

Last year saw 30 young people going away for a life-changing weekend of fun, learning, friendship and God. "The weekend was the best." they said. "The food was great, the views were great, the accommodation was great and the people were great." they said. "It was one of the best feelings I have ever had!!!!" they said. And then they said "When are we going again?"



Following on from last year's theme of "get a life", this year's ak weekend away challenged the young people to take that life and to "get real". We took the story of Peter getting out of his boat and walking on the water towards Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33) and asked the young people to think about what their boats were and how they could step out of them to walk on water.



Malachi were on hand throughout the weekend to provide music and worship and we were also joined by Exalt, an exciting team of young Christians from Saltmine Trust who brought a wealth of talent and excitement in their fusion of music, dance, rap, teaching and more. They helped us to explore the theme all together as well as helping lead workshops in music, drama, dance, art and craft, physical and challenge - sessions which included songwriting (see right), breakdancing, postcard writing, glass painting, pilates, step aerobics, a treasure hunt, drumming and more!

Saturday afternoon was put aside for sports, games and relaxation, as well as music and singing, a bible study, prayer and discussion.



The evening saw Exalt put on a bit of a show, followed by a "hot potatoes" question and answer session or late night film.



"Come"

After a day filled with miracles Jesus had to pray
So he sent His disciples on a boat far away
Across the lake to the other side
A storm blew up, they couldn't hide

The waves lashed high, the wind blew strong
They cried, they thought they didn't have long
A ghost appeared from out the gloom
Their minds were filled with impending doom

"Fear not" he said, "don't be afraid,
have courage and you will be saved"
The disciples listened to Jesus' Word
But only Peter really heard

"Lord, if it's You, let me walk by your side"
"Come" said Jesus with a hint of pride
Without a thought, he jumped out the boat
With faith and prayer He knew he would float

The wind and waves distracted him,
And then he realised he might have to swim
"Help," he cried "help save me please"
And Jesus picked him from the seas.

The wind and waves all died away
The Son of God was here to stay
Back on the boat the disciples cheered
They all agreed it had been a bit weird

On Sunday morning the young people brought together everything they had done in the workshops into a celebration of praise where they were able to share their experiences of the weekend with each other. This turned out to be a very moving time of worship which saw many young people challenged hugely in their faith, and several young people giving their lives to Christ for the first time. To see God moving in such a powerful way was an experience that few there will forget.

And of course, the weekend wouldn't be complete without the awe-inspiring walks to the top of a Welsh hill to see the sun rise!



In the words of some of the young people:



"This was my first time at Cefn Lea, and as I didn't know anyone who I was going with (apart from Marc and Sarah), I was pretty scared! But I have 2 say that I made some great friends there and had a really good weekend. Exalt were brilliant and the workshops were good too... The mountain walk was shattering but the view and the sunrise definitely made it worthwhile!! The dancing in the

girls dorm to Michael Jackson was hilarious - shame no one had a video camera then and there..!! I say we 'blame it on the boogie'!"



"I feel a lot closer to God all the time than I ever have before - not just on a Sunday night! Great food, views, people and laughs (next time I'll remember 2 pairs of trousers!)"



"Cefn Lea was great. I thought that last year was good but this year was fantastic. It was relevant to most, if not all of the people there. Exalt were amazing and really friendly. I now know more about God that I did before, a lot more, so it can't have been bad, can it! I loved at and I really can't wait for next year."



"father, thankyou 4 being with me even when the wind blows and the waves crash. glad you're here, amen"

"thank you god that we are all here at cefn lea together and we can praise you together"



"i pray thankyou for this weekend and i pray that you will look after all of us and help me to us all the things i've learnt this weekend to spread your word"



"i pray that god will let his presence be known to me and give me the opportunity to show that i can make a difference. give me the courage and confidence not to doubt you and let me help others. i pray for everyone not here this weekend who have really missed out. help me appreciate all that i have."

thankyou for always being there, even if we don't always remember that you are, just remind us that you are there and encourage us to talk to you. thank you"

