

SPRING 2024

IGNITE

SPARKING PASSION FOR THE GOSPEL
ACROSS THE UK



**“WE ARE NOT SEPARATED
BY COLOUR; WE ARE
JOINED BY THE LORD.”**

COUNTIES TRAINEE EVANGELIST USES HER
EXPERIENCES OF ETHNICITY TO HELP SHOW US
WE ARE ALL THE BODY OF CHRIST.

ALSO INFORMING THEIR MISSION IN THE UK - COUNTIES
EVANGELISTS VISIT MOLDOVA.

IGNITE TALKS TO A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD CHAPLAIN.

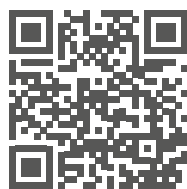


WELCOME TO IGNITE



QR codes

We have introduced 'QR codes' to Ignite to make it easier to access our website. Just open your mobile phone camera, point the camera at the QR code image, tap the link that appears on your mobile screen, follow any instructions which will take you to the Counties website.



Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of Ignite.

Global economic and military crises continue to dominate the news, and there is rarely anything in the media that will cheer our minds or warm our hearts. So much of our world is divided by racial, cultural and gender issues. However, in this edition of Ignite, read of a church who repented over personal attitudes to race that had divided them, and was a barrier to the Gospel, as our Trainee Cheryl shares her story (page 20). And Beverley Bedford helps us reflect on the impact of the story of the women Jesus met at a well in Samaria (page 30).

May God help us to not see the differences but rather the person in front of us, loved by God, and invited to enter His family through the Gospel of Christ.

Martin

Making Jesus known: inspiring and equipping local churches

Counties (formerly Counties Evangelistic Work) is a Registered Charity No. 264278 and a Company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales No. 1041761
 Address: Counties, 30 Haynes Road, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 3HD
 Telephone: 01373 823 013 Email: office@countiesuk.org www.countiesuk.org
 Thank you for your valued partnership. We are glad to make Ignite available free of charge. It costs approximately £5 per year to produce and distribute this newsletter to you. Every additional contribution will help us continue in our mission.
 Editor: Rachel Rounds - communications@countiesuk.org
 Design: Amperative - amperative.com



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 6-9** In the second part of our 125th anniversary celebrations, we take a look at Counties summer camps – past and present.
- 10-13** *Making Jesus Known Today and Tomorrow Spreading the Gospel in Twenty-first Century Britain.* An excerpt from Paul Willmott's chapter on *Sharing the Gospel with Children.*
- 14-17** Two Counties Evangelists share how their recent mission trip to Moldova informs their ministry here in the UK.
- 18-19** Jacob Newman, 19, also visited Moldova as part of TEAM (Counties gap year programme). He tells Ignite about the trip and his time on TEAM.
- 20-23** *"We are not separated by colour; we are joined in the Lord."* Counties trainee evangelist, Cheryl Magowan, uses her experiences of ethnicity, as a Christian, to help show us we are all the body of Christ.
- 24-25** A new Neighbourhood Chaplain from Nigeria explains why the training is helping him to reach out in a predominately white neighbourhood.
- 26-27** At the start of every year, the Counties East Cluster gets together for 24 hours. It gathered at Arbury Chapel, Cambridge. Andy Mugford and Simon Ladd were there.
- 28-29** Counties Evangelist, Jonathan Brain and his wife Heather tell Ignite about their new house church and attending the M4 church planting programme.
- 30-33** Welcome to an unlikely person in an unlikely place. Beverley Bedford explores the story of Jesus' relationship with the woman at the well.
- 34** Evangelists

NEWS IN BRIEF

A SECOND NEW LIFE EXHIBITION

From 29 January, Life exhibition - the multi-media experience designed for primary school children which complements existing RE teaching - has had a second unit.

This has meant more Key Stage 2 pupils than ever before will experience the story of Jesus' teaching, parables and miracles. Its first outings were in London and Exeter and have quickly moved on to other areas of the country.

Life exhibition Coordinator, Kevin Baldwin said:

"We are thrilled that there are two Life exhibition units working in tandem. It means so many students will access the resource."

"Life exhibition has been so well received, over the years, that we have no doubt that a second unit will be as equally in demand, and we thank God for His provision."

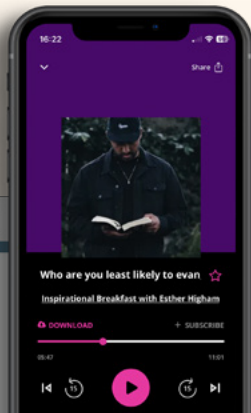
To book, contact: kevin@lifeexpo.co.uk • 07968705623 • www.countiesuk.org/lifeexpo



PUBLICITY FOR COUNTIES NEW BOOK

We featured excerpts from *Making Jesus Known Today and Tomorrow Spreading the Gospel in Twenty-First Century Britain* in our last edition and also in this one. But in the meantime, the book has been making waves in the Christian media world. CEO Martin Erwin and Stephen McQuoid were interviewed on Premier Radio Breakfast show which was a really informative chat.

Martin also appeared on Transworld Radio (TWR) and wrote a piece for Premier Christianity, along with a video for their Instagram page.



YOUR LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Dear Ignite,

Thank you for another excellent edition (Winter 2023).

I particularly enjoyed the article about the befriending of an ex-offender. And, in contrast, the touching article about the policeman who so enjoyed being able to relax and enjoy time with his family at the fun day for police families at Capernwray Hall.

The letter he wrote about his experiences as a policeman and how when a young girl said: "Hello, are you here for the police day?", showed that people can be kind and loving. Knowing that he is a police officer, made such a difference to him, as he remembered that there are good people in the world.

It showed how just one fun day can make a difference to someone who serves the community every day, often in very difficult and distressing situations, often with little appreciation.

His last comment says it all: "So keep doing what you do from love and asking nothing in return."

It shows how sometimes we are there to sow the seeds and leave God to do the rest. And we can do this through our small actions of kindness that may seem like nothing to us – but have great significance to others. It's all part of God's perfect plan.

I also thought Stephen McQuoid's article on the transgender issue was well balanced and



gave good explanations about what it means to be transgender or not.

It helped my understanding of my non-Christian neighbour who is transgender, and how to approach her in a non-judgemental Christian way.

Thank you again

Christine Jooste

Lancs

NEXT STEPS

We love hearing from you. So, if you would like to comment on an article in Ignite or Counties' work, please email: communications@countiesuk.org



HAPPY 125TH ANNIVERSARY, COUNTIES

In the second part of our 125 anniversary celebrations, we are taking a look at Counties Summer Camps – past and present and the impact they have had and still have on the children who attend.

