

## FFWPU UK: North Star Community Building Weekend in Keswick

Michael Balcomb  
May 1, 2022



### **"A Constructive And Action-Packed Fun Event!" - North Star Community Building Weekend 29th April - 1st May 2022 Darwin Escape Retreat, Keswick**

Perhaps one of the reasons this venue was chosen for this retreat is because it is conveniently accessible to both Scotland and the North of England, the two communities which comprise the newly-formed North Star region (although as we learned on the quiz night that Keswick is somewhat nearer Glasgow than Manchester)!

The North Star community was formed after a reorganisation of the UK Family Federation, and this weekend retreat was organised as an opportunity to become better acquainted and bonded through a mixture of natural interactions, fun-activities, and discussion groups.

The seeming disadvantage of the absence of one large enough communal meeting place proved to be only a minor drawback; we crammed together in one of the larger lodges or more often split into smaller and more manageable groups.



Both Saturday and Sunday started with smaller group HDH, followed by discussion of what had been read. On Saturday morning, the more active climbed a hill behind the resort or played basketball, while others took a leisurely stroll on the shores of Derwentwater. All had the opportunity to browse the shops in nearby Keswick and few resisted the temptation of one of the numerous cafes or restaurants.



The afternoon was dedicated to more serious matters with two popular discussion topics: community building, and Blessing preparation, and the groups were a good mixture of young and older, north of the border and southerners. It was very encouraging that an atmosphere of trust had already been established so that participants felt free to express themselves frankly and openly.

Those who wished could then join in a board game, continue informal chatting, or relax and take time to reflect on all the points raised. Some took advantage of the spa facilities. The day was rounded off by a well-prepared quiz with questions ranging from the totally obscure to 'anyone knows that' which provoked much hilarity and expanded our fund of knowledge.



On Sunday, some watched the EUME Sunday service, while others continued discussion from the previous day. For most of the participants, departure time came after lunch on Sunday, but a fortunate few were able to stay until the next day and enjoy more sharing and activities.

Regardless of how the North Star community evolves and whether it is even feasible to have such a geographically spread-out area function as one cohesive unit, an excellent foundation has been laid for future development.

Special thanks to the North Star organising committee for creating such a constructive and action-packed fun event!