

FFWPU UK: Young Members Grow At The Children's Summer Camp 2021

Michael Balcomb

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The annual Children's Summer Camp returned to Cleeve House for a summer of education, growth and fun as the children journeyed on a "Fantastic Quest".

The theme for this year's Children's Summer Camp was "Our Fantastic Quest". We imagined ourselves on an epic fantastical journey, set in the magnificent castle Cleeve House in the idyllic Wiltshire countryside. From the moment the children arrived, they knew that adventure awaited them, and it began with the formation of three teams with magical names: Levitators, Transformers and Rejuvenators. Each team had two team leaders who worked together to take care of their team members and encourage them to gain points by participating fully in the camp and by going above and beyond. They could also gain points by helping out with the daily chores like doing the dishes and tidying the house. At the end of the camp, the team with the most points would gain a special prize.



The participants were split into two groups for their study sessions, with the juniors taught by Narumi Miller and the seniors taught by Chris Le Bas. Through studying bible stories they learnt about virtues and life lessons. Sports sessions, led by Achan Mould with his assistant Taishi Takeda, encouraged teamwork and perseverance through games like capture the flag and other challenges. One challenge was them building their own team castles out of wood. Children also had the opportunity to create clay models in Arts and Crafts sessions.

Each day of the camp had a daily motto, introduced in a short morning inspiration led by staff members,

followed through in their study sessions and concluding with a special evening activity. The first day they were told about "The Hero's Handbook", where they thought about who their heroes were that could guide them while they were on their quest. They were also given their own Summer Camp passport, in which they could keep a record of their points and what they learned on their quest. The day ended with Games Night, involving a dancing challenge and concluding with a game in the spooky woods chasing and being chased by their team leaders.

On the second day they learned about "Confronting the Dragon". They thought about their personal dragons, and how they could transform them from vices into virtues, like greed to generosity, and envy to gratitude. On this sunny day was the water sports, which included a water fight and a swim in the pool. In the evening they had a more reflective time, with Roots and Prayer Night, a short talk about their spiritual foundations followed by singing and prayer around the bonfire.

On the third day, for the final push, the motto was the this year's Summer Camp chant, "Fellow Questers, Huzzah!" In the craft project, they used their creative skills to create their own little world to represent their quest. They also worked in their teams to create skits based on what they learned on the camp, and practiced it together before performing it on family night. Some participants had individual performances as well.

The last morning's motto was "Bringing Home the Treasure". On this day they thought about all the treasures they had gained from the quest which they could bring home. Here are some reflections from the children about the treasures they gained.

Finally, with their parents present, the children graduated from Summer Camp and we found out that the Levitators had gained the most points over the camp! We look forward to seeing the children return next year! - Written by Richard R.

The following are some reflections from the participants:

[About Cleeve House] It is massive. - Selina.

It's my favourite place in the world. - Bobby.

[About games night] I got stung a lot but it was really fun. - Bobby.

Predator was a bit scary but then we caught a predator. - Oliver.

[About the craft project] I absolutely loved to make the little world ... It felt very accomplishing to complete the project. - Michael

[About prayer night] I LOVED PRAYING. - Abigail.

... the bonfire was good because we got marshmallows. - Taisei.

[Best treasure] Being at summer camp with my amazing team. - James.

My best treasure was helping the chefs clean the dishes. - Oliver.

