

Step



Termly News  
Winter/Spring 2024



# Working Together to Illuminate The Cathedral

This edition of the Termly News has a focus on collaborating together and how Step doesn't work in isolation. A prime example of this was a recent Saturday in January where [Illuminate\\*](#) were given the [Cathedral](#) for the evening where 280 young people attended.



Step led one of the activity areas, pictured above, with our Justice Space Mat to explore and reflect on. We also had a number of prayer stations directly under the Doves of Peace installation that the [Cathedral](#) has been showcasing (pictured on front page).

It was also amazing to see the young people going round the [Cathedral](#) getting involved in the other activities on offer, such as dodgeball, a silent disco, a photo booth with fancy dress, a craft area, discussion zones and a Scalextric track. The evening ended with worship together under doves, with an excellent short talk about peace.

It really was a special evening and it was brilliant seeing so many of the young people we know from schools there. Whilst there were some young people we knew were coming along because they were part of lunchtime groups, there were also a number who we had no idea were coming until we bumped into them on the night. The conversations that were able to happen across the night were fantastic and I think we're all looking forward to the next Illuminate event.

[\\*Illuminate](#) is a term coined by a collaborative group of local youth leaders from [Step](#), [267](#), [Young Life](#) and [multiple churches](#), for events designed for young people to encounter the light of Jesus but in a way where Christians would feel comfortable inviting their friends.

## A Heartfelt Thank You

You may be aware that several years ago, we worked with [Haven](#) to help them create a course in schools for young people experiencing anxiety. [Haven](#) has grown tremendously in the last few years and we continue to use their incredible resources. Recently, we received this lovely message from Claire, the director of [Haven](#):

*"I ended up shedding a tear or two last night, in the middle of a crowded pub, at our village's Beer & Carols event. All because a mum had made her way through the crowd of singers, to say a quiet but clearly heartfelt "thank you" - her son has been doing [Haven](#) with Step and she wanted to let me know what a difference it was making to him, and clearly to her too."*



# Young People Turning Up To Church

In 1 Corinthians 3:5-9, Paul uses the term 'co-workers in God's service'. Paul planted the seed (for the new believers in Corinth), Apollos watered it, but God made the seed grow. We have heard several stories of young people turning up to churches unannounced either saying they want to be a Christian or to explore the faith. Sometimes this has been a direct result of a significant connection with Step, but often we have simply played a tiny part in their journey, such as triggering a thought in a lesson or answering one of their questions. So many other people will have played a part including their friends sharing their faith, family or neighbours who have been praying for them, people creating online content for them to engage in or their teachers explaining things so well. On top of this, the involvement of other organisations and local churches investing in their spiritual development through various activities such as assemblies and Easter trails in their primary school or simply being a pillar of the community they've been brought up in can't be overlooked. It's why the Illuminate initiative is so important and why we can rejoice together as these young people find faith knowing that we have been co-workers in God's service.



## Riding Lights and What Youth Think



In October, we had the privilege of hosting [The Riding Lights Theatre Company](#) at [Verso Vineyard](#), both during the day with about 400 young people and in the evening with over 150 people of all ages.

Their performance entitled 'Inspired...The Word Into Action' was a funny and engaging production and the young people, from three different schools, who came thoroughly enjoyed it and we hope many were more

excited about reading the Bible as a result. It was also a wonderful chance for Step to be at the forefront of gathering local people together, something we want to do more of in the coming years.

Later in the term, we also worked alongside [Churches Together](#) to host a forum called 'What Youth Think'. The evening included reflections from Chris here at Step, Claire from [Haven](#) and Declan, the head teacher at [Nicholas Breakspear](#), as well as videos of young people sharing their thoughts about church. It was an encouraging time to debate some of the key issues facing young people today, with many church leaders, youth leaders, parents and others attending.

# Volunteer Voices



On 2nd December, Liam, pictured here with Mary, arrived in the UK from South Africa to volunteer with **Young Life**. The next day he attended Ninja Warrior for an **Illuminate** event and by 5th December, he was in school with Step and is now an official volunteer with us too. He has quickly settled in and is now a regular, valued member of the team at Sandringham. We interviewed him about his time here for this edition's Volunteer Voices article, which is summarised below.

