



cpas

Ventures Update

January - April 2011

Who could you invite to the party?

ventures@cpas.org.uk

VENTURES

Life changing holidays for 8-18s



Can you remember the last really good party you went to? Back in June, my grandma and her twin sister celebrated their 80th birthdays and we threw them a party at my aunt's house. The sun shone, the food was amazing, the presents were thoughtful and significant. But for me the most special thing about that day was reconnecting with people I don't get to see very often. Getting to chat to cousins, aunts and uncles, and even siblings that I don't see as much as I might, meant that I left feeling a deep sense of gratitude for the family relationships I have.

I think that's where the real value of a party lies – in the quality of the relationships that lead to the invitation. In many ways, being part of a Venture is not dissimilar to spending time at a really good family party, with the opportunity to invest in new and existing relationships, great food and

a whole heap of fun! We know from experience that the vast majority of children and young people go on a Venture as a result of being invited by a friend or family member they trust. We also know that a similar proportion of Venture members cite the friendships they develop as the highlight of their holiday experience.

The three very familiar parables in Luke 15 should leave us in no doubt that Jesus is all about celebrating! If throwing a party at the return of a reprobate son seems a little extravagant, then to celebrate finding a sheep and a coin smack of looking for any excuse for a party. But then surely that's the point – when heaven rejoices, there's nothing measured or appropriate about it. And let's be honest – the whole point of Ventures is to see heaven celebrating! On Ventures young people have the opportunity to meet Jesus and

develop a transformational relationship with him that leads to them accepting his invitation to the ultimate party, a party that's out of this world. Through our holidays we're handing out thousands of party invitations to young people who need to hear the good news of Jesus but we'd love to reach so many more.

Who could you invite to the party?

Louise Davis

Ventures Development Manager



'...there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

Luke 15:10, TNIV

More than amazing – life-changing!

Ventures are fantastic, life-changing holidays for children and young people, but don't just take our word for it! This is what some of the members from last summer said:

'More than amazing – life-changing!'

'I will remember for a long time the little Bible studies at night where you got hot chocolate and cake because my dorm all had such funny and amazing conversations. It was the best.'

'I learnt loads about God, had great fun on the activities and made loads of new friends!'

'The worship was so great, and I learnt a lot from the teaching. The dorm Bible studies were really thought-provoking, and the seminars were great too.'

'As always the ABSOLUTE highlight of my year.'

'The place, the people, the fun-filled packed days were all just sooo immensely amazingly super and I wanted it to go on forever and ever and EVER!'

We know most people come on a Venture because of a personal recommendation. This means that we all have a role to play in promoting these great life-changing holidays to children and young people in our churches and youth groups.

Our prayer is that every single Venture in 2011 is fully-booked, and that as many 8-18 year olds as possible are given the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel message.

Please do what you can to encourage the young people you know to book onto a Venture holiday, and pray the young people themselves would have the courage to invite their friends.

As one member in 2010 wrote: 'I have quite a few friends who've become disillusioned with God, or who are searching agnostics, and I can't see any better way to find the courage to witness Jesus to them than to invite them on the best holiday they could ever go on!!

'I'll be working on them throughout the year, and praying that they'll be able to come and get to know God, and the truth that is God's care and love for them individually.'

The Brochure...invite a friend...get copies for everyone in the youth group

The DVD...show at your youth group... give to your church leaders...share a link on Facebook and Twitter...

It's who you know – ten steps to promoting Ventures.

1 Invite someone on a Venture

If you're involved in a Venture yourself, how about inviting some young people to get involved too? We know that the majority of Venture members go for the first time because someone has invited them.

2 Get involved...then tell your story

If you're not currently involved in a Venture, why not think about volunteering as a leader? You'll have a fantastic experience which you can then share with those in your church!

Getting your church involved

3 Create a display for your church

Most churches have notice boards or display areas – how about asking for some space to advertise Ventures? We can send you posters, postcards and leaflets.

Call us on **01926 458456**
or email ventures@cpas.org.uk

 **The Website...www.ventures.org.uk...
choose your Venture...book online...look
at photos...watch the DVD...share a
link on Facebook or Twitter**

4 Write a short article for your church magazine or website

If you're involved in a Venture yourself, how about inviting some young people to get involved too? We know that the majority of Venture members go for the first time because someone has invited them.

5 Ask to show the new Ventures DVD in church

At only 4 minutes 30 seconds in length the young people's film would make a great addition to a notice slot, a short presentation about Ventures, or could be shown before or after a service.

6 Organise a parents' evening

Identify a few parents whose children might be interested in Ventures and host an evening in your home – include the DVD, have copies of the brochure available and give people a chance to ask questions.

7 Organise a Ventures-style evening service

Giving people a flavour of Ventures is a great way of enabling people to make an informed decision about whether they'd like to get involved!

