



**HERE**

**&**

**NOW**

**FRONTIER  
YOUTH TRUST**

# Stop. Look around. This is the here and now.

Where we find ourselves is uniquely important to how we understand the gospel, and how we respond to young people.

It is significant that Jesus 'moved into the neighbourhood'.

In this first edition of our Movement Zine, you will find voices from around the FYT movement on the theme of context.

Timing,  
Challenges,  
local legends,  
and common themes.

These are the stories and theologies of members in local communities across the UK.

Frontier Youth Trust is a movement of people journeying with young people on the margins of church and society.

Our theme for the Autumn is 'Doing Theology in Public'. Email us at [leadership@fyt.org.uk](mailto:leadership@fyt.org.uk) if you have an idea or story to contribute.



# BEYOND CONFERENCE

**22<sup>ND</sup> SEPT 2022**

**£60**

40% off for FYT  
Movement members

3 Tree Community Centre,  
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Birmingham

Frontier Youth Trust and The CURBS Project are hosting a learning day for those interested in connecting with children and young people BEYOND the walls of the Church. We'll be gathering in Birmingham to challenge and inspire each other as we dream BEYOND our own walls.



## BEYOND THE CHURCH YOUTH WORK TRAINING

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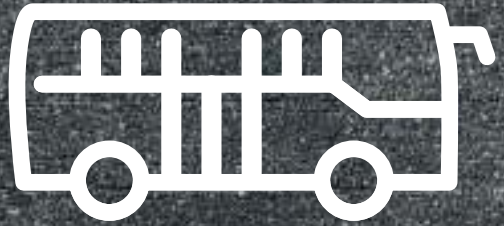
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# A TALE OF TWO BUSES

Kally is in Weston-super-Mare. Holly in Sevenoaks. They meet to talk about meeting young people, participation and the joys of young people fuelled youth work.

**Kally** - We both do detached work with a bus. I do three nights across three local estates. It's good not to be set in a building and each estate is very different. How many nights do you go out?

**Holly** - Sadly, just one night a week at the moment in a local park. Because of volunteer shortages. We were doing a second night in a different park which we had to drop temporarily. It's hard because we are losing contact with people. I hope it's not going to be like fully starting again because I still know many families. But it's a shame because the other detached night is growing and growing.

**Kally** - When we went back out after the pandemic, we almost took

the approach that we were starting again because it'd been so long. And we found that the young people had changed so much! I found it strange that the young ones we had pre-covid didn't come back. But it was nothing about us, it was just about them progressing with their lives.

**Holly** - Do all the young people you see want to engage with you?

**Kally** - Not all of them. Some love it, while others are like "get away from me! Why are you in my park?" I guess I like to challenge those ones, "This is my park too, I'm just coming to say hi".

**Holly** - I've really learnt to not go in too strong and heavy. And that it takes a few weeks; starting small with just a hello. Letting them just watch what we are doing.

**Kally** - It progresses slowly. They start by ignoring me completely





and then if I see them in the street I'll get a little nod. Taking the fire pit really helps actually. Maybe because it's a little further away from the bus. It draws them in and eventually they will say yes to toasting a marshmallow.

**Holly** - In the beginning I wanted to go over and ask a load of questions but that can be quite scary for some - especially if they think you are from the council or whatever.

**Kally** - Sometimes they say I'm undercover: "You're an undercover fed!" I say "no im not, I'm a youth worker!"

**Holly** - I've noticed it takes time. Because of Covid we lost a whole group that just disappeared. But the ones we're engaging with now are really used to us; and know we are gonna be there every week and aren't intimidated.

**Kally** - How do you plan what you do?

**Holly** - I get ideas from the young people. They lead what we do. If their suggestions are doable we will do it. It's not always possible though and it's frustrating when I hear great ideas from them and I'm not


in a place where I can take them forward.

