



SPRING NEWSLETTER

LEEDS FAITH IN SCHOOLS



Ben C & Kim present our Easter Lesson - 'Escape the Tomb!'

WHAT STUDENTS AND PARENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR WORK

"THIS COURSE HAS TAUGHT ME TO LOVE MYSELF FOR WHO I AM AND NOT TO JUDGE OR UNDERESTIMATE MYSELF OR OTHERS"

- YEAR 9 'THE GIRL I WANT TO BE' COURSE ATENDEE

"BEFORE TODAY I USED TO THINK OF EASTER AS JUST ABOUT THE CHOCOLATE BUT AFTER THIS LESSON IT'S MADE ME THINK ABOUT THE REAL MEANING OF THE STORY."

- YEAR 7 STUDENT

"I JUST WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU TO THE TEAM RUNNING THE YOUTH GROUP ON TUESDAY, MY SON CAME FOR THE FIRST TIME AND WAS MADE TO FEEL VERY WELCOME - HE WILL DEFINITELY BE BACK"

- PARENT OF YEAR 9 STUDENT

EVALUATING THE EVIDENCE FOR EASTER

BY MARK ATKINS

We're called in 1 Peter to '...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect' (1 Peter 3:15). Easter gives us a great opportunity to share with young people across the city the 'reason for the [Easter] season'.

At Leeds Faith in Schools we love to make all of our work as fun and engaging as possible, whilst staying true to our primary mission: telling young people about Jesus! This year, our Easter lessons were themed as a virtual escape room and students were tasked with 'escaping the tomb'. We tackled, head-on, some of the arguments made against the claim that Jesus really rose again - theories like whether Jesus really died or if the disciples stole His body.

We're often criticised as Christians for having 'blind faith', so it really is such a blessing to be given the opportunity to discuss with young people the evidence we have that affirms our faith in Jesus' resurrection. It's also a privilege, and a sign of God's faithfulness to us a charity, that we continue to be invited to teach in so many different schools with the freedom to unreservedly preach the Gospel to dozens of young people and their teachers. We'd love it if you could pray for fruitful conversations in schools, now that we have returned after the Easter break.

GOOD NEWS TO THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF LEEDS

HELLOS AND GOODBYES – CHANGES AT LFIS

In January we said goodbye to Kay Brown who has faithfully served Leeds Faith in Schools as a trustee for 12 years, and has been chair of trustees for 10 of those years. Kay has been an amazing part of the charity and has been a huge advocate for the work we do, both city wide and in Abbey Grange Academy, where she is the school chaplain. We want to say a huge thank you to Kay for all that she has done and wish her well. We continue to work closely with Kay in school on a weekly basis.

With Kay leaving we are very excited to welcome Reverend Mark Harlow as our new chair of trustees. Mark has been a trustee for 3 years now and is very excited to take on the role of chair.

In May, our team leader Ben Lawrence is sadly going to be moving on from Leeds Faith in Schools. Ben has accepted the role of chaplain over at Bradford Academy. His last day at LFIS will be the 17th May, after five years of leading the charity. We wish Ben all the best and want to thank him for his time and commitment to leading the team and looking after the charity.

As a farewell gift, Ben is doing a triathlon as a fundraiser for Leeds Faith in Schools, and if you would like to sponsor him you can find more details here: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/20238>. A sponsorship of any amount would be a huge blessing to us.

With Ben moving on, we will be on the hunt for a new team leader very soon, so please keep an eye on our website and social media accounts for updates. We would also appreciate you thinking and praying about whether you know anyone who might wish to apply.



BEN LAWRENCE HAS SERVED AS TEAM LEADER AT LFIS SINCE 2017. WE'LL MISS YOU BEN!

I wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone for your support over the last five years! I have always appreciated your prayers, letters, cards and kind words. It is hugely encouraging to know that LFIS has such amazing supporters. I also want to thank the trustees and all the team I have worked with over my time with Leeds Faith in Schools. My job has been made so much easier because of you. I will miss LFIS massively, but will always be an advocate for its work going forward. Please pray for me in my new beginnings in Bradford.

