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Two dozen campers at the Wyoming-based Haven on the Rock children's church summer camp spread words of encouragement to persecuted Christians this summer.

Camp Director Susan Karavitis included a lesson during one of the weekly camps for 5th and 6th graders about one's faith in God being tested. Karavitis told the campers, ranging in age from 10 to 12, stories about the present-day persecuted church.

"I wanted to include a lesson that would open their awareness to the fact that their faith in God may be tested. I told them stories about the persecuted church that I learned from Christian Solidarity Worldwide," Karavitis said. "They were moved to write letters of encouragement to the people listed in the Connect & Encourage."

Connect & Encourage is used by CSW as a means for persecuted believers to receive encouragement directly. Encouraging words to prisoners are delivered directly to their cells, reminding them they are not forgotten and that the Church stands in solidarity with them. It also serves to remind the prison authorities that the unjustly imprisoned individual has a global family advocating for their welfare and release.

Karavitis said campers were unsure how to start letters to the persecuted and imprisoned but found encouragement from Paul's letters to the early Christian churches. Campers showed some disbelief in the degree of persecution worldwide and were curious about CSW's work.

Haven on the Rock offers camps for various ages throughout the summer. Karavitis said this year there were 350 campers and a staff of 200. "All summer long, new groups of campers come to enjoy the fun, the fellowship and the concentrated learning environment," she said.

CSW-USA hopes to continue working with young believers to aid in the encouragement of persecuted believers.