



Christian Encounter NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION

In a broken and hurting world, Christian Encounter exists to shepherd teens and young adults onto a path of healing and restoration by encountering the love of Jesus Christ through intentional Christian community.

APPLY TODAY

We are accepting males ages 16-21 and females ages 16-24. If you know a teen or young adult in need of restoration and hope, we want to help. Let them know we're here!

INTERN REFLECTION

Freedom from fear

By Rachel McCracken



I am afraid I will be left alone. I sat in a staff member's office last week and listened to those words roll off my lips and settle in the room. Yes,

through many moments during my time at the Ranch, God has led me to realize this core fear of mine. It is a fear which deeply affects the way I live.

Almost nine months ago, I entered internship crippled by the thought that my sin could, and probably would, hurt the students. They already bear many scars from people in their past; I did not want to add more hurt. I am currently reading Tim Keller's book *Forgive: Why should I and how can I?* While reading it, I realized my fears of hurting others and being alone were deeply connected. They were connected in self-pity.

Keller argues that we do not acknowledge the gravity of our sin against God when our motive for repentance is self-centered: *I am sorry for what I did because of what it cost me.* "Self-pity looks like repentance, but it is self-absorption, and



Agony Kickoff Ride Agony riders old and new gathered to ride on the American River Trail. A group of riders are pictured here on the Guy West Bridge.

that is the essence of sin," Keller writes. "[It] arises chiefly from a fear of punishment, while true repentance arises from a consideration of God's goodness and therefore a sense of one's own ingratitude and lack of love" (pg. 146-147).

As I carry out my days at the Ranch as an authority figure in our students' lives, I am often shackled by the *fear* of making the wrong call or wrongly acting in my heart towards the students. I am *afraid* of sinning. Why am I afraid to recognize that I am a sinner? Running from this reality denies a core aspect of the gospel: my need for forgiveness and grace.

(cont. on back page)

AGONY RIDE

July 26-27, 2024

Come join us for the 42nd Agony Ride! We have 91 riders currently committed. Sign up to ride or sag today! Visit agonyride.org or scan below.



In prayer, in practice

By Kendall Henson



A few months ago, my intern team spent a portion of our “Intern Night Out” in prayer over our students. We delegated prayers to make sure everyone was covered, and I realized I would be praying for a student I had struggled with that week. As my turn drew closer, an image began to form in my mind. I stood in the throne room of God, surrounded by the light of His glory. The student in question stood behind me, and I realized I was there to present them to the Lord, and seek His love and mercy for them, as an ambassador. I took the student’s hand and stepped closer

to the throne, and felt, in that moment, a new and precious love for this person, a child so desperately loved by the Father that I could no more protest that fact than deny His love for me.

Author Francis Chan writes, “The theology that matters is not the theology we profess, but the theology we practice.” As an intern I have learned to practice my theology as I wipe crumbs from a table. I have learned to practice my theology as I gather yet another pile of brush on yet another rainy Wednesday. I have learned to practice my theology in every seemingly inconsequential moment spent in community with my students. Most importantly, I have learned to practice my theology by daily surrendering my students to the Father, and asking Him to reveal to them His heart of perfect love and mercy. I imagine my crucified Christ doing the same for me. This is the power of Christian Encounter Ranch.

He holds true

By Bethany Trull



God’s character is trustworthy and steady as life ebbs and flows. I came into internship thoroughly believing that God somehow uses all of our experiences for good because He wastes nothing. Hearing stories of tragedy and trauma tested that belief. Rather than letting go of that concept, the Lord gave me the desire to ask Him for understanding in how He could use everything for good. Already, I have seen some of those prayers answered. But as one of my professors in college says, “Healing is heaven.” We will not be able to have all the answers we want on earth. But I keep praying expectantly for faith that God’s goodness is shown through pain and suffering.

This year of internship is reflected in many notes all over my Bible. I now see

God’s character and promises clearer and deeper. He can sympathize with our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15). He gives wisdom to those who ask (James 1:5). He is unchanging (Malachi 3:6). I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to experience change only God can make in my life and the lives around me.

Internship has shown me how to give all of myself to one thing. Mastery of the role does not come all at once. There is always more to learn and grow in. That has been incredibly humbling. But I am learning that I must let God be God, and it is good for me to experience my human weakness. The phrase “God equips the called” comes to mind frequently. I hold

I now see God’s character and promises clearer and deeper.

onto what God said to Paul: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). The more I lean into my inability and God’s omnipotence, the more I understand what it is to be God’s vessel (2 Corinthians 4:7).

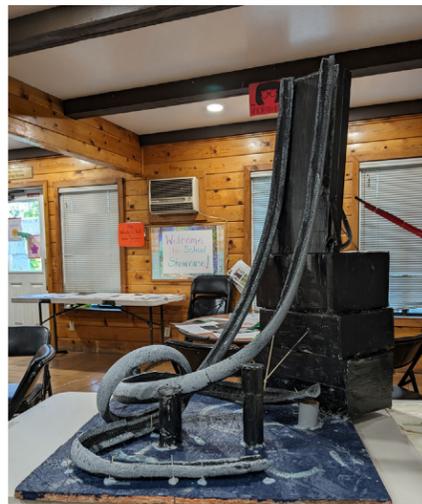


Join the intern team

Jesus invited a select few to come alongside Him - to be with Him - during His ministry on earth. They ate together, they walked together, they talked together.

Our interns model this life-to-life discipleship with our students with a web of support backing them.

For more information, please email jensen@christianencounter.org or call 530-268-0877.



School Showcase

To close out the school year, we have an “open house” where our students have the opportunity to display their work. Here are some snapshots from the evening.

Clockwise: Suzanne with Zaeda and her diploma in March. Robbin reciting the Gettysburg Address with a couple of her government students. Marble roller coaster from science class. Some work from English class on display. Judah’s self portrait, drawn from his reflection in the school’s mp3 player. Judah presenting his country profile of Ireland in class. More roller coasters. Snippet of student artwork.

Did you know we have a high school on-site?

- We average a 3:1 student-teacher ratio
- We accommodate learning disabilities
- Each student works toward individualized goals based on academic assessment
- Graduates receive CA state high school diplomas



Christian Encounter Ranch
PO Box 1022
Grass Valley, CA 95945

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRASS VALLEY, CA
PERMIT NO. 60

*Join us for the 42nd Agony Ride!
July 26-27, 2024*

Christian Encounter is a non-profit, non-denominational, residential community helping 16- to 24-year-olds by providing love, spiritual guidance, high school education, counseling, and 24-hour supervision. Internships are offered to young adults 21 years and older. We are a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and all gifts are tax deductible.



MEMORIALS

*In memory of Donna Verlene Garvis-Wagner, given by:
John & Lorna Foster*

*In memory of Chet Hartley, given by:
Suzanne Hartley*

*In memory of Maxine Taylor, given by:
Ron Taylor*

HONORARIUMS

*In honor of the Parkers & Petrillos,
given by:
Grace Fujii*

Freedom (cont. from pg. 1)

Furthermore, I realized that my fear of sinning derives from my fear of hurting others, pushing them away, and being left by those I have wronged. There it is: my fear of being alone. My self-pity—my sorrow because I am afraid of how my sin could cost me—drives me to inaction. I am unwilling to acknowledge my sin and step into the freedom God offers me through repentance and grace. But praise God: He is freeing me from this.

Learning this lesson in internship has deepened my humility, my relationship with God, and my realization of the freedom I have in Him to live and serve others. God is mightily using internship and the community at the Ranch to teach me this lesson and start to free me from fear's hold on me.