Ben Lawrence



KAY HAS BEEN OUR CHAIR OF TRUSTEES FOR 10 YEARS



REV. MARK HARLOW, VICAR AT ST PAUL'S IRELAND WOOD, IS OUR NEW CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

BY BEN CORDY

Following a successful mini tour of our schools earlier in the academic year, Vanessa Ruck, from the #BecauseICan initiative returned for a second visit to our schools last term. Over three days she connected with new year groups from four of our schools and shared her story of overcoming struggle, inspiring everyone she connected with to push forward in the challenges life throws our way. Following the sessions, students got in touch to say how inspirational it had been and that they were going away to work on their goals. Many students felt Vanessa had given them the 'drive of energy' they needed to move forward. Each school noted how relevant the message was to the need in schools at this time, with both local news and national motorcycle media covering the story. It has been a real privilege for LFIS to play it's part in encouraging this initiative and supporting the work of good people generously supporting young people.



"I JUST WANTED TO SAY I THINK YOU WERE AMAZING AND IT HAS REALLY MADE ME WANT TO WORK FOR MY GOALS"

"THANK YOU FOR COMING TO MY SCHOOL TODAY YOU HELPED ME TO BELIEVE IN MYSELF... YOU ARE A HUGE INSPIRATION... THANK YOU SO MUCH!"

'THE GIRL I WANT TO BE' COURSE IS A HIT!

BY KIM LAWRENCE

This term, at Wetherby High, I have been running a course called, I'm The Girl I Want To Be. This is an eight week self-esteem course for high school aged girls. We look at lots of different topics relevant to the girl's lives, such as friendship, the media, sex and relationships, and the future, using lots of fun activities and discussions to help the girls grow in their self esteem and to help them work out who the girl that they want to be is.

I had a group of twelve year nine girls who did the course and, although many of them were nervous to start with, they engaged really well with the course, giving lots of really interesting opinions on the topics we discussed and having lots of fun. At the end of the course they give anonymous feedback about how they think it went and these were some of the things they said:

“ This course has taught me what I'm worth ”

“ This course has taught me to respect myself. ”

BRIDGING THE GAP – OTLEY YOUTH DROP IN

BY MARK ATKINS

I've had a busy first few months getting settled into my new role at LFIS and one of my most exciting new ventures has been to help set up, and run, a new drop-in youth group for the year 7-9 students from Prince Henry's Grammar School in Otley.

LFIS were contacted by Otley Youth & Community Centre (OYCC for short) to help establish a long held dream held by the ecumenical members of the charity, of creating a safe space for young people to hang out after school. Since February, we have been meeting after school on a Tuesday at Otley Bridge Church and we are already drawing a diverse crowd of over 25 young people each week for games, chats, and even tea and toast for the insatiably hungry teenagers!



Mark and Ben ready to meet youth at the drop in.

PRAYER POINTS

IN THIS POST-COVID SEASON WE'RE SEEKING GOD FOR HIS GUIDANCE AND WISDOM AS A TEAM. PLEASE WOULD YOU JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- FOR THE TRUSTEES AS THEY SEEK TO FIND A FITTING REPLACEMENT FOR BEN L AS TEAM LEADER. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD BRING THE RIGHT APPLICANTS FORWARD
- THAT GOD CONTINUES TO BLESS THE OTLEY DROP-IN AND THAT THE RELATIONSHIPS BEING FORGED THERE WOULD LEAD TO FRUITFUL GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS
- FOR KIM TO CONTINUE TO SPEAK GOD'S TRUTH OVER THE GIRLS IN HER SELF-ESTEEM GROUP
- FOR WISDOM FOR EACH OF THE TEAM WHO MENTOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH. SINCE THE PANDEMIC WE ARE SEEING A SURGE IN REFERRALS TO HELP STUDENTS IN THIS WAY
- FOR BEN L AS HE STARTS HIS NEW JOB - THAT GOD WOULD GO BEFORE HIM AND BLESS HIM!

GIVING TO THE WORK OF LEEDS FAITH IN SCHOOLS

We are so grateful for any financial support you may be able to offer us. Please prayerfully consider partnering with us to become a regular supporter as we continue to be Good News to the schools in Leeds.

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