Began in 1960 - David and Wendy Iliffe set up the Dalesdown camp among many others.

"I really want to run our own camps," said David, a month after we married. *"We'd better do it then,"* Wendy remembers replying, in 1960. Four months later the Good News Camp at Seasalter, Kent was the first of many.

Games such as 'Hunt the Officer' were loved, where teams of children had to go out and find the leaders. One year David spent an hour under a car with just his legs sticking out. Morning Bible groups and the much-loved evening 'camp chat' were filled with laughter and careful listening as the Gospel was taught.

Three camps each summer, under canvas, provided flexibility with location following the initial use of boarding schools.

In the 1980s, David was guest speaking all over the world and found particularly the USA and New Zealand benefited from permanent camps. He kept asking younger workers here to set up the same, but it didn't happen.

In 1989, however, David and Wendy set up their own charity called Family Foundations Trust and three years later bought the Dalesdown site. It needed total refurbishment but now is a 64-bedroomed building with separate sports hall used for school groups, camps and churches. Initially, although at retirement age, David borrowed tents and started camps again, before handing over leadership.

It was David's heart to win boys for the Lord. He was very gifted in teaching the Gospel and bringing children to that point of understanding to commit their lives. Wendy says: *"We do have rich memories. Children have rich memories. David was a reaper"*.



Began 1975 - Stephen and Jean Gillham – Dorset Camps

In our early years as Counties evangelists in Dorset, four couples shared a vision with Jean and me to start a camp work. Thanks to the tremendous help of Reg and Gladys Whittern, formally Hertfordshire Counties workers, who lent us their equipment, and allowed us to use their site.

Camp started in 1975 with just 50 children, mainly in the early days from Dorset. There was just one week for children from 10 to 14 years old. Over the years, we acquired all the necessary equipment, moved to three different Christian farmers' land and every year built a camp in the middle of a field.

The demand was such that we soon increased to three weeks of camp with one year, reaching a total just short of 270 campers, over the three weeks. The camp work thrived because of a large number of volunteers who came each year to be tent leaders, cook helpers, and senior leaders - and worked with Jean and me to run the camps.

Some years, over 100 were involved during the three weeks. Over the 37 years that we



had the privilege of leading the camp work, something like 10,000 children came to camp.

We worked on a very full programme with sports activities on camp; two or three outings: to the sea, adventure or activities sites; morning prayer and 'Evening Rendezvous' each day.

The camp concluding on Saturdays with an invitation for parents and friends to join us for the final Rendezvous.

In 2007 we moved to a permanent campsite owned by the Dorset Education Committee near Wareham, giving us proper toilets, showers, a modern kitchen, and dining space, but we still had everybody sleeping in tents and used the marquee for all our Rendezvous.



Each year we organised Senior and Junior House-party weekends as a follow-on to camp and allowed many young people to meet together for Bible teaching and fellowship weekends.

As we came to retire from the camp work, Ian and Sally Carr took over the responsibility, but in the mid-noughties camp was becoming much more difficult, with so many different legal regulations, fewer children linked with churches in Dorset, increasing problems in finding sufficient help and rising costs.

It is a privilege to look back over the years and recognise the tremendous blessing we had from the Lord. We know that this was the most fruitful part of our ministry in Dorset and scores of children came to know the Lord.

Many of them are now active in church life in many areas, some on the mission field, and some taking on responsibility as Elders and Pastors. We are often reminded of the blessing that campers received when we met them years afterward or parents who have told us of the influence camp had on their children.

It's good to pray for the many hundreds who were influenced by their visits to camp

and heard the wonderful Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

Present day - The Good News Camp. Gordon and Penny Curley

The camp is held at Lockerley Water Farm, Hampshire every year.

I (Gordon) came to faith on a Christian camp many years ago, and many of our volunteer helpers also came to faith on camps or found the weeks away were key times in their spiritual development. Every year we see that pattern being repeated again and again.

The camp gives young people, aged 8 to 15 years old, the opportunity to meet new friends and participate in exciting activities. We attract children from churches and others who have no regular church contact. The highlights are fun, fellowship, friendship, and drawing closer to God.

Organised camp activities include on site sports and arts and crafts sessions, plus a trip out to Romsey Rapids swimming pool. During 'free time', campers can just 'chill out' or use the onsite facilities, e.g. snooker, table tennis, volleyball, badminton, football, and various board games.



Campers take part in various forms of Bible study and prayer. The main learning time takes place in an action-packed, fast-paced programme called 'T.G.S.' (The God Slot). This event includes singing, quizzes, Bible readings, competitions, prayers, fun spots, video stories, and a Bible talk.

We run the camp to give young people an affordable holiday that will create many lasting memories and friendships – sharing the Christian message and building up and encouraging Christians in their faith.

Present Day - Merseyside Christian Youth Camps (MCYC)

Counties evangelists Rob and Sarah Watson are involved in MCYC. It is a charitable organisation made up of volunteers from over 50 churches, who all work together to tell young people about the great love Jesus has for them.

Established in 1945, it offers a fantastic summer experience that gives young people the chance to have fun, make friends, and explore their faith.

Many Counties workers are involved in camp work. We'd love to hear your stories.



NEXT STEPS

To find out more about you can support the work of Counties:

www.countiesuk.org/supporters/individuals

MAKING JESUS KNOWN TODAY AND TOMORROW SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY BRITAIN.

If you haven't yet bought a copy, here's another edited excerpt from the book: Sharing the gospel with children.

Paul Willmott is a Counties evangelist and has worked in ministry with children and families since 1995. He works with primary schools to help connect them with local churches, and speaks at church-based outreach events. He is the creator of Twist Online: short puppet videos exploring big faith questions for children.

Sharing the gospel with children

Let me begin with this bold statement, Children are people too. It may seem a little obvious, but we can often think of children as junior humans or, worse, we can end up treating them as less than people. Maybe this is because they are young, with lots to learn and much growing to do. Children do have much to learn, but then so do all of us.

Jesus taught positively about the way that children can respond to God's love, but not always so positively about the way that

some adults do. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark note that Jesus called a child to stand with the disciples. Matthew 18:3 tells us Jesus said: *"You need to change and become like little children."*

What would that have been like, to be looked at like this, by Jesus? We also read in Acts 1: 8 that Jesus said: *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"*.