**Kally** - I've been trying to empower the young people here to do the work themselves. But it has been hard to get my head around fully. However, I was forced to this Christmas. We had this pantomime trip & hampers to deliver. And I unfortunately broke my elbow and I couldn't work at all! So the young people did it all: the planning, the shopping, the budgeting, all of it. I even gave them the credit card, which people were shocked by. It was amazing participation because I had to step back and they had to step up.

**Kally** - I think it helps that I don't tell them what to do. I'm not leading them. We do it together. For me it's about slowly building them up so they know they have a voice and that they can use it.

**Kally Critchley** works for South Weston Activity Network and the Boombbox Youth Project in Weston-super-Mare. **Holly Brazier** is Lead Youth Worker for Severnoaks Area Youth Trust.





# If only the church wasn't so stuck in its ways

I have worked for Bath Youth for Christ for 15 years. Here I have done school's work, a skate project, youth clubs, a football team, even mission trips. I have worked with those who are privileged, and those who are not.

But after 15 years, I realise the established ways of the church have stalled the progress of what could have been. Young people are interested in belonging and spirituality, but not in the outdated ways of the church. And the gap is widening.

One of the highlights of our work has been taking groups of young people from Bath to build houses

in Mexico. An important lesson is making sure the foundations are well-laid (see also 1 Corinthians 3:10). But it turns out that in youth ministry Christians are totally obsessed with putting on the roof before giving any thought to foundations. It's all about 'outcomes' and not journey.

For many the impact of our work is beyond doubt. Our feedback is filled with stories of transformation. But this is rarely enough for those who hope to maintain the established ways of the church - and that misplaced hope shuts down the possibilities of something new, something deeper.

In our experience, our communities need leaders that will commit to living out the story of Jesus - and who will take more time to explore a different way of living our whole lives in the spirit of God. We are striving to create a church that is much more accessible to everyone. Instead of finished christian products, we need a theology of salvation that is about the quest for change, hope, future and a fullness of life.

*Dave Joyce is director of Bath Youth for Christ. Dave will be leading our Beyond the Church module on context and culture. Details of which can be found online at [fyt.org.uk](http://fyt.org.uk)*

