **Santana**, a recent graduate of Booker T. Washington High School who works for us part time. We think of **Tyrone**, who we are mentoring to be a youth pastor. We think of **Xavier**, who has overcome so much to graduate this year and of **Dashae**, who is dreaming of being a chef and will play a vital role in our day camp this year. We think of **Kamyria**, who continues to serve part time and goes above and beyond by volunteering. We think of **Hassan**, who has had to deal with tragedy that no 8-year-old should but is learning there is joy, love, and peace for him. And we think of **Christopher**, who has raised his grades through his hard work and coming to our Afterschool Academic Program (A.S.A.P.). This list goes on and on.

For every Christopher, Dashae, and Kamyria, there are hundreds more that need the hope of knowing that through Christ, they are built different. **They can experience the love, peace, joy and hope they are searching for.**

**We knew that last summer was one of the most important times in the history of UIM. Today, our families still desperately need the safe place we offer, the life-giving ministry we sponsor, and the truth of God's grace.**

And we are committed to meeting this unprecedented need and make this the best summer ever for our children, youth, and adults. **We want to reach out with the love, hope, and truth of Christ at a level we have never done before.**



Day Camp is not just a safe place for a kid to be a kid, it is a safe place for teens to learn to be “built different” and be mentored into great employees and committed followers of Christ.



**UIM committed to making last summer the best summer ever. We thought you might want to know how we did! From June through August, we:**

- **Created our own summer camp experience and took 25 students to Spiritual Growth Camp in FL.** It was a huge success, and we are going again this year.
- **Joined the Challenge Conference (EFCA Youth Conference) in Kansas City** – our students were challenged and grew in their faith, and 10 students were inspired to grow as leaders and followers of Christ.
- **Provided one of the only free day camps in New Orleans serving 70 6-11-year-olds each day for seven weeks!** We're thrilled that we had over 100 kids registered and averaged 55 kids a day!
- **Upgraded our 10-year-old audio and visual capacity** that is working great and allowing us to integrate media into our teaching and worship times.
- **Hired 12 high school and college aged students to serve their peers and to grow the next generation of leaders for Christ.** And we're thrilled that four of them have been hired part-time to help lead the ministry this year!



**This summer, we want to show our community that we – and they – are built different. We’re going to build on our success by:**

- **Continuing our own summer camp experience by taking 30 students to Spiritual Growth Camp in FL**, a 4-day growth-level camp for 20 students in Panama City Beach, FL.
- **Bringing 15 students to Kids Across America camp in MO**, exposing them to the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ. This will be the first time since COVID that we will be taking our youth to this incredible, life-changing event.
- **Creating our own “stay home” camp for 10–13-year-olds**. With COVID continuing to make parents nervous to send their kids to camp, we are hosting our own “stay home” camp for three days. During this time, students get introduced to how God built them to be different and have some fun, too! Our recipe focuses on lessons, water parks, games, and food! Our goal is to host 30 students, which will be a bridge to our junior group and then to Kids Across America next year.
- **Continuing to provide one of the only free day camps in New Orleans that will serve 125 6-11-year-olds each day for seven weeks!** One of the first ways children and adults get involved in our ministry is through our Day Camp. UIM provides one of the only free day camps in New Orleans, and we’re the ONLY one that provides free transportation! **As a trusted presence in our community, we give kids a safe place to gather as they learn about the Gospel and how God built them different to give them hope and purpose.** This year’s quality programming includes music, sports, Bible classes, crafts, water days, and field trips.
- **Hiring 15 high school and college aged students to serve their peers and to grow the next generation of leaders for Christ**. We have always been committed to having our ministry led by those who live in the community. The church must go the distance to make lasting change and give our youth hope for a strong future and the practical skills they need to be incredible employees! Our commitment to hiring locally is a powerful testimony to our community.

To support the transforming our neighborhood, we’re investing in our building. We’re excited to be:

- **Replacing four air conditioner units in our facility**. The summer heat has taken a toll on our air conditioners. We need to replace four of our well-worn units for more energy-efficient and effective units that will keep our kids and staff cool.



**High Schoolers at Challenge Conference**

Our budget to make this the best summer ever is \$90,000. I'm thrilled to share that through the Live Oaks Community Church in Florida and other donors we have already raised \$40,000. That means **we only need to raise \$50,000. Will you prayerfully consider helping us bring God's truth to our community this summer by donating before June 15<sup>th</sup>?** Here's how your donation can help us grow our community of youth and adults who are built different:

- \$100 helps purchase supplies or refreshments for one week of camp.
- \$200 can cover one camper at Stay-at-home Camp.
- \$500 can send one student to Kid's Across America in Missouri.
- \$1,000 can help us hire a high school/college aged student for a month or sponsor a quality field trip for day camp.
- \$5,000 buys one of four needed air conditioning units.

Thank you for your faithful partnership. Together, we can proclaim the power of God's grace and truth. And the truth will set all of us free.

In Anticipation of What Our Great God Will Do!

Pastor John



**Thank you for making  
an investment  
in our youth.**

PS: **Please give by June 15** to ensure that we cover all our expenses for the summer so that we can continue to invest in youth like Xavier, Dashae, and Christopher. You can also give online by going to:  
<http://www.urbanimpact.org/> and clicking on "Make An Impact! Donate Today"