We don't read: *"And then the power of the Junior Holy Spirit fell on those who attended Sunday school lessons."* The same Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are available to all, whatever our age may be.

Accountability and responsibility

So, is there an age at which we become spiritually accountable? The Bible gives no



specific information about a person's age of accountability. In practice, it probably varies a little from child to child. I would suggest that a child reaches the age of accountability when he or she is capable of making a faith decision for or against Christ.

One of the common myths in today's church is that children cannot be zealous, God-loving, faith-drenched, Bible-devoted, prayer-uttering disciples of Jesus Christ. The truth is that children can be just as ardent in their Christian faith as adults.

When we are teaching children biblically and theologically, we do, of course, need to take great care that we are not indoctrinating, but because we would want

each individual to be living a renewed life, demonstrating faith in the way that they live. And most of all, we would want them to be following Jesus out of choice and love, not because they are being told to do so.

Parents and responsibility

We also have a responsibility to the parents of the children whom we are teaching. As churches, we need to ask the question of how well we are communicating with the parents of the children that we teach. This is important for parents who are members of our churches, but it is key for families who are not members of our churches.



Paul Willmott and Twist

Do the parents know what faith principles we are teaching to their children? If not, how can they reinforce these principles at home? Who is really responsible for teaching our kids about faith? RE lessons at school can teach facts and figures. Children also learn in the playground. They also learn in Sunday school.

So, with whom do they spend a good portion of time? That would be with their family—parents, carers, all those in their households. But not all of these parents are known to us, and still fewer members of our congregations. When we are teaching children the Christian faith, it is a good principle to be completely open with their families, whether they are part of a church or not, about what we are teaching and why.

Even better, we could aim to be teaching the whole household at the same time. Why not run an 'Alpha' style event for the whole

family? Or if you want to connect with those families outside of church, how about a lunch club? Through local schools, we have engaged with families who would benefit from free meals. Let's be ready to invite new families to our events, so we can get to know them and welcome them into God's Family.

We can also look for resources and conversation starters in book or video form, and make this available to parents and prospective parents, and also to young people and children. We could also encourage conversation during the service. If we can encourage each member of the family to talk, then maybe we shall inspire the whole family to share faith at home.

So where do we start in leading a child to Christ? How can we help a child take their own steps into an independent Christian life? The following seem to me to be key points.

1. Let's allow and encourage conversations to happen.

Maybe these conversations can be guided in the home or through Sunday school lessons, or maybe by other members of our church in targeted chatting at the end of a service. It is when we begin to explore the truth about God and begin asking questions that God will begin to reveal his presence to us.

2. Let's actually present the Gospel to our children. As with those whom Paul had in mind as he dictated Romans 10: 14–17 if they don't hear, they can't know. If they don't know, they can't respond.

3. Let's be living out God's story in our lives. Children can often be visual learners and can pick up what is going on around them in the world. So, how are you living out your God story? Children have this knack of being able to tell when you are being genuine. Are we ready to teach the gospel by the way that we live?

4. Let's be ready. Where do you begin? If I was going to present

the Gospel, I would be sure to talk about these key points:

- God as creator, creating the world and people, to love and share it with him.
- Through bad choices, sin entered the world. People began to value other things before God. Therefore, people are separated from God.
- Then Jesus, as God the Son, became human as part of our world and lived a perfect life. He stood in our place at the cross, to restore our relationship with God.
- To complete this, the Holy Spirit (not the Junior Holy Spirit) lives with us as our comforter and guide, to help us live rightly before God.

But, most importantly, let's remember that it is the Holy Spirit who does the work in people's hearts and that includes the children for whom He has given us responsibility.

To purchase book visit:
www.countiesuk.org/home/#our-book



TWO COUNTIES EVANGELISTS SHARE HOW THEIR RECENT MISSION TRIP TO MOLDOVA INFORMS THEIR MINISTRY HERE IN THE UK.

Gordon Curley

Each autumn a group of Moldovan Christians (guided by Mark McCormack from The Moldovan Mission) invite evangelists/preachers to speak to their unsaved Friends Relatives Associates Neighbours and Kids (F.R.A.N.K. outreach) about Jesus and share their own testimonies of coming to faith.

I was involved again this year, for eleven days in the Cahul area of Southern Moldova, and took our friend and Hampshire CLG Chairperson, Mark Majunusz (Aka 'The Moose') for his first plunge into Moldovan culture and cuisine.

It is difficult to explain just how different (and sometimes bizarre) Moldova is, but perhaps this description of one meeting will set the scene.

This FRANK meeting, towards the end of our stay, was in a home in Gotesti, a village outside Cahul. As we entered the snug sitting room we were warmly greeted by a small, eclectic group of people. First, we

were introduced to a Russian-speaking mother with her baby, an immediate complication as everyone else spoke Romanian and further translation would be needed.

Then, we met a deaf lady, who needed everything signed by her friend once it had been translated into Romanian. They were sitting beside a young man who was completely unfocused and didn't appear to take in anything that was said.

Add to them, a senior couple who had very obviously been drinking, and a toddler that constantly ran in and out of the room, and you have pictured our meeting. Our translator unfortunately got a 'frog' in his throat during the second part of the message and could hardly speak, but we struggled on, until the appeal and prayer of response.

Suddenly, the 'doorbell' – a madly barking dog in the yard – rings, and in walks the local pastor. Yep, it's all about the timing. On a human level it felt chaotic, but God

is sovereign. Five people responded to the appeal that day and the pastor will be doing a Bible study with them, in that home, over the coming months.

We had an amazing eleven days and saw folk responding to the Gospel at almost every meeting. We enjoyed a few days working with Pastor Alexander and his wife who are church planting in Larga Noua. We watched how they are connected to the community - which was thought-provoking.

Perhaps the highlight of my time in Moldova, this year, was meeting two young people, Mark and Gabriella, who last year responded to the appeal to trust Christ. They are now baptised and active members of the local church. We know that: *"One sows, another reaps"* and it was a joy to see them having been nurtured by the fellowship there.

This brings me to the lessons I have brought back from Moldova, which feed into my ministry here in the UK. I see three timeless principles of evangelism in action every time I go:

1. The believers make a commitment to both engage with some basic training in evangelism and to pray regularly for their unsaved family and friends.

We know that: "One sows, another reaps" and it was a joy to see them having been nurtured by the fellowship there.



Gordon ready with aid packs

2. They have a sincere desire to see people saved and they are not embarrassed or afraid to invite people into their homes or into their churches.
3. The local pastors and fellowships aim to follow up all those who respond during these mission weeks and to ensure that they are disciplined and cared for appropriately.

