

*Destination of your trip\**

Leicester Holy Trinity Church

*Departure date of your trip\**

March 5<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> 2019

*How has your life been changed as a result of your experience?*

My trip has only been a few weeks, so I am a bit cautious talking about life changes. Still, I would say that this experience did pull me out of my normal circumstances and confronted me with a very different way of belief and practicing faith. After a rather dry period where faith seemed more like a burden to me, I came to a place that was alive, friendly, motivating. I came to a place where worship was the very thing to start with and the constant focus on Jesus as the creator and perfecter of faith was key. To come to such a place where many people believed that Jesus could change their lives and to see them stretching out to that truth was very refreshing. I was reminded of the God of grace who wanted to be with his people. It helped me to refocus and put my issues into a new perspective. So first of all, my life has changed in coming back to a place where I felt loved and blessed by God. It was very inspiring to me to have this experience in an actual church, not a camp, a seminar or retreat. To experience such a focus in a busy everyday life setting. It reminded me why I chose to study Theology and work in this Church in the first place.

On a more practical level I learned a lot about organizing a Christian community. I was very impressed by the patience I saw in the leaders to always invest and know that things take time. I was amazed by the will to empower people, to encourage them in their personal calling. And I was amazed by the humbleness I saw in many of them. In situations of trouble I realized that it was not about whose fault it was but more about the thing itself, the problem that needed to be solved.

One last thing I want to mention is the variety I saw in the Church. Prophets, musicians, dreamers, very practical people, all sorts of very different personality types. It was so great to see how all these come together in one big mission. I had often experienced variety as troublesome and often thought it impossible to bring people together in such a way. But this experienced proofed me differently.

*What will you do differently as a result of your experience?*

This experience taught me to dream bigger and expect more from God. It reminded me of the importance to put Worship first, which I need to be reminded of again and again. It also encouraged me to try and error. It encouraged me to encourage other people and to believe in everybody's calling. And it reminded me of the importance of being reminded of my personal calling again and again.

*Would you recommend this trip/experience to someone else? Why/Why not?*

I would recommend this trip. I would also recommend staying longer which I just didn't have the time to. I saw so much, and I could just always come and take part. The atmosphere and community were very welcoming and empowering. I also think it is worth experiencing Church in another culture as it can be an inspiration. It helps to see and understand the own culture better as well. The own culture, the own church is just too small, traveling and staying at other places and churches for some time helps to get a glimpse of the huge variety of God's power.