## Why did you come to the UK?

My dad had already moved to the UK for work and met Michael Hunter, the director of **Young Life**, at **Forest Town Church**. Michael shared his hopes to start a **Young Life** project in St Albans, which included running clubs inside and outside of school. My dad also visited **Young Life's** amazing camp in Scotland, which young people they work with are invited to in the summer. My dad thought I would be interested and after speaking to Michael, I jumped at the chance. My mum and I then came to the UK.

## What made you want to work in schools?

When I was a teenager, there was an organisation similar to Step working in my school. Although I was brought up in a supportive Christian family, it was important that I had somewhere else to discuss my questions and doubts. One person in particular became a mentor for me and my faith grew stronger as a result. I now want to offer the same support to the young people in schools and share the gospel to those who haven't heard it before.

## What have been your highlights of your time at Step so far?

I have only been in the UK for six weeks (and two of those were the Christmas holidays) but I have regularly come to two weekly clubs at Sandringham called Christianity Unpacked and Ultimate Questions, including recently running a session. I have been part of a food collection, watched some assemblies and attended a Step Day, where I enjoyed the pottery. I have met loads of young people already and it's been really cool to see people who aren't Christian keep coming back to the clubs.

## What are you looking forward to?

I'm looking forward to meeting more young people, building real, authentic relationships and seeing new initiatives develop in school through Step. I am also really excited about the plans to set up after-school **Young Life** clubs in the local community and seeing young people come to our camp in Scotland.



# Keep Calm and Cook

Last term, Amy and Gillian (one of our volunteers) launched 'Keep Calm and Cook'- a new initiative at Loreto in partnership with Charlotte Bradley from [Hertfordshire Community Kitchen](#). It was designed to help Year 7 students who were finding it hard to settle into life in secondary school due to anxiety or other issues. Each week they met in the cookery room to bake some delicious food, including lemon and blueberry muffins and pizza pinwheels, before eating lunch together whilst chatting about a different tool to help manage our well-being. The sessions ended in a special way by lighting a candle and saying the serenity prayer together, which is also used in the [Haven](#) course.



The students arrived to the first session like little timid mice, but as the weeks went by, and they realised they were in a safe space, they soon relaxed and really engaged and enjoyed themselves.

In the final week, there was a celebration where each student was allowed to invite a friend to enjoy our baked goodies and to share what had impacted them the most. It was such a joyful time together, full of laughter and squeals of "these taste yummy" as they tried the things they had baked. It was clear the students who had baked them felt proud of all they had learnt on the course. All of them gave the experience 5/5 and said they would recommend it to their friend. We received comments including, "I enjoyed it because it is really relaxing", "it is a safe space... and you can eat your work!" and "thank you for all of the kindness that you have committed to us", all showing that the students loved their time with us. There are now plans afoot to bring it to other schools as it genuinely appears to help Year 7 students settle into school.

## Support Step By Simply Shopping Online

There are many ways you can support Step financially, but one way is simply shopping online by setting up an [Easyfundraising](#) account and choosing Step as your charity. We will receive donations at no extra cost to you. Details about how this works can be found at [www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/fundraising-initiatives](http://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/fundraising-initiatives) or go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk). It can be used on holidays, insurance, broadband services and much more. Recently, Tesco agreed to donate £1.75 for every online order over £50 (your initial basket before amendments needs to be over £50 too). Therefore a weekly shop would generate £91 in a year for Step. Just think how much we could raise if several people did this and not just for Tesco.

# Upcoming Events

## Prayer Evenings

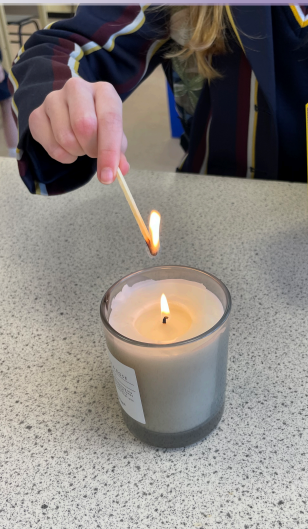
We have three prayer evenings every year. Our next one is kindly being hosted by **St Luke's Church on Cell Barnes Lane from 7.30pm on Wednesday March 6th**. Please join us to hear stories from our work and pray for the local schools with some lovely refreshments.