I would love to encourage and facilitate these principles in the UK churches we are involved in and always return home from Moldova excited to see what God can do through each of us in our own communities.

David Brown

My third visit to Moldova differed from the previous two as I was based in the south rather than the north, and instead of staying with Moldovan families I was in a flat in the city of Cahul with others, including Gordon Curley and our 'apprentices', Matthew and 'Moose'.

As before, most of our evangelistic opportunities came in gospel meetings in homes, where believers had invited unsaved contacts to hear a testimony from the 'apprentice' and a gospel message, followed by a challenge to repent and put their trust in Christ alone.

This time Matt delivered the main gospel message on several occasions after I had given my testimony. It was so encouraging

to see his development compared to last year. It blesses us and others so much when we don't hold tightly to opportunities but look to encourage and develop the next generation (2 Tim. 2:2) without trying to make them clones of us.

As with our previous visits, there was a high degree of responsiveness to the Gospel, with almost half of the unbelievers responding publicly in the home meetings and some believers making a recommitment.

We preach the same Gospel as in the UK: salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, through His sacrifice on the cross. Seeing such responsiveness to the same Gospel in Moldova has encouraged me to challenge people to respond (publicly in certain situations)



David preaching through a translator in church at Baurci Moldoveni

On another occasion, Maria told the unbelievers present that she was recommitting her life to the Lord after many years away from Him and urged them to give their lives to him, including her husband.

in the UK, being more willing to risk the 'embarrassment' of nobody doing so, more confident in the power of the Gospel and in the Lord's ability to work in people's lives through His word, even if there is no obvious evidence of this at the time. Our preaching must be for a response, not just to educate.

On several occasions I asked groups what they would ask Jesus if He stood right there. A highlight was when Anna replied: "I would ask Him to forgive my sins."

Praise the Lord that she followed this up in repentance and faith in Him. In another home, Angela listened intently and tearfully throughout the message before making the same response.

On another occasion, Maria told the unbelievers present that she was recommitting her life to the Lord after many years away from Him and urged

them to give their lives to him, including her husband.

Our dependence on the Lord is often stretched in Moldova by unexpected situations, such as being taken suddenly to visit the council offices in Tiganca, where the local church planter gathered three employees in the board room and without warning said to me: "You speak."

Those who respond are encouraged to join discipleship groups where the local leaders will seek to ascertain the genuineness of their profession (with some coming to genuine faith at this stage) and take them through next steps in the Christian life, including baptism.

Key lessons to learn from this are the amount of prayer that is invested ahead of these missions and the thoroughness of the follow up.



NEXT STEPS

Could you support our evangelists in the work they do?

If you'd like more information on ways to donate regularly or just give a one-off donation visit our website

www.countiesuk.org/supporters/individuals

JACOB NEWMAN, 19, ALSO VISITED MOLDOVA AS PART OF TEAM – COUNTIES TRAINING IN EVANGELISM AND MISSION GAP YEAR. HE TELLS IGNITE ABOUT THE TRIP AND HIS TIME ON TEAM.

Jacob, tell Ignite readers about yourself and how you ended up in Moldova.

I normally live on a farm in North Gloucestershire, however, these past few months I have stayed in many places around the UK and abroad. My home church is Glebe Chapel in Newent. I went on the trip to Moldova with Bob Telford (a different trip to Gordon and David).

I started TEAM in September 2023, and as part of the programme, Counties wanted me to experience evangelism in a different culture and so I went out to Moldova.

How did you find Moldova?

Busy. It was a full-on experience but really good. Finding a common ground or a way to connect with the people, before presenting the Gospel, can be quite difficult because it's such a different culture and yet the preachers would always find a way of connecting with people in the place we were visiting – whether it was towns or villages. It was great to see the Gospel presented in many different situations.

What did you take away from it?

The power of the Gospel. In the West, you don't always see the Gospel having that much power due to the culture and the rise of atheism. Whereas when you present a simple message of the Bible in Moldova people still respond to it due to most people knowing that there is a God.

How did you end up joining TEAM?

When I was in lower sixth form, I was looking around universities and nothing seemed right. Then I thought about taking a gap year and our church has good connections with Counties. And while at a youth event, Dave Thomas, who works for Counties, was advertising it, so I decided to go to it. That's where I first heard about TEAM. This, I knew, was the right option for me.

You are only half of the way through the course – but tell us how you have found it so far.

At the start of September, I went up to Tilsey Bible College in Motherwell. I was

there for four weeks doing the advanced course, which is an introduction to theology, hermeneutics, and Christology, but also looking at the practical application of experiences we might have over the coming year.

Then I had a placement at Kilmarnock Baptist Church, for three weeks, shadowing the pastor. It was very different from what I was used to. Kilmarnock has a lot of drug and alcohol problems. Obviously, everyone hears about towns and cities with these issues, but when you go to a place like Kilmarnock it's very visible. You get to experience it close up, and the effects it has on a community and the need for Christ.

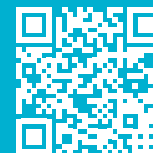
So, what are you doing now?

I have been placed at my home church. So, I am shadowing our Pastor. I am working on our new website. But I have also preached and hosted services. I preached on Christmas morning about the gift of God's salvation which was based on Ephesians 2: 8-9. I really enjoy standing at the front and telling people about Christ.

Would you recommend TEAM to others?

Yes. There is such a wide variety of experiences, and you can customize them. If I suggested something, they always

tried to find someone to do that with me. But if you are not too sure, Counties provides you with so many options and opportunities. I have had so many experiences I didn't even know I would get – like going to Moldova. I am not yet sure where I want to go from here, but I have learned so much about how churches work and the many different ways someone can serve the Lord – it's been invaluable.



NEXT STEPS

If you would like to know more about One2lead and TEAM email: one2lead@countiesuk.org

or visit: www.counties-training.org/one2lead

“WE ARE NOT SEPARATED BY COLOUR; WE ARE JOINED IN THE LORD.”

A Counties trainee evangelist is using her experiences of ethnicity to help show us we are all the body of Christ.

Cheryl Magowan was born to a Caribbean mother, from Trinidad, and a white Irish father from Belfast. Growing up in the 1980s, neither parent really discussed the topic of racial identity.

Cheryl, however: *“wanted to know who I was”* after experiencing many bouts of racism from a tender age. As a young woman, she went on to study for a master’s degree in ‘Identity Construction’ where the entire focus was on race and visual culture. After her degree, she worked in areas of racial diversity.

