



Ventures Update

Autumn 2011

Thanksgiving and praise

www.ventures.org.uk

VENTURES

Life changing holidays for 8-18s



For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all his people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ... I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:15-19

Throughout my childhood my parents had a significant struggle in getting me to write thank you letters for my Christmas presents. Having relations who lived far away only added to the seemingly endless numbers of letters I had to write. Perhaps that's why I'm still not very good at saying thank you! Thankfully, my daughter doesn't seem to have inherited my difficulty and our relations are delighted by the handwritten cards she produces. And I too am always touched when someone makes the effort to write a personal note of thanks.

The Apostle Paul didn't seem to have a problem with giving thanks. His letters are generously sprinkled with occasions where he gives thanks to God for other Christians, and the life they are living. He was able to recognise the way in which God was at work in the lives of people in the churches he planted.

Giving thanks to God is an important discipline for us to develop, but some of us find it more difficult than others. For those who find it difficult, a change of perspective may help.

When we forget the hope to which he has called us it is easy for our eyes to be drawn away from the riches of our inheritance in Christ. When the eyes of our hearts are enlightened it becomes easier for us to see all that God has done for us. Having a thankful heart is the mark of a mature Christian disciple.

In this issue we give thanks to God for all that leaders of Ventures were able to achieve this summer. There's a long list of people for whom we give thanks to God:

- Young people who are now included in Christ because they have responded to the word of truth on their Venture.

- Young people whose hearts have been enlightened again by all that Christ has achieved for us.

- The 3,000 leaders who gave so sacrificially to enable young people to receive the inheritance promised in Christ.

Let's never stop thanking God for changed lives, remembering all those who are seeking to live for Christ in their schools now the summer is over.

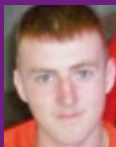
Thank you!

David Hart
Director, Ventures
and Falcon Camps



New beginnings

Liam, 14 and Luke, 15 both went on the Foremarke 3 Venture this summer ... and made the wonderful decision to give their lives to Jesus!



Luke's story

'This was the first time I had been on a Venture. I go to the youth group at Christ Church, Blackburn, which is how I got to go on Foremarke 3. I had a great time – I liked the activities and the Bible studies and made loads of new friends, but the best thing of all was realising that God is always there, and that he forgives you.'

'Before I went on the Venture, I was a bit sceptical about God. I wasn't sure what to believe, and wasn't sure what my friends would think if I believed in him. At Foremarke 3 I got to hear other people's views and find out how they became Christians, and also understand from the Bible that Jesus died on the cross for me.'

'Being a Christian is a new beginning for me. I thank God for giving me the chance to be on the Venture and realise that he is there.'



Liam's story

'I'm also part of the youth group at Christ Church, Blackburn. Before the Venture, I knew who God was and that one day I needed to make a decision about following him. We heard the story of Jonah – who tried to run away from God but couldn't – and I realised that I couldn't run away from God either. I thought 'why wait any longer?!', and made the decision to follow Jesus.'

'It was great having lots of friends who were Christians around my age on the Venture, and the Bible teaching was really easy to understand. It was also encouraging knowing that the other members and the leaders were there for you.'

'I know that God will forgive us when we are sorry for the wrong things we do, because Jesus has died on the cross for us. I now feel that I have a friendship with God and a sense of respect for him. I thank him for an amazing time on the Venture, and how he's changed my life!'



Praise God for all the young people who became Christians on Ventures this summer, and pray that they will be well-grounded in their faith.

Leaders' scrapbook



Peter Dearden – Foremarke 1

I'm 59, and the last time I went on a Venture (or Criccieth Pathfinder camp as it was called then!) was when I was a teenager! This year I decided I'd like to help in a practical way.

I had no cooking experience but found I was still able to help the head cook and, even though we spent most of our time in the kitchen, we felt very involved in the Venture as a whole. Each morning we had a cooks' meeting where we did a Bible study and then prayed together about the Venture (and kitchen) activities for the day and also about any issues and concerns which arose.

I was really encouraged by the commitment of the assistant leaders. I saw my role as helping to feed them (along with many others) so they could then serve the young people, and so indirectly I felt I was facilitating them in bringing the gospel to teenagers.

One night at the main meeting we sang a song – 'In Christ Alone' – which two girls had chosen. It was really encouraging to hear them explain why they'd chosen it – that, in all the challenges young people face, they wanted to rely on Christ alone.

I don't feel I'm someone who can give a striking gospel message in front of a large group of people, but I can peel potatoes for Christ! God has used these camps so much in so many people's lives, and it's great to be part of it.

Give thanks to God for the 3,000-plus volunteer leaders who gave so much time and energy to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with children and young people on Ventures this year. You're all amazing!





Ross Tranter – Romsey 3

I was leading the oldest dorm group, who understood the Bible well. They had a good head knowledge about God and so my prayer was that they'd know him more and more in their hearts as well.

