

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.” ~ John 15:5 NLT

Songwriter Bruce Reimer wrote:

*Deep in the heart lies a heavenly dream
A dream God designed for you and for me.
From the time of Creation, from the beginning of time,
There's a dream that's meant to live, in your heart and mine.*

DREAMS FULFILLED AT CAMPS

Camp is meant to be a place where the dream God has placed in each person's heart comes alive. Enjoy the stories of dreams that are now alive in the lives of campers and staff.

“My name is Nataly. I am 9 years old. This year my dream came true. I was at a Christian camp for the first time in my life. I liked and remember many things. I still sing songs about God every day at home. During the Bible Lessons we learned new things – things we will need in life. I have never had such a wonderful, unforgettable summer.”

“My name is Nigyar. I am 16 years old. I seem to have landed on another planet. The atmosphere is completely different here. I am treated kindly. I feel accepted at camp. At school I always need to show and prove that I am the coolest and first. Here I feel I belong. After camp I want to go to church with my new friends.”

“My name is Masha. I am 16. I made many new friends at camp. My mother and I go to church now. I have almost

finished reading the New Testament. Then I will read the whole Bible. The camp director invited me to the youth meetings. I did not know believers could be so friendly and have so much fun. I am so sorry that I did not meet such people before.”

“My parents died when I was very young so I lived in an orphanage. As I grew older, my curiosity about who my parents were grew. I had a vague memory of my mother. In searching the records, I discovered my mother murdered a neighbor girl. I couldn't handle the information and ended up in a mental hospital. Eventually I was adopted by a Christian couple who sent me to summer camp. One day while I was praying, my eyes were opened and I realized I am a new person in Christ. My soul was healed, my fear of people vanished. I felt loved and could love in return.”



BECAUSE HE LOVED GOD

“My name is Fatima. It was my first time in the Christian camp. As soon as I got on the bus, I fell in love with all the people. Before the camp, I always envied people. But in this camp I learned to love people. The life of Joseph is an example for me. No matter how much his brothers wronged him, Joseph still loved them. He did it because he loved God and God does not like evil. After I accepted Jesus he freed me from jealousy, envy and bitterness. I don't mean evil and don't hold grudges anymore against those people who hurt me.”

TO BE A CAMP COUNSELOR

“I wanted to serve God so I decided to go to camp. I discovered that to be a counselor I had to attend the Staff Training Workshop (STW) which I gladly did.



The training in sports, psychology, and counseling was very interesting, fun and a great blessing. I made new friends. I was entrusted with six 9 year-old boys. Leading them was not easy. My patience, understanding and wisdom was tested daily. I am thankful to all counselors in the camp who supported me and gave me advice. My boys gained an appreciation for God and left camp with God's Word in their hearts. And God's Word accomplishes the purpose for which it was sent.”

MY UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE

“My name is Sophia. I am 16 years old. Every day at camp was full of emotion. On the first day I felt great warmth from every person even though they were strangers to me. Each game taught us something – trust, friendship, hope, unity, teamwork. One evening the discussion topic was on forgiveness and love.

The conversation was so lively and touched my heart so deeply, I left the room, called my father and asked his forgiveness for insulting him on my departure for camp. I told him how much I love him. Much has changed in my life during this week at camp. I have made new friends; God and I have become much closer. This week is unforgettable for me. Thank you to all people who contributed to make this camp such a meaningful experience.”



MOM, I'M A BELIEVER

Dzhunayt attended camp when he was five years old. His parents, scientists with their own ideas, are not believers. Dzhunayt enjoyed all camp activities and returned home. One day his mother was on the telephone talking to her friend. In the conversation she said: “Well, you know, it is because we are not believers.” Dzhunayt overheard the conversation, turned to his mother and said, “Mom, please don't generalize. I am a believer.”

At age 10 Dzhunayt returned to the camp. His parents spent time observing the camp activities. A few days after the camp was over, the father called the camp director to thank him for the order, respect and love he and his wife experienced at camp.

DELIVERED FROM ADDICTION

“My name is Eldar. I am 15 years old. My favorite topic at camp was ‘Author's Rights.’ I understood that it is wrong to download movies. After being out in nature, having fellowship with my peers and performing acrobatic maneuvers on the trampoline, I don't feel like playing computer games. God has delivered me from this addiction. I am thinking about water baptism because the Holy Spirit filled me more than usual at camp. I thank God for the opportunity to see the world through His glasses”.

