

Let's share our life-giving faith



The Rev Andrew Hargreaves challenges us to make personal evangelism our top priority

GRAHAM Webb and Dawn Sampford. These were the people who told me about Jesus Christ.

One came into my school when I was 16 to take an assembly and one patiently shared her faith with me during our Saturday jobs at Tesco. They helped me to become a follower of Jesus from no church or religious background.

Dan Hargreaves and Laura Knight-Smith. These are among the people I have spoken to about Jesus over the years who decided to follow him. These people went on to tell many others about Jesus, who then put their trust in him and so it goes on.

Disciples making disciples. I wonder who first spoke to you about Jesus? I wonder who you last passed the story of Jesus on to?

Research from the Church of England concluded that 66 per cent of people of no Christian faith know a practising Christian who they view positively. Only one per cent of those people know a church leader, which shows that telling the story has to be a team effort!

The research also says that one in five adults would welcome a

conversation about Jesus, with a staggering 43 per cent still believing in the resurrection.

This is an encouraging base from which we can share the relationship that is most important to us from now to eternity. After all, we talk with others regularly about our family members and friends so why not our relationship with God?

Let's be ready to give a clear story of how we came to know God

There are many reasons why talking about Jesus can be hard in our culture and, as mission development officer, I am committed to breaking down some of the fears and misconceptions around this.

I am willing to work alongside your church by invitation to help give you the tools to increase your confidence in sharing your story and the story of God in your contexts.

In the meantime, it seems to me that the One who we follow was always talking about God and pretty bold in sharing a claim or two about himself!

Why not read afresh from the gospels to learn how Jesus put words and action together to proclaim the 'good news' about God?

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, states: "Evangelism is joining in the work of God to bring redemption to this world. The only way anyone knows of God's love is because someone tells them and shows them. There is no greater privilege in life than to see God at work in changing lives."

I would love to help you to share your story of how God has changed your life and what he has done for all of humankind. I believe there are few greater needs for us at present than learning how to marry our loving actions to life-giving words about Jesus Christ.

As I await your church's invitation to explore further, let's get started by praying for five people we know to come to know Jesus Christ.

Let's make sure we are ready to give a clear story of how we came to know God and look to share opportunities about how he's currently at work revealing something of his gracious and life-giving character.