If you'd like your church to host a future prayer evening for us, please get in touch. All our events, including the following prayer evening in the summer term once the date has been confirmed, can be found at [www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/events](http://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/events)

## End of Year Celebration

Every July, we like to celebrate the academic year with worship, a light buffet and lots of stories from the year. We will also look forward to the following year. Please join us on **Wednesday 17th July from 7.30pm at Verso Vineyard** (formerly known as St Albans Vineyard)

## Please Pray...



- That we appoint an additional Schools Coordinator in the near future, a role we haven't been able to fill. More details can be found on our careers page on our website.
- For financial provision, specifically that we have success in a number of grant applications we are submitting in the coming months.
- That we can expand our work into the two secondary schools and one college we aren't currently working in.
- That our commitment to working together with many other organisations bears fruit, including the development of after-school clubs through Liam at **Young Life** (see our Volunteers Voices article).
- For all the young people in our area experiencing mental health issues and that Step can play our part in helping them.

## Want To Hear More From Step?

If you've enjoyed reading some of these stories, check out our latest news page at [www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/latest-step-news](http://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/latest-step-news). You can also sign up to email updates using the form at the back of this Termly News or the online form on our website.



# Financial Gift Form

## Your Details (must be filled in for standing orders or to claim gift aid)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename/s \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for donation: Church Visit ☐ Mailing ☐ Spring Appeal ☐ Event ☐ Other/details \_\_\_\_\_

## Gift Aid Declaration

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made to Step (charity no 1091290)

Today ☐ In the past 4 years ☐ In the future ☐ (tick all relevant boxes)

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April - 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008. I confirm that I am a UK tax payer, resident in the UK for tax purposes and that I will advise Step if I wish to cancel this declaration; I change my name or home address or I no longer pay sufficient tax on my income and/or capital gains. I understand that if I pay less tax in the current fiscal year than the amount of the gift aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE ENSURE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ARE ABOVE SO WE CAN CLAIM GIFT AID

## I would like to make a financial gift to Step ☐

I have made a bank transfer/enclosed cash/enclosed a cheque made payable to 'Step' for the amount of £ \_\_\_\_\_ (please delete where appropriate)

## I would like to set up a standing order to support Step ☐

Please complete and give to the Step team or post it to us at Step c/o Vineyard Church, 7 Brick Knoll Park, St Albans, Herts, AL1 5UG. **Please DO NOT send it directly to your bank**

To: The Manager of \_\_\_\_\_ Bank Sort code \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Bank Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay Lloyds Bank (sort code 30-97-25), 36 Chequer Street, St Albans AL1 3YQ for the account of St Albans and Harpenden Christian Education Project (account no 01338536)

From my account number \_\_\_\_\_ please pay the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_

(amount in words) \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ (day) of

\_\_\_\_\_ (month) 20\_\_ (year) and monthly/quarterly/annually\* until further notice.

(\*delete as appropriate)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Receive Updates or Volunteer with Step

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename/s \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number/s \_\_\_\_\_ Church I attend \_\_\_\_\_

## UPDATES

Please add me to Step's general mailing list ☐

By signing up to our mailing list, we will send updates such as invitations to events, annual report and fundraising initiatives and you confirm that you are 13 or over and accept Step's Supporter Privacy Notice which can be found online at [www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/sign-up-to-updates](http://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk/sign-up-to-updates) or by requesting a copy from Step.

Please also add me to the following specific mailing lists

Weekly Prayer Calendar (email) ☐ Termly News (email) ☐ Termly News (post) ☐

If you're under 13, your parent/guardian needs to consent on your behalf by signing below.

Parent/Guardian Signature (for those under 13) \_\_\_\_\_

## VOLUNTEERING

I am interested in the following volunteering opportunities so please contact me ☐

Lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retreat Days	<input type="checkbox"/>	CUs/Explore Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Form Times	<input type="checkbox"/>	Courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serving Refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Year 6 Step Up Days	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Action	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lunchtime Clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Admin Team	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step c/o Vineyard Church, 7 Brick Knoll Park, St Albans, AL1 5UG  
[www.stepschoolswork.org.uk](http://www.stepschoolswork.org.uk) 01727 893540  
Charity Number 1091290



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