

## Please Pray

For staffing capacity in our centres as we head into an autumn & winter of recovery with a temporary reduction in personnel.

That groups planning to visit would be able to go ahead, and others would have the confidence to come away.

For staff members struggling with short & long-term illnesses, responsibilities and grief.

That each of us would be able to cope with the changing circumstances in our working lives.

For schools, that they may be allowed to take their SU groups on residentials this year.

## Give Thanks

We have had a summer to be grateful and amazed about.

Staff have largely stayed free from infection, despite looking after hundreds of guests.

For Government assistance through the period of closedown.

Generosity of those who have supported us with donations and prayer.

The goodness of God manifest in so many ways to us at this time.

## Looking Forward...By Looking Upward

*"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:18-19.*

These verses formed part of the morning devotions in one of our centres recently. They were in the context of the whole chapter, and passing through troubled times with the confidence of God's promises to preserve us, and lead us out victorious.

These couple of verses resonated particularly because of our experience through the summer: At last we were welcoming back 'proper' groups, to carry out the ministry we yearned to see. We were so grateful to be able to host families over the past holiday periods, but this was back to what we really wanted to be doing.

There was such a sense of a new beginning. Some managers likened it unto opening a centre for the

first time and receiving their first residential group - such was their excitement at seeing the building used as it should be; such was their joy at hearing singing & teaching ringing through the hallways!



I know I have referred to the impact on our staff of being restricted in their ability to fulfill their calling in respect of our ministry over the past 18 months, but it is only when you experience the emotions that were displayed and shared by our managers and their teams as groups returned, that you realise just how much this work is a vocation for each.

There were many difficulties along the way; there was a need to constantly adapt to emerging situations; the old ways of doing things had to be abandoned for new, more suitable methods. And all this while trying to economise and make our centres viable to continue ministry into the future.

In April 2020 I wrote, 'Wherever the 'new normal' finds us, we need to be doing God's work for that hour - not just persisting with our work and hanging God's name over the door!'

I believe we are being faithful to that challenge. God has preserved us thus far, and we believe He has a continuing purpose for us. We are not here to lament what has gone, but to grasp what He is giving us in this hour.

As someone has paraphrased the opening verses:

***"So do not dissolve into the past and whine your way to defeat. Be courageous, for God is about to do a new thing, to effect a new cycle of spectacular delivery."***

**FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS!**

## Autumn / Winter Adjustments

**Whilst we are seeing recovery** in our bookings, group size is still limited, and there are sectors which are finding it more difficult to return to residential activity.

Consequently, we face a challenging few months as we hit our expensive season in respect of heat & light, with diminished income.

In an effort to help the charity through this period, a number of staff have volunteered to take a temporary reduction in hours, and seek employment elsewhere, some on a full-time basis.

Others have requested a salary reduction, or donated a portion back to the charity.

Some have sought ways to raise some income for our work, using their skills.

This temporary reduction in workforce will lead to increased pressure on those staff continuing to work through the next few months, particularly those providing duty cover to the centres while guests are on site.



I would like to publicly record my thanks, and that of our Board of Trustees, to our staff who are each making sacrifices in various ways, to help Centre Ministries weather this storm.

Please pray for the various situations that our people find themselves in, over this period, and that they would be kept free from illness, injury and over-stress.