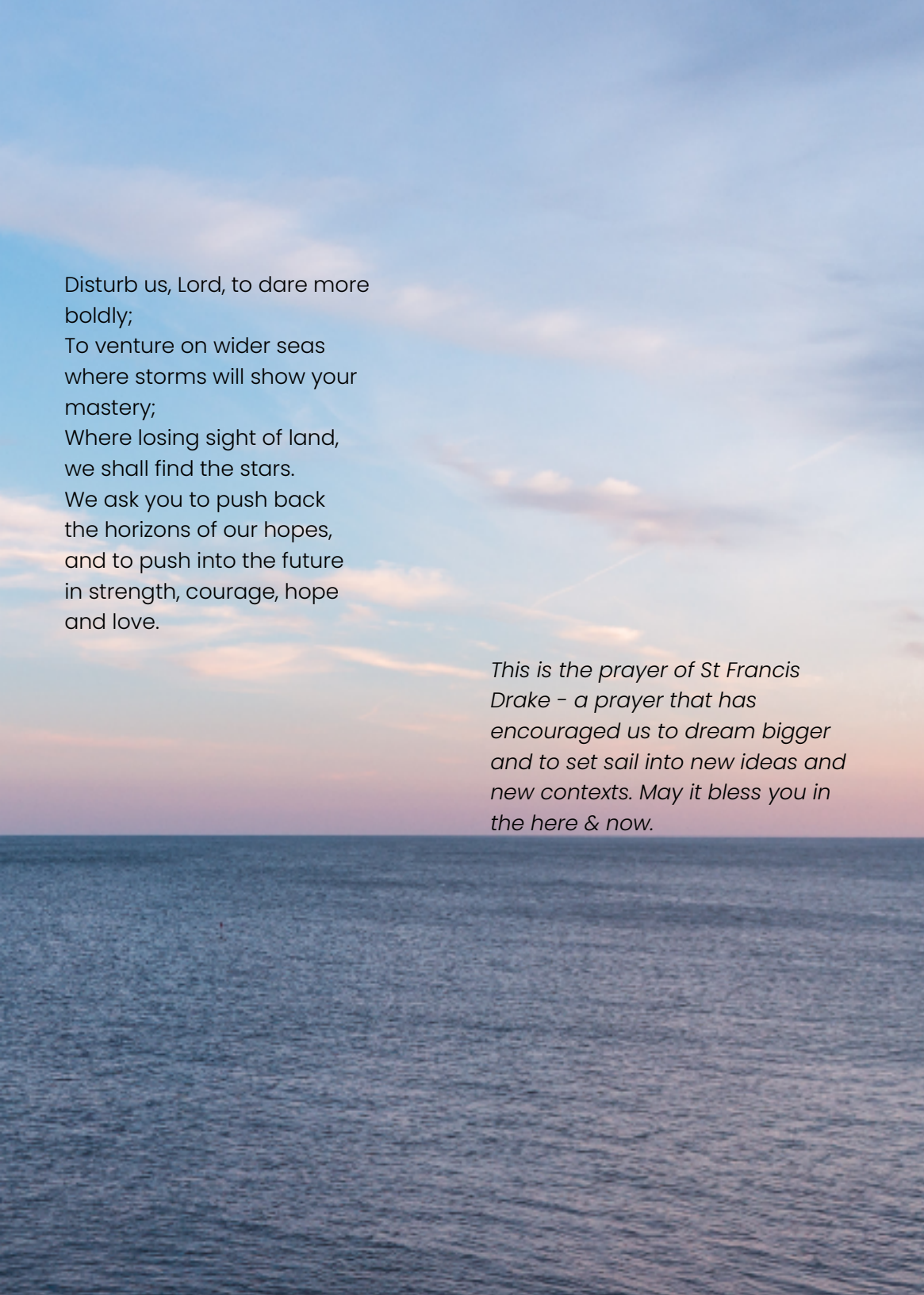


Disturb us, Lord, when  
we are too well pleased with  
ourselves;  
When our dreams have come true  
because we have dreamed too  
little;  
When we arrived safely  
because we sailed too close to the  
shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when,  
with the abundance of things we  
possess,  
we have lost our thirst for the  
waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
we have ceased to dream of  
eternity;  
And in our efforts to build a new  
earth,  
we have allowed our vision of the  
new heaven  
to dim.

**Push back the  
horizons of  
our hopes**





Disturb us, Lord, to dare more  
boldly;  
To venture on wider seas  
where storms will show your  
mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
we shall find the stars.  
We ask you to push back  
the horizons of our hopes,  
and to push into the future  
in strength, courage, hope  
and love.

*This is the prayer of St Francis  
Drake - a prayer that has  
encouraged us to dream bigger  
and to set sail into new ideas and  
new contexts. May it bless you in  
the here & now.*

# This is our place

*Simon from the Bardsley Youth Project shows us around his patch - Coventry City Centre - guiding us through the spaces that make the patch, and project, unique.*

## Supporting the city's most vulnerable young people.

Bardsley House is Youth Homelessness Hub that delivers activities and support to young adults aged 16-25. The logo is an image of the original key to the cathedral-owned building that houses the project. The cross in the image is a reference to the Coventry Cross of Nails. The story dates back to the second world war: in the wreckage of the bombed cathedral a clergyman improvised a cross by tying together some nails. It became a symbol for the city's resurrection. A version of the cross hangs on the wall in the lounge area of the youth project.







## **A city of resurrection and renewal – and defiance**

Bardsley House sits in the shadow of the new Cathedral; which stands next to the preserved shell of its predecessor, destroyed in the second world war. This link between the old and the new is a reminder of the city's story of renewal; of its rising from the ashes; of its defiance and resistance in the face of adversity.

Another iconic symbol of the city is the public statue of Lady Godiver. A local legend dating back to the 13th century tells the tale of a heroic noble woman who protested oppressive taxation on the local people by riding naked through the streets of the city. It's another strong symbol of the city's defiant spirit. Today the statue is a way marker for residents and in the centre of a popular shopping square. This, says Simon, is the most significant location in the city.



