



EMPOWERING FAITH

Raised in Maple Ridge and a former participant in Youth Unlimited's breakfast program, James Mortimer has grown into a confident, 23-year-old young man of faith. He has dreams of helping the next generation going through experiences similar to his own.

James grew up in a Christian home and had the incredible opportunity to grow in his faith when his mentor, Dennis Hemminger, retired YU youth worker, told him about YU's Elevation Project and the then upcoming 2019 trip to Rwanda.



After being accepted into the program, reality hit. James was unsure how he could possibly raise the \$4,200 needed to go on the trip, but he decidedly put his trust in God. "Every single opportunity that God gave me, I just took," says James. After multiple opportunities opened up, he ended up raising \$6,400. "It just really showed to me that He provides," James

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While in Rwanda, James experienced more, spiritually. Three days into the trip, James was inexplicably unable to get out of bed for 24 hours. "Chris Hege [the EP Manager] was able to get me a call home because I wasn't doing well mentally because of that," says James. "I called home and my mom said: 'What if it's a spiritual attack?' So I just started to pray and worship God and I was fine the next day."

These experiences matured James' faith. He now wants to be a mentor for youth in the future, just as Dennis was a mentor for him. "I'm currently searching for ways to help," he says. "I went through some challenging things, so I want to try and help the next generation as well. Dennis and Chris didn't necessarily tell me the answers, but they give me a starting point to find them."

The GVVU Elevation Project provides Canadian and Rwandan youth with holistic education and leadership development opportunities.