8 Run Ventures Sunday

We have some great resources to enable churches to shape a service with a Ventures focus – have a look at www.cpas.org.uk/ventures-sunday.

9 Put on a fundraising event

A fundraising event gives you the opportunity to raise money to support those going on a Venture who might not otherwise be able to afford to, as well as raising the profile of Ventures themselves!

10 Come up with a brand new, innovative way of promoting Ventures and tell us how you get on!

**The Facebook Page...search
'CPAS Ventures' and become a fan!
...up-to-date information...breaking news...**



Keeping numbers high

As one of the largest Ventures with 80 members each year, you may think that filling places is not one of the Maidwell 1 leaders' biggest concerns.

However, despite the impressive numbers, overall leader Scott McKay takes a strategic approach to recruiting new members to ensure that this Venture continues to flourish long into the future.

He said: 'Even though we've had good numbers in recent years, it's important to know that whatever happened in the past is no guarantee to filling up in the future.'

'I'm convinced that relational promotion is really important, so all previous members get sent a Ventures brochure and one for a friend as well.'

We create a DVD (for free with the help of a church contact) and send it to previous members, which they're encouraged to share with friends as well.



Maidwell 1 has also linked up with the Pathfinder Ventures at Oswestry and Casterton to ensure a stream of Venture regulars who want to carry on once they turn 14.

Scott said: 'Our approach of using the general brochures and our own DVDs seems to work really well. The DVD helps us retain existing members, while many of the new members come from having a brochure given to them by a friend.'

'Also, because parents get something which looks like a normal holiday brochure it sends a useful message to both them and their children – we find that many parents go away on holiday themselves during the Venture.'

'Our dorm leaders also keep in touch with members who were in their dorms – obviously in compliance with child protection rules – by doing simple things like sending birthday cards. We believe that personal contact is key, making members feel like they're very much part of "the family of Maidwell 1".'

Pro-promotion!

Ventures couldn't take place without the fantastic team of volunteers who each year help organise, plan and run the holidays. Promoting Ventures is a key aspect of this preparation – without it, young people won't hear about how great the holidays are, and won't book or invite their friends!

Helen Pattinson is one of the main overall leaders at the Morfa Bay Venture. They promote their Venture in a variety of ways, from simple word of mouth, to presentations in local churches.

Helen said: 'A lot of the promotion we do is built on strong relationships, through talking to the young peoples' parents and churches. We have been involved in leading Ventures for several years and so have become well known to the churches near to us whose members come to our Venture.'

'It's important to use the team of leaders to help with promotion as well, making use of their networks and contacts. We



regularly send emails to all the leaders and prayer supporters with prayer points and an update on plans, and within that we include a reminder to let people know about the holiday.

'We make use of a website as well, keeping it up to date with images and news so that young people can see what goes on during the Venture, and we use the promotional material from the Ventures head office, such as brochures, leaflets and posters to help spread the word to young people from previous years.'

'We try and tailor these mailings so that they will be appropriate to the needs of parents and young people at a particular time of year. For example, for the Easter

Venture, we highlight the revision time built in to the holiday so that parents don't need to worry that their children will miss out on time to prepare for exams!

'Ultimately though, we find the best way to ensure a Venture is fully booked is to ensure it is as good as it can be. That way, young people will naturally want to come back – and bring their friends!'

You can order promotional items from the Ventures office, including posters, leaflets, brochures and PowerPoint presentations.

Please email ventures@cpas.org.uk for further information.



Ventures Sunday...get involved and tell your story...inspire others...raise money...

The Ventures Leaflet...give to friends...hand out at church...order from 01926 458456



New for 2011!

We have a brand new DVD to help you effectively promote Ventures with your church and your friends!

It contains two short films about Ventures, one aimed at young people, ideal for using in a youth group setting or as a promotional tool in a church service, and one for parents and youth leaders, designed to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about Ventures and to highlight the quality of the Ventures experience. Here are some ideas for ways to use the DVD:

Arrange a showing for your church

Have a chat with your church leader about including the DVD in a Sunday service – you could offer to do a short presentation to introduce it and share your experience of Ventures. Encourage your church's youth leaders to show the DVD in a youth group meeting and offer to get hold of some brochures to give out as well. If you're part of a home or small group you could show the DVD over coffee – the parents and youth leaders' film would be great in this context.

Ventures is part of the ministry of CPAS



CPAS, Athena Drive, Tachbrook Park, WARWICK CV34 6NG

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Give copies to friends

We'd be more than happy to give you extra copies to give to parents or young people who haven't come across Ventures before!

Share a link on Facebook and Twitter

The two films are also available on the website – how about sharing the link on your social networking site of choice?

For full details of Ventures in 2011, please visit www.ventures.org.uk or contact **01926 458456**.