

SU News

An inside view of
Scripture Union

Kingdom Culture



Sitting with conversation table group.

I was well into my middle school years before I realized that not everyone in my small town hosted a second dinner at 10pm for their relatives. My grandparents immigrated to the United States in their teens, entering an environment that was not welcoming to Italians. They met, married, and had ten children—seven sons and three daughters—and maintaining much of their own “old world” traditions, they created a Little Italy of mostly relatives and friends who had also arrived through the port of New York City. My mother, when married and, with children of her own, carried on many parts of this different way of

life. She would regularly be found in the kitchen late in the evening, cooking a second dinner for her brothers who came for a visit. It was just the expected thing to do. My staying up late to join in the gathering was just as natural, even if it was a school night.

My family life already set me apart culturally from most of my friends and I embraced the uniqueness of it. My affinity for other cultures extended beyond my Italian-American experience, maybe because of it. I rooted for Taiwan in the Little League World Series, proudly displaying their flag in my bedroom. I embraced every new cuisine offered to me, and there are only a few things that I don't enjoy eating. I spent a summer in the Amazon jungle, fascinated by the simple and joyful life of the small Indian tribe I lived among that year. After that, traveling to different parts of the world and exploring other cultures has enriched my life and world view. Adopting my children from DR Congo has forever bonded me with their African roots.

Yet, nothing could have prepared me for the experience of sitting with brothers and sisters serving with Scripture Union movements from over 100 different countries. It was a rare privilege and foretaste of the kingdom of God. I wish I could have brought each of you into the room to share in the worship, the storytelling, the visioning of what God could do through this global body, united by the love of Jesus. The 43 young people, representing as many nations, infused such hope for the future. I can see it, and it is glorious. Thank you for being a part of something truly remarkable.



Gail A. Martin
President,
Scripture Union

Scripture Union Global Gathering 2024



Participants from 100 different SU movements around the world attended the Global Gathering

More than 300 Scripture Union representatives from 100 different countries met on March 4–8 for the Scripture Union Global Gathering in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This special event, which last took place in 2017, drew together SU leaders, volunteers, and supporters, for three days of meetings, discussions, and planning considering the theme of “Bridging the Gap.”

Three keynote speakers joined the delegates: broadcaster and advocate, Krish Kandiah, from the UK, youth advocate, Nana Yaw Offei Awuku from Ghana, and the theologian, and social justice campaigner, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, from Costa Rica.

Each of these experienced speakers examined key gaps in society, including the gap between the church and the world, the generation gap, and the gap caused by social divisions and injustice.

In addition to the speakers, for the first time a group of over 40 Scripture Union Young Ambassadors from as many different countries joined the event to present on issues around the gaps they have seen in a whole range of contexts affecting their lives.

International Director for SUI, Monika Kuschmierz, said: “Our challenge globally is how Scripture Union can remain relevant and respond to a fragmented and divided world—and find the best way to help children, young people, families, and communities navigate their way in challenging and sometimes dangerous situations.”

YOUNG AMBASSADORS to help Scripture Union “Bridge the Gap”

A former catwalk model, a limousine chauffeur, and a refugee were among 43 young people from 40 different countries who joined this extraordinary global event in Malaysia.

The 43 Scripture Union Young Ambassadors aged 18–35, worked together online for nine months prior to the gathering. They then presented in groups on a range of issues from creation care and injustice to holistic mission and innovation.

Monika Kuschmierz, said: “We live in an age where humanity is easily and increasingly polarized around issues of climate, vaccines, politics, gender, and theology, to name a few. We do not want to be part of the current polarizing pandemic as we continue to work with churches to respond to a world in need.”

Monika said she was excited to engage the group of Young Ambassadors who were an integral part of the program focused on Bridging the Gap. “In Kuala Lumpur we sought God together for how Scripture Union as a global movement can best help build ‘bridges’ in this polarized world.



Young Ambassador

REFLECTIONS

Skylar Brown, SU USA:

The 2024 Scripture Union Global Gathering was such a joyous experience, full of celebration. It was an incredible glimpse at what heaven will be like: many nations, gathered together to worship, pray, and think as one body, under Christ! The theme of the gathering was “Bridging the Gap” – bridging the gap between adults and youth, between the rich and the poor, between those with opportunity and those without. But the most beautiful part was the gap we bridged between each other as young ambassadors. I had the opportunity to meet more than 40 young ambassadors from all different countries and see how we all have a role to play in our countries’ Scripture Union movements.

