

## FFWPU UK Summer Family Camp: Remembering The Important Things In Life

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**From the 28th of July to the 2nd of August, families from across the UK join together at Cleeve House for the Summer Family Camp under the motto "Focus on the important things, don't sweat the small stuff". See below a testimony from Simon C.**

Every year is a process of evolution; new families join with their young children, people who came last when they were teenagers return in their mid twenties, and then there are those who used to take part when they were little now turning up with their own children.



All of us seek reassurance in something that is constant, and then there is also the side of us that wants to discover new experiences and see our lives progress. The family camp culture manages to meet both those needs. It proves how tradition and new ideas are both important and can go hand in hand.

It was one of the pioneer's, Simon R.'s, 25th year of helping to run the camp, and while he has changed, appearing leaner, more distinguished with his silver trim and sharm el sheikh tan on his forehead, he is

just as funny as he has always been and can still keep an audience on the edge of their seat for a good length of time. It was also refreshing and reassuring to see so many of the twenty somethings take up the MC roles, leading the music, and organising the games.

Over the 5 nights we were 125 people and so much depends on everyone helping out with the cleaning and cooking and just people taking care of each other.



Over recent years one area that has involved new ideas has been Vanya and Chieko's coordination of the shopping and the chefs. This year meals were organised according to people's cultural backgrounds. So we had Russian's and Latvians (with David E. being made an honorary Russian) preparing Borscht, people with Indian heritage preparing curry; it meant we could eat Gimpab, Iranian lamb BBQs, and Chinese food. But also the kitchen became a place for people to talk, to catch up, or get to know each other, probably the most important health and safety policy to have.

On health we put an emphasis on hygiene, encouraging people to wash their hands regularly, organising the schedule in a way to ensure people got a proper night's sleep, and despite the large numbers we had no outbreaks of viruses.



Two highlights for me were:

To see regular campers bringing their extended family, and also to see people from beyond our UC community continuing to come back year after year, inviting their own friends to camp, and then also now their children feeling free to register for HARP workshops. When we see people keeping their own tradition (going off site on a Sunday to attend Mass), and then also having the capacity to be part of ours, offering a prayer in their own name, Aju, it is a real education by example, of what a 'holy community' could or should be.



Someone who has been coming for many years, Andris, has always joined in discussions at family camp and helped to spark debate and get people thinking. This year we asked him to give one of the morning talks, and after beating everyone at chess, he agreed. It reminded me a bit of being at one of True Father's early morning talks: you got to laugh a lot and were a bit nervous of what he might say next. But what made it stand out was the thoughtful honesty that so often is missing. When he asked: 'who dies first, and who flies out first, when a country goes to war?' no one wanted to answer, even though the answers were obvious. Some truths are uncomfortable.



In the end it was my first year knowing that at the end of family camp, I wouldn't be driving back to

London with the tent on the roof rack. So it was with a grateful heart that we waved people off after so many had sincerely contributed to a really comprehensive cleaning session.



There were quite a few people who asked to sign up late, and we simply didn't have space. We hope in the years to come, that with our thanks and praise, with one heart, we can build more facilities here at Cleeve House, expand our capacity and make space for everyone. Let's get together and feel alright. (you know the rest of the lyrics).

