



7th – 9th October 2011
Leicester City Centre

75 young people and their leaders from 15 Churches across Leicester and Leicestershire came together for a weekend of mission in October, based at St. Martin's House in Leicester City Centre.

The weekend kicked off with a Celebration with hot dogs and pizza provided by the Diocese, worship led by the Youth Band from St. Luke's in Thurnby and Phil Hulks from Urban Saints speaking on vision & David's story. This led into a time of ministry to which a number of young people responded. The Bishop also made a brief visit to encourage the young people as they prepared to hit the streets of Leicester. The following morning the young people gathered bright and early to continue to study David in small groups.



Either side of lunch on the Saturday the young people took to the city centre streets to demonstrate God's love & power to the people of Leicester, sharing God's love in word and deed. Projects included, gardening on a local housing estate, litter picking with City Wardens, working with Healing on the Streets, Treasure Hunting, Acts of Kindness, and our Clock Tower project which included drumming, drama, giving out hot chocolate and chatting and praying with people. The teams were led by local youth workers but in practice it was very often the young people who took the lead. The projects were a great example of partnership with Leicester City Council and also with the wider church in Leicester; being hosted by Leicester Diocese, working with Healing on the Streets Leicester and being covered by Watchmen on The Wall (24/7 prayer cover for Leicester) who were praying for us on that day in the Town Hall! It was also great to have 3 lots of coverage on BBC Radio Leicester.

"My favourite bit of the weekend was when a group of us all sat down in Leicester market and prayed. I know we all hear that church isn't the building but a group of people together; but it's not very often we live it. I was in a church in the centre of Leicester praying to God while in the background the market was busy with people buying 1lb of bananas for £2." Martin Wright, Reality Youth Worker

The day finished with an evangelistic youth event for those on the team and for young people we had met during the day, although on this occasion we had no extra guests due to the city location. The evening was a mixture of crazy videos, even crazier games and an invitation to respond to the Gospel, which around 10 young people did either for the first time or to recommit their lives to living for God, including a volunteer leader who has been sitting on the fence for years!

The weekend concluded with a service of celebration on Sunday evening to share stories and celebrate what God had done. There were around 200 young people, leaders, parents and other supporters. One moving story was about a group who had felt God ask them give some flowers to a charity shop. They noticed a sign to one nearby but when they got there it was shut. They knocked and the cleaner let them in. After talking to the Manager, one youngster in particular thanked her for all the work, particularly as it had helped his Mum before she died. Others spoke of how God had led them to situations or people, or simply to chat to people.





Massive thanks goes to the Diocese for providing a base and lots of food over the weekend, plus for their encouragement and help in the planning stages. It was a pleasure to work alongside Luke Wilsher & Graham, City Wardens from the Council, Simon Stokes of *Talking Rhythms* and also Steve Barber & the *Healing on the Streets* team. Thanks to Paresh at St. Matthew's Housing Office & the Tenants Society for guiding us with the estate project. Thanks also to all those who held us in prayer over the weekend and/or came along to the Sunday Celebration Service at Whetstone Baptist Church.

What impressed us the most was the level of faith that the young people showed, particularly the younger ones. They led by example and they were the ones who were both proactive and reactive to the spirit's leading. When we were with the team at the Clock Tower, young people were telling us about found treasure, gifts given and spiritual conversations had. Young people, on more than one occasion, came and told us that God had told them to go and pray for a specific person or group and asked if it was ok if they could go and pray for them?!

This ncounter extra was our biggest weekend so far and we look forward to our two events, booked for February and May 2012, to be even bigger!

(Matt Brown and Bez Gradden)



"ncounter is a great opportunity where young people and youth leaders from all over Leicestershire can unite together for one purpose and serve their communities and each other. It generates new friendships, empowers acts of stepping out in faith, trains them with deeper biblical understanding and provides new and exciting opportunities. Each ncounter weekend is different, yet each ncounter weekend sees a bunch of young people step out for God, and God faithfully uses them for His work." (Deb Goodhead)