“My thing throughout it all was harmony. Let’s focus on what we have in common rather than what makes us different. But institutions were more focused on the negative and I think if you stay there, restoration doesn’t happen.

“My approach, irrespective of one’s colour, was asking what can we do in your life on the basis of racialised history or are you

staying in this historical past and repeating the same hidden or open injustices, the anger, the separation, the devastation.”

Cheryl always knew Father God, but she was never, ever introduced to the Bible, or Jesus. In 2020, Christ rescued her. *“The Lord literally pulled me out of a horrific relationship”.*

“My life was in pieces. Desperation for a family led me into a volatile relationship with a narcissist. Also, I suffered two traumatic pregnancy losses. I was grieving, lost, and heartbroken. Not long after being discharged from the hospital, I was in my back bedroom, he came in, and started emotionally abusing me again.

“This stocky guy was literally picked up off his feet, his face changed, and he looked demonised. There was an invisible separation between us, suddenly we were both given the choice to be with God. I knew it was God’s army. I chose God.



Cheryl (in green) walking with Martin Luther King III

“The next thing, the guy bolted out of the bedroom terrified, he ran down the stairs and out of my house. Simultaneously, I felt scales lifting from my eyes. Powerfully and clearly, I saw my whole relationship and living situation playing out for what it really was.”

A few hours later Cheryl’s television was on a YouTube channel and a Derek Prince’s sermon popped up; he said: *“Would you like to pray this prayer?”* She had never heard of him, but she says

she knew he was talking to her and knew she had to give her life to the Lord: “And I have never looked back. I am so, so, so grateful. My life is completely different. I am saved.”

Cheryl started attending a church in the local village where she lived near Preston in Lancashire with her mum. The welcoming but small congregation of only 10 members was all white and retired.

But even though Cheryl had done so much work in the areas of race, equality,

and diversity she says: *"I was shocked and not prepared by what I began to encounter at churches with my mum – including these ones."*

At a church over 70's coffee club, Cheryl's mum Ivy, sat next to a woman who immediately held up a Robinson's Golliwog toy, dangling on a bag; she snapped aggressively: *"Is this you? Does it offend you?"* Cheryl happily offered to run race equality sessions but sadly, the committee refused, saying members would resist learning.

"I could see the Lord working and opening up with a new path by bringing what I used to do and offer it to the church. So that's what I did."

One Sunday, Cheryl and her mum attended church and the service information leaflet was called 'Racial Justice Sunday'. Cheryl says the minister told the congregation that it would be a short service as he was not the one to talk on the subject.

Cheryl says: *"Then all of a sudden something happened in my boots – they began to move me, and I ended up at the front of the church. As he took the offering I asked the minister: 'Would I be able to say something at the end?'"*

"He said: 'You can speak now'. And he beckoned me to the mini pulpit. I had no idea what I was going to say. But I began to talk about the experiences of racism I had encountered in the village, that I felt very sad, and that I had always wanted to go to that church, but I had always been afraid about how I would be received."

"I can't explain or tell you how – but there was a sudden movement in the place, and I could hear a groaning and every congregation member was sobbing and my mum was in the middle, and they were all hugging and holding each other."

"All I really remember was that there was nothing but forgiveness and love. The thing that brought me around, was the sobbing – they were all speaking their sorrow about what they had done in their lives – some were teachers, some worked in offices, and they were repenting, and even the preacher was crying. It was extraordinary – we all held each other for about half an hour – felt like forever. It was a heart-moving, Holy Spirit moment."

They had also attended another church as part of the 'Shoebbox Appeal' where they were quizzed as they entered: *"What do you want?"* and then politely told they were at the wrong church and should perhaps go to the Pentecostal church around the corner.

Cheryl was also able to talk to people at that church, who admitted they didn't know what to say when they saw people like her coming in. Cheryl was able to share that all she and her mum needed was for them to say, sincerely: *"Welcome" or "God bless you"* and that was it.

"We are not separated by colour," Cheryl continues. "We are joined in the Lord because that's what happened at Calvary. That's why Jesus did what He did on the cross for us all to be united through Him."



CHERYL'S PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

Look into the recesses of our hearts. Heal our wounds of racial trauma. Lord, help us to forgive one another for any racial hurt. Reconcile us together as your little children, who are colours of the rainbow and beautifully made in your image.

In Jesus Mighty Name

Amen.

Mark 11: 25 -26 (Forgiveness)

Hebrews 6: 18-19 (Hope)

James 2: 1-4 (Judgement)

"It was really phenomenal to be able to have this dialogue with them and to say, the difference you believe is there, actually isn't. Race is an idea; it is an ideology that has been placed upon society to separate us. Believers in the Lord are family. It is as simple as that. When we look at the Great Commission, we can't afford to get distracted by something that is deception, that is not truth, that's not Jesus. Our identity is in Christ."

Cheryl is now using her experiences on Counties' Evangelist Training Programme. She is now writing an easy-to-follow booklet to help churches address issues of ethnicity, with one accord.

She says: *"I hope it may well help us all to keep Jesus' commandment, to simply, 'love one another'."*



NEXT STEPS

Are you interested in you joining the Evangelist Training Programme. Visit:

www.counties-training.org/etp

A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD CHAPLAIN FROM NIGERIA EXPLAINS WHY THE TRAINING IS HELPING HIM TO REACH OUT IN A PREDOMINATELY WHITE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

Frank and Mavis Nnabue founded the New Glory Christian Centre International Ministries in Chatham, Kent – where they live – late, last year. The church had been meeting on Zoom over the Covid period but once it was over they felt God's calling to open a new church. They didn't, however, have a building to use but they fasted and prayed for forty days, and God provided for them, and their first service was held at Chatham Grammar School on 17 December 2023.

When they were meeting on Zoom they had around 40 to 50 people joining from all over the UK as well as Africa, Europe,



and Canada. Now the New Glory Christian Centre has a small congregation of around ten Christians but is focused on outreach and evangelism in the area – a large part of the reason why Frank and Mavis decided to join the Neighbourhood Chaplains Scheme.

"We had been reaching out to our neighbours as a group. We love evangelising. But at the time we were leading a church group online. They were really supportive of the idea of doing Neighbourhood Chaplains. It just made sense for us to have a partnership."