Natalie Duchesne, SU New Zealand:

Being included at the 2024 Global Gathering as part of the young ambassador program, I left with a sense that our presence and contributions didn’t feel token which is an impressive feat from Scripture Union International... as representatives of a younger generation, to be able to voice our desire for environmental justice and creation care, and for that to be received well from the national directors and board chairs who listened and discussed our presentation was both exciting and honoring. Even hearing different methods for ‘bridging the gap’ and the larger strategy of Scripture Union International has helped inform the ministry and strategic direction I’m involved in. In the SU New Zealand camps ministry which I’m a part of, we’re looking this year at the influence we have with our teenagers and how to instill a deep desire to put faith into action which was touched upon time and time again within the 2024 Global Gathering. What an opportunity to be in the same room with so many clever and motivated people to draw insight from!



SU-USA delegate, Skylar Brown, working over lunch with his young ambassador group on their presentation.

43 Scripture Union Young Ambassadors from around the world enriched the event. (below)



Watch highlights of the global gathering in Malaysia



A presentation on the generations living together today, highlighting that we each need the other.

IN MEMORIAM:

Kathy Wittenborn

Longtime Scripture Union advocate, Kathy Wittenborn, was called home on March 11, 2024. Kathy was a teacher, by passion and trade. She spent her career teaching high school in New York and her free time working tirelessly preparing lessons for new and seasoned Christians along the path of discipleship in the Word of God. Kathy served as Secretary and



then Chairperson for the Scripture Union Northeast Council. Since 2005 she offered exemplary support to Scripture Union's mission, activities, and outreach. What resonated most with Kathy about SU was its focus on studying and teaching scriptures, aligning perfectly with her own passion and ethos. She cherished the organization's commitment to Helping People Meet God Every Day, reflecting her deep love for both God and people. Kathy's life mission paralleled SU's goal, as she dedicated herself to guiding others to know the Lord. Kathy had two great loves in her life: the Bible and her husband of 53 years, Andy. We will miss her loving spirit and tenacity for spreading the Word, and have profound gratitude for her life of service and her significant impact on the ministry of Scripture Union.

SUTRIVIA

Who is the Scripture Union President Emeritus?

Submit your answer to:
Trish.McFillin@ScriptureUnion.org.

The first correct response will receive a custom SU Tervis® tumbler and be recognized in the next newsletter!



IN HONOR OF:	GIVEN BY:
Mildred Webber-Holmes	Anonymous

IN MEMORY OF:	GIVEN BY:
T. Ladson Webb, III	Kristin D Webb
T. Ladson Webb, III	T. Ladson Webb, Jr.
Patricia Haze Endsley	Mary Ann Siegel
Nelda Nadine Clark	Mary Ann Siegel

[www. scriptureunion.org/saltandlight/](http://www.scriptureunion.org/saltandlight/)

SINGAPORE

Camps help children be brave for God

A SPECIAL SUPA camp called 'Brave Heart' run by Scripture Union Singapore has been inspiring children to get to know God and understand how he can change their lives. The camps are designed to help children learn through games, stories, and fun activities about how they can be patient, strong and brave.

Head of Children's Ministry for SU Singapore, Flora Chew, said: "We had an exciting and amazing SUPA camp this year. We decided to have more outdoor activities because of our theme BRAVE HEART. As they moved

around Changi Village on their quests, the children learnt that to be brave for God means to do the right thing even when the plan sounds silly or when everyone else does not believe in it or when they do not feel like it. Being brave means to follow God's plan no matter what.

"It was a miracle that the skies over Changi Village remained clear and blue for all our outdoor activities (thanks to all our prayers as we heard that there was heavy rain over the western part of Singapore). We give thanks to God His goodness and His protection over 28 campers and 33 leaders.

GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT



ABOUT SINGAPORE

Population: 5,917,600

Religion: 17% Christian, 26% Buddhist, 18% Muslim, 8% Hindu, 10% other

Population under 15: 593,475