

# Termly News

Step

Summer 2026



# Step at the Forefront of Developing Young Leaders

Step's commitment to developing young sixth-form leaders has reached a new milestone this year, with more Leadership Foundations Courses delivered than ever before and over 100 sessions in total for the first time. We've piloted a new workshop on the course covering presenting well and sharing your story effectively, which has been received positively. Alongside the courses were two exceptional conferences that placed character, wellbeing and servant-hearted leadership at the heart.

The Step Leadership Conference has become a much-loved fixture in our calendar, but this year's event felt especially significant. We welcomed over 90 students, including two schools beyond our usual St Albans and Harpenden reach, and expanded our seminar offering to five sessions. Students from faith and secular schools explored servant leadership, conflict management, finding their tribe, the Careers Equation and how to use influence well – all led by experienced Christian leaders who generously invested in our young people.

A standout moment came from Isaac, a third-year Warwick student, whose keynote brought joy, humour and deep wisdom as he shared the qualities of great leadership and why he chooses Jesus as the ultimate leader to follow. The day was filled with energy and even spontaneous worship as students gathered around instruments during lunch – a beautiful picture of faith lived freely.

Step also hosted and supported the Alban Learning Partnership (ALPS) Conference. Over 250 Year 12 students from six schools tackled the theme of 'escaping reality' through student-led sessions exploring life beyond their phones, AI and real-world relationships. It created a vibrant atmosphere that was noticed by teachers and the new pastors here at Verso.

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Thank you for all your kindness and support. You've helped shape me into the person I am. You have always been so encouraging and kind. You were there for me when I was at my lowest and cheered for me when I was at my highest. The retreats (Step Days) helped me become more confident – they were so fun and memorable, they're the highlight of my time at school.

(Extract of a message from a Year 13 student before leaving school)



# Welcome Maddie and Temi

***Hello everyone, I'm Maddie and I'm thrilled to be working for Step. I have just finished my degree at Royal Holloway, where I was also a part of Young Life International (another youth outreach charity), and have now moved back to Hertfordshire. Over the last few weeks, I have jumped into the world of Step, and from observing lessons, to helping at Step Days, I have been loving my time. It is a real blessing to have been welcomed so well and to have had such a wonderful snapshot of the work we do.***

***One of my favourite things about my time so far has been how the team prioritises reflecting on and celebrating the days and sessions we've led.***

***From September I will be mainly working in Nicholas Breakspear and Sandringham schools. I'm also looking forward to working with Steph in the Wellbeing area. I can't wait to be in schools more consistently and to begin to build relationships with the young people there. I would really appreciate prayer for networking with the school staff!***

*In the spirit of introducing new appointments, we are also very excited about Temi Akindele (pictured below) joining the trustee team. Temi has a huge heart for Step - enthusiastically communicating about us at her church, writing an article in the last Termly News, and becoming a volunteer - mainly focusing on our Leadership Foundations courses. The trustee team were impressed by her character, experience and passion so we were naturally delighted she agreed to the role. Please pray for her as she juggles her commitment with Step while being a mum, working full time and being part of the leadership team at Transformation House Church.*

## A Gap Year at Step

We have a gap year program at Step starting in October. School leavers will have the opportunity to work with students, schools and volunteers, through becoming an integral part of the Step team.

If you or someone you know would like to use their unique gifts and dedicate a year to leadership, mission and self-development, please get in touch with us to find out more.



# A Celebration of Culture and Creation

**"Our recent Culture Day was a vibrant celebration of diversity and global community, bringing learning to life by immersing students in the rich traditions, languages, and histories of different cultures. This incredible event was beautifully run by Step, whose leadership, organisation, and passion made the entire day a resounding success, alongside the dedication of their wonderful volunteers."**

**By fostering empathy, curiosity, and global citizenship, Culture Day has set an inspiring new standard for our year 7 community. We highly encourage other schools to adopt and we are deeply grateful for this experience that broadened our students' horizons and unite us all."**

These were the kind and encouraging words of a teacher at Sandringham where we delivered a culture day in June as part of their Activities Week.

In the morning, the Year 7 students carouselled around 8 different rooms (Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, South Africa and Turkiye), celebrating their food and customs (6 of which had volunteers from those places). It was so much fun with drums being played, dressing up in various outfits and languages being learned, among much more.

In the afternoon they had two further workshops to build on their appreciation of the different cultures in our world. They had the opportunity to reflect on the Christian view that we are uniquely created by God in our 'I am Created' workshop, and how they can live out Jesus' greatest commandments of loving God and loving our neighbour as ourselves, in our 'Refugee Experience' session.

The day was sandwiched in between two lessons in their RE classes, with a Who is Jesus lesson the week before and Parables the week after, where 185 Good News for Everyone Youth Testaments were accepted as a gift.

One of our favourite parts of the day was a boy coming up to Mary and saying about his Youth Testament he'd received, "I have read Matthew, guess what? Jesus dies!" and then asking how he could get access to a 'full Bible'.



