



Christians at work in Luton With Youthscape Part 2

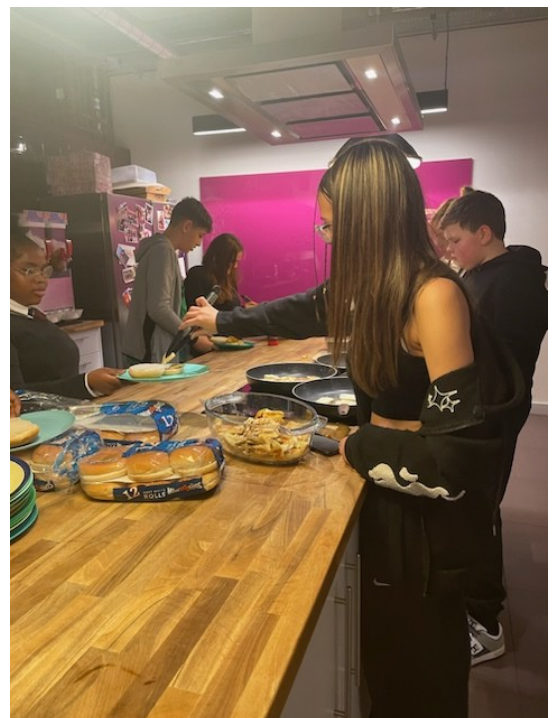


Gemma Milligan , Head of Youth Work

Chairs scrape, glasses clink, and the buzz of animated chatter fills the air. Groups of teenagers crowd round dining tables, mobile phone in one hand and fork in the other, laughing at each other’s jokes. The aroma of a meaty, home-cooked stew floats through from the kitchen and everyone looks at me in anticipation, waiting for their table to be given the go ahead to collect their food.

Dinnertime at Youthscape’s after school Drop-in is one of the highlights of my week. Eating together regularly helps meet the physical needs of the young people we support in Luton, and it also demonstrates something significant about who we are. As Christians who work diligently to see holistic transformation in the lives of young people, we believe that the act of eating together creates a sense of community and belonging and depicts a valuing of others that Jesus also demonstrated throughout his earthly ministry.

When we read the gospels, we see that Jesus spent much of his time eating with others, particularly those who the religious leaders of the day scorned at. Not only did Jesus eat with social outcasts, the poor, and those viewed as sinners, he even invited himself to their houses, which shows a desire to build relationship beyond the sur-



At Youthscape we also want to build relationship with young people that is beyond the surface, as we believe the God we worship is a God who intimately knows and deeply loves every person on earth. It doesn't matter what their background is, what they might have done, or even how they are viewed by those around them, they matter to God. And we want to demonstrate this truth to every young person we work with.

As someone who has a heart for the most vulnerable young people in our society, especially those who often present behaviours that mean they are disregarded by others, Youthscape's vision to see every young person transformed by the love of God inspires me. Being part of a team who wants to embody Jesus in these young people's lives takes this work beyond a job, to a mission.



As I sit down at the dinner table, I take in the snippets of conversation flowing around me. From whispers about who is dating who, laughter as Tik-Tok videos are shared, and discussions about who is coming to the Luton Unite event that Friday, I am aware that I have access into the worlds of these young people, and the privileged opportunity to speak into them. I join the conversation about Luton Unite, the youth worship event we run in partnership with local churches, and am asked a question about my own faith. I smile and answer enthusiastically; God is at work in the lives of these young people, and I love that I get to play a part in that.

By Gemma Milligan Head of Luton Youth Work, Youthscape

Would the community perceive the absence of your church or organisation? Chances are they would, considering the valuable ministries and services it offers. Stay tuned for further updates on the thriving church in Luton as it remains actively engaged with the community