CAMP ON WHEELS

– as told by Oleg, Camp Director

“Christian camps are illegal in our country so we put our poor village children on a bus headed for Odessa. Not one of these campers was from a healthy family. One boy was taken off the bus at the border. Permission signatures from both parents were required to leave the country. His father was nowhere to be found so he had only his mother’s signature.

“His counselor stepped off the bus to plead his case. Permission was granted. When the boy returned to the bus, he saw the whole group praying for him. Hugs from everyone followed. Later the boy told me, ‘I have never experienced such love from my peers.’



“The Black Sea experience was new for all of us. Nutritious food five times daily was unusual for these children. The emphasis on Bible Study, prayer and fellowship warmed the campers’ hearts. The territory around the cross on the hill overlooking the sea, was designated for quiet time and prayer. It was never empty. Reciting their memory verses on stage every evening was a welcome achievement. All campers are now attending our Sunday school. On behalf of our remote village church and the children, I thank all who generously contributed to make this camp possible.”



CAMP IN WAR ZONE

War between Russia and eastern Ukraine has been active for several years. Life is not normal for people living in or nearby the war zone. Soldiers and civilians are dying daily.

Pavel B., our staff member lives in Kharkiv, Ukraine, a large city close to the Russian border and about 300 km north of the conflict zone. The church he attends decided to have a camp in Mariinka, 3 km from the conflict line where the exchange of gunfire happens from 6 pm until 6 in the morning. The Day Camp, in which 30-50 children participated daily, was held in the city park from 9 am to 4 pm.

Pavel writes: “I arrived in Mariinka at night and tried to get some sleep amidst the sound of explosion and bursts of machine guns. The next day I participated in the camp program. My job was to teach the Bible lesson on John 3:16. The special thing about the camp was that apart from usual things like games with parachute, crafts, or sport games, the children were taught tactical medicine so that every child who lives in the war zone was able to help a wounded person.



“The program that day was shorter than usual. At 3:30 p.m. from the separatists’ side, 120 mm mines started to come (it can be defined by the sound of explosion). We quickly took the children to the church. Later their parents came to take them home.

“You can see me with the children on the picture taken 15 minutes before the mines started to explode.”

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO PRAY

FORGIVENESS

“I became a Christian in my childhood. My parents raised me with love and care. But at age 15 I chose sin. Now I am 17. The voice of my body sounded louder than the voice of my soul. Sexual immorality over and over and lie after lie! August 8 was totally different for me. The Bible lesson was on forgiveness. Something struck my inner world. I had no idea that Jesus would forgive me. After a long talk and prayer with my counselor, I was liberated. I made the most important decision of my life. I understood that I belong to Jesus. As His daughter, I promised I will not hurt my Lord anymore because He has forgiven me.” **Pray for the campers who have accepted God’s forgiveness at camp this summer.**

VERTICAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Four Vertical graduates have enrolled in the Ukrainian Baptist Theological Seminary Distance Leadership Program. This two-year program is designed to equip young men for Christian ministry. Vertical Director, Viktor Korniychuk, is committed to building a competent team of leaders to help him develop Camp Vertical into a stable ministry that will impact all of Ukraine. **Please pray for the four students:**



Dmitriy N.



Konstantin P.



Nurali M.



Pavel L.

WHERE GOD WANTS ME

“I really like being an office administrator. When I came to the Christian Camping Int’l (CCI) office in Kiev, I felt I was exactly where God had led me. Every day we receive phone calls and emails from people who are on fire for the camping ministry. This inspires us a lot. People are very sensitive to the way they are treated and hospitality is one of the ministries God has given me. It is a blessing for me to be part of the CCI team in Ukraine. Our goal here at CCI is not just to help people run camps but to teach them to colour their campers’ lives, teach them to overcome their difficulties, and of course, help them to connect with God. A great testimony for me is to see children change.” **Praise God for staff like Julia and ask Him to bless her as she serves in the CCI ministry.**



Julia

FORBIDDEN CAMPS

“The Lord gave us wonderful camps this summer despite the fact that Christian gatherings outside of the church are strictly forbidden in our country. With trembling and reverence I observed the work of God’s grace in the lives of children and staff. It is always a joy to see how children’s characters change and how staff grow and mature. Our follow-up work with teenagers includes a Bible study on Sunday, a Bible Seminar twice weekly, and hiking trips every school break. We have Sunday school for our campers. We run Christmas and Easter camps.” **Praise God for a leader like Misha. Ask God to protect him and the Christian camps in his country.**