# City Wide Youth Alpha

**When the latest Youth Alpha material was developed, we hosted one of their launch events. After several successful courses in schools – including one at Townsend where the participants also spent a day off timetable at Verso Church with the Step team on an Explore Day – we worked with 267, Younglife and St Paul's Church to host a city-wide course.**

We launched it on the back of the Verulam Year 7 Christianity Day and the Illuminate Event at the Cathedral where over 300 young people gathered for activities such as inflatables, mini golf, a silent disco, and an inspiring talk from Gizzy, a Step volunteer and staff member at Younglife.

The dates were set fairly late notice but we had 12 turn up on the first week (with some pictured below at our Holy Spirit Day). It was a fantastic course. With nearly all the participants engaged in other Step activities, we have the privilege of continuing to invest in the lives of the young people through lunchtime groups, Step Days and after school clubs such as Younglife's Tuesday club at Marshalswick Baptist Church.

The plan is to make this an annual course, with more notice given to attract even more to it. It was another example of how churches and youth charities work so effectively together in our area – something we will never take for granted.

## Following Jesus & Wellbeing Leads

We are introducing two new lead roles to help us be even more effective. Mary has already become our 'Following Jesus' Lead to develop our Explore Groups, Next Steps Discipleship Program and Youth Alpha, while developing new opportunities for those who want to find out more about following Jesus.

In September, Steph will be our first ever 'Wellbeing' Lead. With the assistance of Maddie, she will help grow our provision of Haven Hope (anxiety) and Tough Stuff (bereavement/loss) courses while developing our mentoring program. We are also planning 3 parent/community events to address issues such as exam stress, phone/social media use and the manosphere.

## Step Events

There are lots of Step events that you can come to. As well as the three forums mentioned above, you are welcome to attend our End of Year Celebrations and Pudding and Prayer evenings throughout the year. Once these dates are confirmed, they will be on our 'events' page on our website



# Work Experience Students Helping Us Grow

Every year we have at least 10 work experience students and we love spending the week with them. This year is no different. We've seen young people teaching lessons, leading clubs and running games with nearly 100 students on a Step Day. They also undertake a project that adds value to the work of Step, for example rewriting a lesson or creating a new resource.

Recently, year 10 student Jemima joined us for a week. Alongside Helena, she started designing a new 'Big Questions' Space Mat (see image of our justice-themed Space Mat to know roughly what it will look like). The four coloured sections (Core Christianity, Science and Faith, Suffering and Life After Death) will each have a few activities, with students guided by audio on an iPod.



Jemima loved it so much, she wanted to continue designing it, so Helena is now meeting her after school to create the resource, which will ultimately be used on Step Days and in schools next academic year.

## Stepping Up to Secondary School

This term, we have delivered 13 Year 6 Step Up Days in different primary schools and have helped two secondary schools with their Transition Days (where all the Year 6s going up to those schools attended).

We love these days as they not only provide an encouraging day for the children as they reflect on their move up to secondary school, we also know that this is the start of Step journeying with many of these young people in their new schools - we really notice the difference in year 7 when they know us already.

A Step Up Day consists of games, often held outside in the glorious sunshine, and sessions called Friendships, Journeys, Strength and Stretch, and Footprints.

Within the day, the children reflect on Moses, Joshua, the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and the power of the tongue. We end with the Footprints poem as a reminder to them that we believe God journeys with us at all times and carries us when things are difficult.



## Love Your Enemy for Step

We have raised over £7,000 this year with people wearing their rival's football shirt - the latest being Martin Watson, the curate at St Paul's Church wearing a Watford kit in late July. If you still want to sponsor the team, scan the QR code here.

# Financial Gift Form

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

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church you attend if any (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 to 01338536 (30-97-25)/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** ☐ **I have set it up online** ☐

Either set one up through your online banking or fill in below and return to us at Step c/o Verso 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to increase my existing standing order** ☐

As it's a standing order, this must be done by yourself through your bank. However, if you'd like to tell us your intentions to do this, please say how much you plan to increase it by: £ \_\_\_\_\_

# Receive Updates or Volunteer with Step

## Your Details

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename/s \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Church you attend if any \_\_\_\_\_

## Receive Updates

Please add me to Step's general mailing list ☐

By signing up to our mailing list, we will send you 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) ☐

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If you are under 13, your parent/guardian needs to consent on your behalf for you receive updates from Step by signing below

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

## Volunteer with Step

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

|                                              |                                                        |                                               |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Lessons <input type="checkbox"/>             | Haven Hope Course (Anxiety) <input type="checkbox"/>   | Set Up/Pack Down <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Step Days <input type="checkbox"/>           | Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/>                     | Serving Refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lunchtime Clubs <input type="checkbox"/>     | Leadership Foundations Course <input type="checkbox"/> | Photography <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Explore Groups/CUs <input type="checkbox"/>  | Alpha Youth Course <input type="checkbox"/>            | Writing Resources <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Year 6 Step Up Days <input type="checkbox"/> | Sixth Form Enrichment <input type="checkbox"/>         | Admin Team <input type="checkbox"/>           |



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