One of the best things about the Venture was that everyone was playing a part. It was a really unified and dedicated team, all working towards the same goal in a very connected way. And even though I didn't know many people on the leadership team before I went, they were so friendly and welcoming that getting to know them wasn't a challenge!

I was only planning to lead as a one-off, but now I want to go back next year – it was the best week of my year so far, and I don't normally say things like that!

Keturah Howard – Sparkford 3

I first got involved with Ventures eleven years ago and have led five times since then. I love having the opportunity to serve while making new friends and studying the Bible with others, and it has been a good training ground for me in leading Bible studies, seminars, and working with young people. I am now a full time youth worker so it's been a great experience for me!



This year I really enjoyed the theme of 'Keep Calm and Carry On', as well as the Bible briefings and 'Food for Thought' sessions, engaging with a different issue each day. There were plenty of opportunities for the young people to ask questions about faith and to help them think about how they can stand up as Christians in their homes, schools and youth groups.

We were able to discuss practical ways of inviting friends to church or onto the Venture next year and, for those still exploring Christianity, it was good to help them find out more about Jesus Christ.

I'll definitely be taking part again next year – it's such a brilliant opportunity for fellowship, sharing the gospel with young people and discipling them. And it's such a lot of fun!



'A wonderful experience'



Elysia Greening shares her experience as a first-time leader on the Oswestry Venture.



Q. How did you get involved in Ventures?

At my church, we pray for summer camps, so I knew about Ventures through this. I have only been a Christian for a short period of time, so I thought leading on a Venture might be a good way for me to serve.

I love outdoor activities, so I was really excited about doing something worthwhile for God which would also involve things I liked doing.

Q. How did you find leading for the first time?

I had an absolutely amazing time! I hadn't worked with young people before, so leading was quite scary for me as it was completely new, but everyone was so friendly and I felt really included so it was easy to get stuck in.

Because I was leading for the first time, I

didn't have too many responsibilities, but I was involved in all of the activities, and looked after a dorm of nine girls with three other leaders.

I found getting to know the young people very rewarding – it was great to be on a journey with them. The teaching was fantastic, and they responded so well and asked lots of questions. I praise God that so many of them benefited from it, and heard the gospel through the teaching.

Q. What was the best thing about leading?

That God used me, and that I saw young people come to faith in him. Some of them were from a Christian background, but others had come on the Venture through church youth activities, and hadn't heard a lot of Christian teaching beforehand.

For some young people, the teaching was very challenging, as they realised that becoming a Christian would mean significant sacrifices in their lives. It was fantastic seeing some of the girls who had been the most apprehensive at first coming to faith!

Q. Would you do it again?

Definitely – I grew in my faith and have taken so much away from it, and it was amazing seeing young people come to know Jesus. I really want to come back again, it was a wonderful experience.



If you're inspired by Elysia's experience and want to get involved in 2012, go to www.ventures.org.uk to find out more about volunteering.



'The highlight of my year!'

We've had some great feedback from young people on this summer's Ventures. Here's a selection of comments to give you an impression of the difference that Ventures make in thousands of lives each year.

I think Ventures are FAB!!!!
(Emily, 11)

It's been such an encouraging thing and I really put my life and faith in Jesus! (Luke, 17)

I had an amazing time and learnt lots about God! (Ella, 13)

Ventures is where I became a true Christian and became on fire for God. They've changed my life. Thank you! (Katherine, 16)

I had a really, really, really, really, really ... really, really, really, really, really good time at Morfa Bay. (Adam, 13)



My first Venture was
Awsometastic!!! (Rebecca, 10)

This Venture has given me
some of the best times of my
life. (David, 17)

Ventures is so good. When I
am older I would like to lead.
(Nick, 11)

Ventures are the highlight of
my year. (Hannah, 17)

Clear gospel teaching, the food
was great, the people were
amazing and it was thoroughly
great for getting a gospel boost
in my life. (Dominic, 17)

These Ventures mean a great
deal ... It forms the scaffolding
in which our faiths can grow
and I know many people who
would not have a fulfilled life in
Christ without them.
(Pascoe, 19)



Share your highlights from this summer on
Facebook at www.facebook.com/cpasventures

Keep praying!

Along with your own prayers of thanksgiving and praise for whatever has encouraged you about this summer's Ventures, please also pray for:

- Protection for those starting out on their walk with Christ.
- New leaders to be called by God to serve on Ventures in 2012.
- Bookings for 2012 holidays, which open on 1 December.
- Venues to be confirmed for the rest of next year's Ventures.

News from CPAS

Mentoring Matters is a new CPAS resource to nurture disciples and develop leaders. Written by James Lawrence, it has everything you need to start a mentoring network. Mentoring is an effective way of nurturing disciples and developing leaders, equipping people of all ages for God's mission to share the good news of Jesus. Visit www.cpas.org.uk/mentoring to find out more.

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