Misha

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO PRAY CONT'D



ORPHAN CAMP

We ran two teenage Orphan Camps together with Music Mission Ukraine Canada. A total of 155 children, most of them from the war zone, were loved, led, and inspired to let Jesus take care of their heavy burdens. Many of them did so. All children were respected. Their self-esteem began to be restored as they developed friendships, scaled the 10 meter climbing wall, and cooked their daily supper in their tent groups. They discovered Jesus and learned to pray. Tanya, 13 years old, said: “two persons fought for my allegiance; now Jesus lives here.” Artom, 16, said: “I regret very much that I have not been here before.” **Thank God for the orphans, their camp experience and the 35 staff who loved them, and for God’s continued work in them.** Philippians 2:13



MY LIFE CHANGED HERE



Oksana M

“CCI has played a crucial role in my life for the past twenty years. Shortly after accepting Jesus I came to a CCI workshop and I saw immediately that my life would be changed. My current role with CCI/ Ukraine is Training Events Manager.

My responsibilities include recruiting and equipping instructors for our leadership training events – we had 36 training events in 2017. Preparing camp programs, planning workshops and seminars, and teaching at the events is a large part of my work. As CCI team we have learned that the purpose of all our ministry is to help build and solidify relationships. It is an honor and a joy to watch God do this in deeper ways each summer. Campers who were unbelievers just a few years ago are now leaders in their camps and churches.” **Praise God for Oksana and pray His blessing upon her and her ministry.**



CAMP VERTICAL 2017

Our camp for boys ages 13-18 made a leap forward with 60 campers. The team of 27 staff – 23 had participated previously - was well-trained, spiritually mature and men of prayer. The sports program, daily Biblical character studies, tent camp life, assigned responsibilities all led by exemplary counselors resulted in 58 of the 60 campers swimming across the river during the dedication ceremony to give their pledge to God to uphold the ten values and become godly men. **Praise God for these young men and pray that they would diligently complete their weekly follow-up assignments to the end of the program in June.**



My pledge to God



VERTICAL DIRECTOR

“My name is Viktor Korniychuk. A long time ago I dedicated myself to serving boys via Vertical Camp. God called me to develop this ministry. I am happy I was asked and trusted with this ministry and that God gives me wisdom and insight to do it. I rejoice knowing that through the Vertical program many boys will grow and develop their characters based on biblical values, become faithful husbands, hero fathers to their children, dedicated servants in their churches, and real men after God’s heart.” **Thank God for Viktor and pray that God will fulfill His purposes and calling in Viktor.**



Viktor K.



REACHING OUT

Pavel B, our administrator in Kiev, visited many church camps this summer. "My purpose was to see camps which CCI had no previous contact with, and offer our services." He found some well developed camps that were willing and able to help others. He also visited camps that were struggling. They did not handle their legal and administrative issues well, programs lacked development and staff members were untrained. When he invited them to our training events they said our STWs and conferences are too expensive.

Pavel is now developing strategies through which CCI can become connected with the dozens of church camps that have not utilized CCI resources. Training for untrained camp leaders, connecting churches without campsites with campsites that have vacancies, staff exchanges for mutual sharing of best practices are on CCI's radar for 2018.



Pavel B.

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO GIVE



Elena C.

Elena has been our accountant in our Kiev office for nine years. "I like working here," says Elena. "I analyze and plan the annual budget and produce monthly reports. I advise camps on their bookkeeping and accounting practices. Helping everyone develop a better understanding of the financial aspects of our organization's activities gives me pleasure. I am happy when my work helps to keep God's money in order and motivates people to be responsible and accountable."

Over 2000 camp leaders received training in 2017. More than 1000 Christian camps operated in the former Soviet Union where tens of thousands of children and youth were loved and introduced to Jesus. Several thousand became His followers. Rejoice with us! Your prayers and donations help to accomplish all of this. Our staff has even bigger plans for 2018.

Camp is designed to help children and youth to conquer the Goliath's in their lives – the Goliath's that destroy their dreams. Please continue with us and increase your support, if possible.

Make cheque payable to:
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*"IT IS BETTER TO BUILD
CHARACTER IN CHILDREN
AND YOUTH THAN TO
REPAIR THE BROKEN LIVES
OF ADULTS."*



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