"However, after some time, we decided to join another bigger church. We decided to be part of the Vineyard movement. We went to their Bible leadership college, just to be able to plant a church. So, we put Neighbourhood Chaplains on hold. But after the training, we felt it wasn't where God wanted us to be. So, we said we are going to go with Counties and began Neighbourhood Chaplains training."

Two years ago, Frank and Mavis started the training, and they finished in June 2023. Frank says both he and his wife have done quite a lot of training in the past, particularly in area of leadership and pastoral care.



"What was different for us," says Frank, "was how to minister to the English. How do we effectively engage with English people – to reach out to them and get them to accept the word? It was looking at different ways of ministry and how to effectively grow a church. I am from Nigeria and my wife is from Ghana, although she has lived here in the UK almost all her life."

Frank also says he learned the importance of 'rest' as you do the work of God as a pastor or a minister, so you don't burn out. He also learned from the knowledge of other people on the course who were from Ireland, Southampton, Birmingham, London, Manchester, Scotland, Wales, and all over the UK who brought their different experiences.

"Although we follow the same Jesus, people need to feel comfortable in their church environment. We also need to learn how to

pray for them, and how to see life from their point of view. So, for us, it was so important to learn how to minister to the English."

Taking Neighbourhood Chaplains forward, Frank and Mavis now intend to go out into their local neighbourhood and knock on doors. They are also getting the church on board. They have wanted to connect the church to the local community for a long time, where they are in a predominately white area.

"So, we want to reach out to people, befriend them, connect with them, and from there, lead them to church."

"I want to use it as a tool. And I want other churches to join us instead of it just being one small group. So, we can set up different groups in Medway to take the Gospel to different parts of the neighbourhood."



NEXT STEPS

If you would like to know more about Neighbourhood Chaplains visit:

www.counties-training.org/neighbourhood-chaplains

COUNTIES EVANGELISTS AND CHURCH PLANTERS MEET IN REGIONAL GROUPS TWICE A YEAR FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND TRAINING.

THIS YEAR, THE EAST OF ENGLAND CLUSTER GROUP GATHERED AT ARBURY CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

ANDY MUGFORD AND SIMON LADD WERE THERE.

The work of an evangelist can sometimes feel quite isolated - so the chance to meet up is to be treasured and a time to catch up, learn from each other, and pray, is enormously beneficial.

One of the sessions is always to share and pray about things that are too personal to put in the prayer letter. These times are honest, often emotional, and very precious.

Victor Jack is part of the East of England Cluster, and he is endlessly inspiring with his enthusiasm, treasure trove of experience, and up-to-the-minute accounts of leading people to faith.

At the end of the day, we retire to the nearby Premier Inn, where we enjoy a meal together and try to remember our menu choices that we made a month ago. *"Oi, that's my banoffee pie - this fruit salad must be yours."*



Dan Randall

The next morning, our speaker Dan Randall from Hope Together got up at 5am and drove from Burnley to be with us. He shared some challenging statistical research about faith in different age groups and helped us think through the practical implications of how we share the Gospel. The truth doesn't change – but the wrapper does.

Most older people have had some involvement with church at some stage in their lives and they think that they understand the basics of Christianity. Usually, they don't. They think being good will get them into heaven – if there is one. A good deal of time needs to be spent helping them unlearn, unpicking their prejudices, and apologising for incidents that gave them a negative impression of the church.

Many younger people have not been involved with church and don't know any Bible stories. Instead of throwing up our hands in horror at another example of the decline of 'Christian' Britain - why not see this as an amazing opportunity to share the Gospel with a blank-slate generation who don't have jaded misconceptions, off-putting experiences and are genuinely interested in discussing the spiritual dimension of life.

The session was certainly thought-provoking. The opportunity to scratch heads together was invaluable as we are all involved in churches, that are seeking to connect and communicate the Gospel relevantly with different generations. It was great too, to share some ways in which some are already seeing fruit in doing this differently. What struck us all was that it did not include a big budget – but rather making time available to come alongside others – whether that be one-to-one or in a community setting. Again, we were reminded by Dan that *"community"* and *"authenticity"* are what all generations are looking for.

Some of our time was spent sharing resources – books, small group courses, and websites that have proven to be useful to some evangelists and are worth sharing.

For example, *"The Wellbeing Journey"* course has been a helpful lead-into Alpha type courses. <https://wellbeingjourney.org/>

As a Cluster, we are starting One2lead East in March at Vauxhall farm. It is exciting that young people from churches in our area have already signed up – and we have room for more.

In November, we are celebrating 125 years of Counties in East England with a Counties Connect event that we hope to run on Saturday 2 Nov, in Bury St Edmunds or/and Sunday, 3 Nov, in Chelmsford.

We are looking back over God's faithfulness and looking forward to what He has in store for us through Counties involvement and support in the local churches across our region.

Details to confirm venues will follow via Ignite.



NEXT STEPS

To find out more and book on the One2Lead East visit:

www.counties-training.org/event-details/one-2-lead-east-march-2024

JONATHAN BRAIN AND HIS WIFE HEATHER, CELEBRATE 25 YEARS AS COUNTIES EVANGELISTS. THEY LIVE NEAR CHIPPENHAM IN WILTSHIRE. THEY'RE ALSO SETTING UP MARANATHA HOUSE CHURCH AND ATTENDING THE M4 CHURCH PLANTING PROGRAMME.



We've been blown away by His Spirit. We're increasingly putting the sails up, losing the rudder, ropes, and seeking to let God do all the directing. It's been nearly half of our lives and it's gone so quickly – you're no fool to give your life up in usage for the Lord.

Tell us the background to setting up Marantha House Church.

For years, I had heard preachers talking about the early church in the book of Acts and I thought: "Well, formal church struggles to resemble that."

As soon as Covid hit, I felt that God was speaking and I was taken to that obscure verse in Amos: "Take away from me the noise of your songs," (Amos 5:23) but it got little traction amongst the people I shared it with.

But I know God spoke and I couldn't 'unhear' it. When I asked God: "What do you want me to do with it?" I knew He said: "Small, in your house." Then I had a dream and told Heather it was one-word "gazebo." That was it.

So how does it feel to have been a Counties evangelist for 25 years?

It's been a big part of our family life. When I stepped into the work I had been working full-time and I remember Heather saying: "God will provide." And He has – He has provided work for us to do, and finances.

Then, ten minutes later, I got a phone call, and someone said: "I've got a gazebo, do you want it?" So, feeling rather freaked out I said: "Yes, please." It was pretty old and worn out, but I knew I had to have it even though I wasn't sure what for. Then someone else phoned and also offered me a gazebo.