## The city is always changing

Since its near destruction in World War Two the city has become a place of constant restoration and renewal - and in recent years, gentrification. A factor that is increasing the marginalisation of young people. Gentrification is pushing up the cost of housing and making it inaccessible to the vulnerable young people that Bardsley supports. Places of gathering for young people are becoming fewer as the city is upgraded. Simon describes the external space of the city art gallery as "accidentally the best skatepark ever". Young people loved it. But very quickly anti-

skating measures were brought in. Where do the young people hang out now? They don't. They've been kicked out. The council invested a lot of money on spaces for young people, then they took them away piece by piece. One of the few places left is the cathedral gardens - Young people have hung out here for generations. Made in the remnants of the ancient abbey buildings, just a stone's throw from Bardsley's doors, this is where the Bardsley House project started.



**'All the major moments of breakthrough in my work have happened here.'**

Simon considers the pool table at Bardsley House the most significant space he works in - a space where all the major moments happen. And it's in a unique location that connects the present to the past. It stands on top of the remains of two ancient cathedrals - and the mythic resting place of Lady Godiva.

"Bardsley is a uniquely Coventry project because when you get the two halves - the cathedral and the city - you get our uniqueness. I'm not sure if any other cathedrals work with the young people that have smashed their windows. Or sleep in the abbey courtyard. Our city's story of rising up, of defiance, relates well to these young people - because the system is screwing them over. We are trying to set them up to succeed. Taking young people who are being dropped by everyone. We keep fighting for them. Advocating for them when no one else is.

"I don't know where the hope is. We're trying to be the hope."

*Simon Ree is Project Manager of Bardsley Youth Project. Photo Essay as told to Lauren McCombie Smith, FYT Movement Advocate.*



# It's all in the...

If there are 9 stages to pioneering youth ministry, we skipped a few and started half way. I'm an RE teacher in the local secondary school, so I already had relationships with many of the young people. And for us the timing of all this has been key.

The Greek has two words for time, Chronos and Kairos. Chronos is the actual time. Kairos is "the appointed time in the purpose of God". Starting Hangout has been a kairos moment. School is hard work for our young people. School staff are stressed. There is a lot of pressure to catch up after covid. Mental health among us all is at an all-time low. The time and context were right for a new response.

We spent so much time with God to understand this timing and

recognise the divine appointments he set for us. We are using our new church space to offer young people the opportunity to come and be and chill with friends, in a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Hangout - that's what we called it - is a drop-in youth club working with secondary age young people in Blackpool. We're in a parish of 6000 people on the Mereside estate, a place often overlooked by those outside.





# ...timing

We started Hangout in February 2022 following discussions with young people in the area, and now we have a weekly drop in group, offering a place to “be”, play board games, chill, do homework, chat and eat. We have been directed by the young people and developed their ideas to start what we have now. We want Hangout to

be young person led, with us getting alongside them to make things happen. We hope to see the club evolve as the work becomes more defined and natural

groups emerge from the larger group. Then, we will consider taking some calculated risks and organising trips, projects, 1-2-1 work and residential.

## **It’s all in the timing.**

“This is the best thing that’s ever happened. I can’t believe I am running a youth group. Nothing we do will make it better!” (Zach and Sienna, junior leaders aged 14).

*Vicki Gale is an RE Teacher and volunteer youth leader in Blackpool. Vicki is joining the FYT team to support new youth projects in the North of England.*



# PIONEERING POSSIBILITIES

The BIBLE, TRADITION and CULTURE are three points on a triangle that hold open a space for pioneering. Here's an idea to try... ..or not!

**BIBLE:** A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight. Proverbs 11.

**TRADITION:** Itinerant preachers always on the move, never in one place for too long.

**CULTURE:** Young people are risk takers and often enjoy extreme sports.

## PIONEERING

**POSSIBILITY:** Do all your pioneering youth work on a unicycle!.

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