

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

Christian Endeavor is a Christ-centered youth-oriented ministry which assists local churches in reaching young people with the gospel of Jesus Christ, discipling them in the Christian faith, and equipping them for Christian ministry and service in their local churches, community and world. It reaches across denominational, cultural, racial, and geographical boundaries.

Christian Endeavor groups are a part of a local church which determines theology, program, activities and relationships.

Christian Endeavor is based on the "learn by doing" principle in which young people, under the direction of adult leadership, learn first to participate in, and then lead their own meetings.

Christian Endeavor is an intergenerational ministry which is graded in age groupings similar to other Christian education activities in the local church. Patterns may vary in different parts of the world.

Christian Endeavor groups usually meet once a week for prayer and discussion meetings, and at least once a month for recreational, outreach or mission activities.

Christian Endeavor encourages each group to hold a Consecration service monthly (during one of the weekly meetings) for personal response and recommitment from each member.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The first **Christian Endeavor** group was organized on February 2, 1881, in the Williston Congregational Church, Portland, Maine, U.S.A., under the leadership of the pastor, Francis E. Clark, and his wife Harriet. It was born out of a week of evangelistic services which had resulted in twenty to thirty young people accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Before the first meeting was over, 57 people signed the constitution and covenant, the essence of which is expressed in the opening words of the **Christian Endeavor** Pledge.

That first **Christian Endeavor** group revitalized the youth in the Williston Church beyond expectations. Born to meet the needs of a single church, it did it so well that other churches began copying it with equally exciting results.

Christian Endeavor grew out of the need of an individual church to ground its young people in their Christian faith and devotion to Christ. **Christian Endeavor** unions grew out of the need to share with others the **Christian Endeavor** plan and need for mutual enrichment which comes from fellowship with other believers.

WORLDWIDE SCOPE

As the movement spread to other lands, many national unions were formed. The World's Union was organized in 1895 to coordinate the activities of **Christian Endeavor** around the world.

Officers of the World's Union include the president, five regional vice-presidents, a general secretary, and a treasurer. There are no full-time paid employees so most of the work is carried on by volunteers.

The union is incorporated and governed by a Council which meets every four years, a Board of Trustees which meets annually, and an Executive Committee which meets annually between sessions of the Board of Trustees. A World's Convention is held quadrennially.

The World's Union is financed by annual contributions from national and international unions, personal gifts and offerings, and other returns from conventions and conferences.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of **Christian Endeavor** as expressed by Francis E. Clark, the founder of the movement, have remained constant to this day:

Confession of Christ
Service for Christ
Loyalty to Christ's Church
Fellowship with Christ's People

These guiding principles have been expanded and amplified into a generally accepted Platform of **Christian Endeavor** Principles recommended for better understanding and expression of unity among Christian Endeavorers around the world.

1. Personal commitment to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and acceptance of the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the only rule of faith and practice.
2. The covenant obligation, embodied in the pledge, as an essential part of a true Christian Endeavor group.
3. Constant training for all kinds of Christian service through active participation in devotional meetings and committees.
4. Cultivation of the personal devotional life through daily Bible reading and prayer.
5. Loyalty to one's own local church and denomination.
6. Christian citizenship and the promotion of peace and goodwill among nations.
7. Interdenominational, international and interracial fellowship through conventions, conferences, and other united activities.
8. Evangelization of the world for Christ by personal witness and as directed by the churches and missionary societies.
9. Adherence to the motto of Christian Endeavor, "For Christ and the Church."

10. Recognition that it is not the province of Christian Endeavor to legislate for the individual conscience.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR PLEDGE

Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I promise Him that I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do; that I will make it the rule of my life to pray and to read the Bible every day, and to support the work and worship of my own church in every way possible; and that just so far as I know how, throughout my whole life, I will endeavor to lead a Christian life.

As an active member I promise to be true to all my duties, to be present at and to take some part, aside from singing, in every Christian Endeavor meeting, unless hindered by some reason which I can conscientiously give to my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. If obliged to be absent from the monthly consecration meeting of the society, I will, if possible, send at least a verse of Scripture to be read in response to my name at the roll call.

(This wording of the Christian Endeavor Pledge and of the Platform of Christian Endeavor Principles is given in the interest of understanding and unity and is not mandatory upon national unions.)

We are ready to serve you ...

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