Later that day, I was fixing the car outside and a neighbour popped across and said: "You're a Christian, would you do something in the neighbourhood outside so we could do something churchy?"

So, I told them it would be under a gazebo the following Sunday, May 2020. So, we did that for a couple of months, and it was great. As the restrictions lifted, we morphed into being a 'sofa church' in our house, although we'd started online from March 2020. We began a house group last summer - sharing testimonies, praying, singing, having communion, and looking into the word together. Building relationships and getting to know one another. That has gradually led to where we are now.

So, you've joined the M4 Church Planting Course as you start Marantha more formally in your home.

I am not one for big formal gatherings and I saw it was in Preston, Lancashire

which is a long way from here, so I wasn't feeling thrilled about going, but it was great. Heather and I benefitted from what was said from the front and especially from other church leaders. You hear their challenges, excitements, and ideas, both simple and profound and you think: "That's a great idea. We could try that."

Within a few seconds of us being there, the Lord spoke to Heather and me and said: "Start a house church officially really soon." It's not been an instant thing – it's taken three and a half years, and we will be having it every two weeks on a Sunday evening, along with our online church and midweek house group.

There has been a lot of groundwork and conversations. A lot of people know about it. It might be a slow build-up – I am not asking for 50 people - maybe just five or ten. For me, it's not about numbers, it's about where the Lord takes us.

Ivor Cooper said to me when I went into ministry: "KISS – keep it simple stupid," and he was right. I have taken my eye off the ball a few times but that's what we are going to do now with God's grace.

Ignite will be following the progress of Marantha House Church over the coming year.



NEXT STEPS

Are you considering a church plant and would like to find out more:

www.counties-training.org/counties-church-planting

A WELL-COME TO AN UNLIKELY PERSON IN AN UNLIKELY PLACE.

BEVERLEY BEDFORD EXPLORES THE STORY OF JESUS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WOMAN AT THE WELL (JOHN 4).

Why did Jesus sit at a well under the burning heat at Noonday?

The scene is set at a well in Samaria for a divine encounter. The woman who came to draw water may not have been the most likely person to be recruited as a catalyst to evangelise her neighbourhood. It is clear she wasn't exactly living her plan A life. For women in this culture of gender discrimination and injustice, it must have been difficult, with limited choices impacting their daily lives. There are gaps to her back story of being used and used up but clearly, through the mistreatment of others and the sin of her own choices, she is classed amongst the most marginalised of her community.

Jesus gives hope to every woman in every generation who has been dehumanised, marginalised, glamorised, patronised, unrecognised, and ostracised simply for being a woman. Jesus has and continues to shatter the walls of inclusion within gender, race, and religious prejudices. Jesus came to proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God where there is no gender divide, racism, or religious tensions. As kingdom people, should these ever exist in our hearts, homes, and communities of faith?

The woman knew nothing about this ordained encounter or how it would change her life. Jesus was compelled to go to meet her and with great intentionality, found the place where



their paths would meet at Jacob's well. It is noteworthy that Jesus's posture, as he sat at the well, was one that reflects his humanity: he was tired, thirsty, and hungry. Jesus entered into all earthly experiences as truly God and truly man so he might be able to identify with all our struggles. The woman came to draw water from Jacob's well and the icebreaker that opened the conversation, was a request from Jesus for a drink which set up a dialogue between them that would be transformational.

The woman had made a solo appearance at the well which would have commonly been a social event taken up earlier in the day. Evidently, she had forsaken convenience to possibly avoid

confrontation or social interaction with the other women of her community.

This woman immediately recognised Jesus as a Jewish rabbi and she was curious why he might initiate a conversation and ask for a drink from their arch-enemies, the Samaritans. This was a remarkable moment as we observe Jesus's approach to this woman. Initially, she thinks she is meeting his need for water, but this idea is turned on its head as she discovers that she needs living water and is standing in front of the one who is the source of that eternal fountain.

To this woman, is presented an amazing opportunity, something far greater than Jacob's well with all its ancestral history.

Jesus informs her that Jacob's well water will never satisfy her thirst but the water he gives: "will be a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (v14).

It is a sobering thought that by rejecting the offer of living water you will remain forever thirsty. The Bible warns that if you choose an eternity without Christ, you will experience a thirst that will never be quenched and a request for even a drop of water on the tongue will tragically be denied.

Jesus sees this woman and knows that she carries more than a water jar but the burden of shame and an empty heart; she has searched for love in all the wrong places. Jesus addresses her deepest desires, and, in probing, he touches the pain barrier and uncovers her beasts in the basement.

Jesus makes a request, "Go, call your husband, and come back". The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "What you have said is true" (v16-17).



As the woman confesses her messy sinful life in vulnerability, we capture the stunningly beautiful compassion and love of Jesus for her.

At this tender moment, he names her a truth-teller and reveals that he knows all things about her. Jesus didn't come to condemn the world but to seek and save; to go to the cross and die to remove our shame and set us free. The exposing of her sin was extremely uncomfortable, so the woman tried to deflect and derail the conversation with an interruption.

She steers Jesus to a theological discussion: "Sir I see you are a prophet," (v19) so who, where, and how do we worship?

The Samaritans were a mixed race that grew out of the Assyrian captivity. Rejected by the Jews, the Samaritans set up their own shrines and religious services on Mount Gerizim which only fanned the fires of prejudice and hatred from the worshippers in Jerusalem. However, as the dialogue continues there is a breath-taking moment where Jesus drops the mic and gives to this woman the gift of knowing his Messiah identity which had been concealed from everyone up to this moment. This nameless woman was to be the first to know, and later to tell, that the long-awaited Messiah was in the neighbourhood. How could she believe this – well he knew all things about her yet loved her still.

At that moment, transformational change was unleashed. She left her water jar to

carry the revelation to others of who Jesus was, what he had to offer, and how he could be received. Jesus redirected the trajectory of her life, purpose, and destiny and in doing this, restored her worth and value.

Readers, does the zeal and passion of this woman for evangelism consume your heart? When we truly encounter Jesus, we are immediately sent to go, to share, to invite, to bring, to multiply, and to disciple others. Jesus stayed for two more days at the request of the Samaritans, and in this unlikely place, many believed. There are divine appointments for unlikely people to encounter Jesus at the well through us. When was the last time you felt compelled to stop and be present in a conversation with someone, you didn't have to but had to?

