

Welcome	What is the most significant experience you have had on a holiday or a day ‘out’? Has it changed your life for good?
Worship ideas	Choose songs that focus on God’s promise of his presence and protection (see Gen. 28: 13-15) - or read Psalm 139, focussing on the encouraging promises of vv.1-12. <i>(NB: 20 files containing about 30 ‘newer’ songs are available to borrow from the office for groups)</i>
Word (refs.↓)	<i>some suggestions for discussion here – you might prefer to look at just one of the 2 passages</i>
Genesis 28:12-19a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacob (Esau’s younger twin) had tricked his father Isaac into giving him the blessing due to the older son (ch. 27) – even though he may have felt it was rightly his (see ch.25:27-34). Esau was now waiting for his father to die so that he could kill Jacob in revenge, but their mother Rebekah persuaded Isaac to send Jacob to their ‘home town’ of Haran to find a wife from their own ‘clan’ – which provided Jacob with a chance to escape. After about 50 miles (probably on a camel) he stopped for the night. • How do you think Jacob was feeling as he lay down to sleep? How did the dream/vision God gave him (vv.12-15) speak to him in this situation? What difference did it make in the days and years ahead? • In John 1:51 Jesus refers to this passage, describing “the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man”. What is he saying about the supreme means of access between earth and heaven that we now have? • <i>Either:</i> Have you experienced God speaking to you personally? How? - Dreams/ visions? Unusual circumstances? A clear sense of a Bible passage applying to you? Direct words/ pictures given by the Holy Spirit? Other Christians? Books/ sermons? Some other way? Do you think that some ways are more ‘spiritual’ than others? How can we best ‘weigh’ whether it is God speaking and (if so) what he is saying? • <i>Or:</i> Do you think people are more ‘open’ to God speaking to you when you are away from familiar situations (eg on holiday)? Why?/ Why not?
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	<p><i>(alternative study)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. In this parable, who is the sower in v.24? What does the wheat represent? The weeds? The enemy? 2. In what ways can premature judgements cause harm to a community of believers? What is ‘the harvest’? • Why does this parable puzzle the disciples? Why is patience and tolerance towards unbelievers in the wider church ‘family’ so difficult for them (and us)? • What is your responsibility in the wider church community (individually and/or as a group) regarding ‘wheat’ and ‘weeds’?
Witness	<p><u>Pray</u> <i>(briefly!)</i> for one or two of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ for your mission link person(s) or project ❖ for those who are planning to travel on holiday, or who are facing big changes in their personal circumstances over the next few weeks/ months <p><u>Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ an activity as a group during July or August to which you can invite those who are not yet Christians (eg barbecue, garden party, outdoor concert/play, etc) ❖ any changes to the pattern of meetings over the next couple of months <p>NB If you are planning to take a break over the summer, please let the office or your cluster leader(s) know if possible, and if needs be discuss some simple way of keeping in touch with each other for mutual support, prayer needs, etc. (especially if/ when the groups leaders are away).</p>