

summer evangelism

eagle day

AIM

To describe a day event based around Birds of Prey suitable for people of all ages.

INTRODUCTION

Let me tell you

As a young person the call to worship I heard every week was from Isaiah 40:31:

Those who trust in the Lord for strength will.... rise up on wings like eagles.

These words have stayed with me all of my life. So when I started work as temporary school Chaplain I asked if we could have an eagle day. Some Sixth Form Students helped to raise the money to pay for the eagles to visit school.

A handler called Ben Potter visited the school for one day bringing with him six birds: three vultures and three eagles. We were able to interact with these creatures in small to medium sized groups, watch them fly, learn about their skills and so on.

The week before the visit I had prepared for this by introducing the image of the God who supports with the promise that we will 'rise up on wings like eagles'. During the visit the students were able to post their own reflections on this idea. Some also did paintings and others took photographs.

SO YOU WANT TO DO EAGLE DAY?

A search of the internet will give you contact details for Bird's of Prey centres, display teams and conservation groups. Any of these could be the beginning of your Eagle Day. We used Ben Potter: <http://www.birdsofpreydisplays.co.uk/> who was excellent. He built a good rapport with the young people and shared his knowledge with enthusiasm.

But you could visit a place that has Birds of Prey and holds displays if it seemed too expensive or complicated for them to visit you. For example the Birds of Prey Centre at the Beal, near the A1 in Northumberland: <http://www.barnatbeal.com/birdsofpray.php>

Lots of websites will give you information about Birds of Prey for a quiz or information sheet. Here are some:

www.rspb.org.uk and
<http://www.rspb.org.uk/supporting/campaigns/birdsofprey/index.aspx>

or The International Centre for Birds of Prey: <http://www.icbp.org/index.html>

Other ideas for Eagle Day include worship songs on the Eagle Theme and creative activities around eagles: painting and drawing, writing poems, prayers and reflections.

Have a comments sheet or flip chart where people can put their responses or maybe a blog or send 'tweets'.

Not just eagles

Of course it doesn't just have to be eagles. You could choose any theme for your day that linked with a verse or passage from scripture that could be explored and illustrated: a visit to the seaside for Psalm 107: 23-24 (or more) or some 'remembering the Bible' based

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around Gospel stories as described in 'Tell me the stories of Jesus: a companion to the Remembered Gospel' by Janet Lees (this has recently been published by Wild Goose at www.ionabooks.com). The book includes many different examples of sharing the stories of Jesus with people of all ages.

Prayer

Everlasting God, your age old promise comes to us afresh as we watch the eagles soar.

Renew us with your strength to go on in faith and hope and share your story through our daily experiences. Amen.

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

THE NEXT STEP

There are more suggestions for summer evangelism on the website.

Acknowledgements

Janet Lees has based this material on an Eagle Day she organised and ran as Chaplain at Silcoates School, Wakefield. It is described on the school website at: <http://www.silcoates.co.uk/index.php?q=node/1706> with more photographs at <http://www.silcoates.co.uk/index.php?q=node/1734>

HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group and the coordinator about general issues via the website or at admin@vision4life.org.uk

Website issues can be dealt with through web@vision4life.org.uk

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email: Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: evangelism@vision4life.org.uk