So, what of the returning disciples, did they evangelise as they went to buy bread? I wonder, were the sandwiches more important than the salvation of the Samaritan community? Jesus prepared his disciples to look up and around as the harvest was ripe. Evidence of this would be seen as numerous people were making their way to the well through the witness of a woman. God has never stopped championing women who are evangelists, teachers, preachers, missionaries, intercessors, and authors. This female hero of faith provides a holistic picture of the equality of men and women working together for the sake of the Gospel. It challenges us to wake up to the call that the fields are white for harvesting in the most unlikely places and encourages us that God can use the most unlikely people.

JUST A MINUTE WITH...

JANET HAWKING



Janet is a Counties associate evangelist and lives in North Pembrokeshire. She travels and teaches Walk Through The Bible.

How did you become a Christian?

I was 14 when I knelt in a Methodist Chapel in Devon, after a rare altar call to surrender my life to Christ. That changed me, and joy flooded my heart that Jesus loved me. Married at 19 to a precious Farmer, reading, praying, and reciting Bible verses together - in fact, this bride carried her Bible with a single red carnation through it, and the caption in the newspaper was: *"Bride carried a Bible."*

Janet, tell us about your work with school children?

The teaching is fun, but powerful, giving them the option of a Bible enhances the lessons. We can do this because of supporting churches and individuals. Also, Picture and Good News Bibles come from the charity Bibles For Children, of which I am the Welsh associate - over 5000 were presented last year alone to our West Wales Schools.

How did you get involved with Counties?

The GSUS Live unit had come to West Wales and was due to come again but the lady organiser cancelled it. When I read her email, it was as if I saw a picture of a big black hand snatching 3000 teenagers from hearing the Gospel.

Faith rose: *"How dare the enemy rob our teenagers?"*

So, I emailed back: *"Can I uncancel it?"* By the end of the week, little me was the organizer. We had it for six weeks in Pembrokeshire, then later six weeks in Ceredigion (West Wales). Individuals and churches did rise to the challenge to help. So that was my introduction to Counties. I realised, as a pioneer; it would be good for me to have the umbrella support of an evangelistic network.

What does it mean to be part of the Counties family?

It's good to be part of something bigger, where I am accepted, valued, and accountable.

What's your favourite Bible passage and why?

"And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

Romans 10:15 (NIV)

I live near the hills, and I travel because God called me to share that good news, support our schools, and lay a foundation again in children's lives.

"So, we say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Hebrews 13:6 (NIV)

YOUR LOCAL EVANGELISTS

NORTH OF ENGLAND

Steve & Debra Cowles
Julian & Ella Gutteridge
Phyllis Jenkins (Senior)
Martin & Angie Korchinsky
Lee & Lesley Marsland
Matt & Nicola Rich
Rob & Sarah Watson

MIDLANDS

Jordan & Lacy Armstrong (CP)
David & Lindsey Brown
Roger & Hazel Chilvers (Seniors)
Angela Cooper (Senior)
Tim & Katrina Cracknell
Andy & Isobel Hodson
Bob & Rita Telford (Seniors)
Paul & Vanessa Willmott

EAST OF ENGLAND

Charles & Elizabeth Addoco
Will & Lynne Andrews
Tim & Joy Ayrton
Madelene Bathgate (Senior)
Mark & Amanda Bingham
Lionel & Katy Clargo (Seniors)
John Hardwick
Kim & Jo Hobbs
Tony & Ruth Hood
Victor Jack (Senior)
Andy & Miriam Jelfs (Seniors)
Colin & Linda Johnson
Jane Martin (Senior)
Caleb & Adanesh Mathewos
Andrew & Rachel Mugford

SOUTH WEST

Jacquie & Tim Bodman
Jean Campbell (Senior)
Steve Ellacott (AE)
Mike & Su Strange (Seniors)
Alex & Beth Symons (AE)
David & Katie Symons
Stevie & Natalie Walker

SOUTH CENTRAL

Jonathan & Heather Brain
Ian & Sally Carr
Gordon & Penny Curley
Ray Dadswell (Senior)
Stephen & Jean Gillham (Seniors)
Wendy Iliffe (Senior)
Steve & Dawn Loader

WALES

Grace Anderson (Senior)
Clive & Fiona Cornish
Paul & Laura Davies
Phil & Sheila Davies
Janet Hawking (AE)
Lesley & Andrew Lawrence (AE)
Mike & Jan Thomas
Steve & Gwyn Treseder (AE)

AE – Associate Evangelist
ETP – Evangelists' Training Programme
CP – Church Planter

PARTNER WITH US AND THOSE WHO LIVE BY FAITH

SUBSCRIBE

Please send me:

- Ignite Magazine and Praise & Prayer diary by post (please fill in address)
 Monthly newsletter by email

MY DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Your details will be kept on our database and may be shared with a local Counties Evangelist, but with no other persons or organisations.

- Please remove me from your mailing list

MY GIFT

I would like to partner with Counties. Please find enclosed my/our gift of

£

(please make cheques payable to Counties)

To give online by debit or credit card visit countiesuk.org

Gift Aid

- This is a Gift-Aid donation (We will send you a gift-aid declaration, if you have not already completed one).
 I would like to set up a regular standing order.

Your feedback is always appreciated.

THANK YOU



FIRSTSERVE

Expand your experience of God through mission

FirstServe is an exciting gap-year programme for 18-30 year olds, which provides discipleship and missions experience.

There are three different programmes to choose from: Standard, Compact and Practical, depending on the length of time you have available. The experience includes four weeks' study at Tilsley Bible College, and placements in a local church and overseas. Encounter other cultures and learn about mission in locations such as Bolivia, India, France, Peru and Zambia. FirstServe is not simply about overseas travel. It's intended to inspire, motivate and encourage young people beyond the ordinary.

'FirstServe has been a worthwhile gap year for both of us. While on placement, God taught us how to serve others wholeheartedly. We learned so much from others just by serving God in everyday tasks. God also reminded us that He is our comfort. When we fully surrender ourselves to God, He can use us in extraordinary and ordinary ways. A theme running through the whole programme was a growing desire to know God more. We learned that God is 100%. He is everything. It is impossible to grasp all that God is, and time and time again we were amazed to discover more of His greatness. We were thankful to be able to meet and experience the love and prayerful support of God's family everywhere we went.'

Sophia Martin and Rachel Kennedy (FirstServe 2023)

We take new FirstServers on board in February and September of each year. Visit the website or contact us for more information.

T: 03300 563334 **E:** admin@first-serve.org.uk **W:** www.first-serve.org.uk

