

Leeds Universities' Chaplaincy

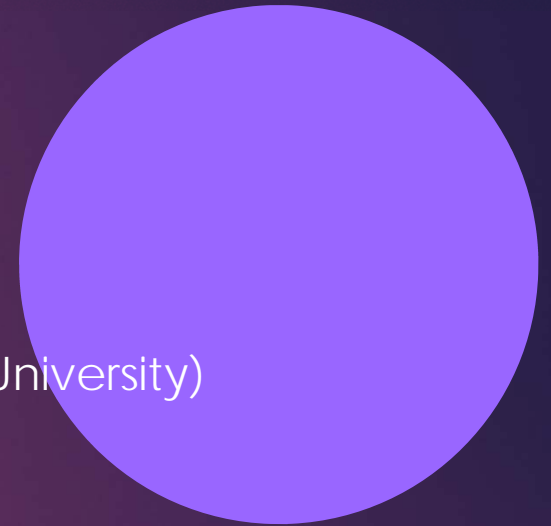


ROBIN FISHWICK

CO-ORDINATING CHAPLAIN QUAKER REP
ON CHURCHES HIGHER EDUCATION LIAISON
GROUP (CHELG)

Who we serve

- ▶ University of Leeds
- ▶ Leeds Beckett University
- ▶ University of Law (Leeds)
- ▶ Leeds Arts University
- ▶ (Our Roman Catholic Chaplain also covers Leeds Trinity University)
- ▶ Students and staff (not just academic)
- ▶ Approximately 100,000



Who we are



- ▶ Our Team is an ecumenical partnership of chaplains from the following churches:
 - ▶ Anglican
 - ▶ Baptist
 - ▶ Free Evangelical
 - ▶ Leeds Chinese Christian Church (evangelical)
 - ▶ Lutheran (currently vacant)
 - ▶ Methodist
 - ▶ Quaker
 - ▶ United Reformed Church
- ▶ Our work is overseen by an independent trust which has Service Level Agreements with the universities we serve.
- ▶ Chaplains are voluntary or funded by their churches.
- ▶ No-one is employed by any of our universities but the Trust employs 5 staff on a part time basis

Role of Co-ordinating Chaplain



- ▶ Co-ordinating and overseeing the work of the team
- ▶ Chairing team meetings (usually fortnightly)
- ▶ Reporting to the Trust
- ▶ Meeting with
 - ▶ Chaplaincy Service Managers
 - ▶ Lead Chaplains (each university has a lead chaplain from our team)
 - ▶ Student Outreach Workers
 - ▶ Unity partners
 - ▶ Other partners in the university (e.g. heads of student well being, accommodation providers, students unions, counselling services etc.)

Team Unity

- ▶ Team Unity was set up by members of our team and the Muslim Chaplain, Farhat Yaqoob, in response to the divisiveness felt at the time of the EU referendum and death of Jo Cox.
- ▶ Farhat is the only chaplain employed directly by the University of Leeds (technically she is classed as a "Muslim Student Adviser") and the only non-Christian university chaplain based at Leeds (Other faiths have "faith contacts" or national chaplaincies such as "Mychaplaincy" which supports Jewish staff and students.
- ▶ Team Unity organises events to foster a sense of unity within the whole university community.
- ▶ Many chaplaincy activities are run via Unity

The Unity Pledge



I make this pledge in the knowledge that my University has a global role and my actions impact on the world.

I pledge to work alongside others in creating a community; a community of students, staff, friends and family.- a community

- that recognises the worth and dignity of all human beings
- that cherishes the Earth and promotes justice and unity
- that is an accepting, inclusive and safe environment for all
- that appreciates difference, whilst fostering friendship and togetherness.

I accept my own role as part of this community to support, nurture and protect it. I hope, through playing my part as best I can, to make my University and my world a better place. Therefore, I will actively take steps within my own life to put unity into practice.

Quaker Chaplaincy



- ▶ Provide a Quaker voice within the team.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for Quaker worship (note: We advertise this as “Breathe” not “Quaker Meeting for Worship” in order to make the welcome to non-Quakers explicit. Breathe is usually attended by non-Quakers and has frequently been attended by non-Quakers).
- ▶ Provide support to Quaker students and staff.

Generic Chaplaincy

Most of my interactions as a Chaplain will not be with Quakers. We are there for staff and students of all faiths and world views. Here are some features of "Generic" chaplaincy

1. Distinctive support. The support chaplains offer is distinctive in these ways:
 - ▶ Ease of access. Someone can usually be put through to a chaplain straight away. We also operate an out of hours service.
 - ▶ Length of engagement. We do not have to restrict engagement to "four sessions" or similar. We can continue engaging with students even after they graduate.
 - ▶ Depth and breadth of conversation.

Generic Chaplaincy (2)



2. Overlapping interests. These are the services our universities expect us to provide:
 - ▶ Pastoral support (as above)
 - ▶ Enabling and leading worship
 - ▶ Faith based expertise
 - ▶ Spiritual Accompaniment
 - ▶ Promoting interfaith engagement
 - ▶ Promoting religious and ethical literacy
 - ▶ Promoting shared values (e.g. Unity pledge)

Some Final thoughts:

- ▶ Slotting in or standing out?

Our universities will have an idea of where we as a chaplaincy fit into their framework(s) but as Chaplains we have to be aware of our distinctive voice and perspective. Every chaplain serves within a specific context (Prison, hospital, university etc.). We often engage with our "souls" in a time-limited contexts (The time you are sick, the time you are at University, the time you are in the airport etc.). However, we offer a perspective which is far less limited (I once described one of our roles as being "ambassadors of eternity")

- ▶ Responding to the big

We are often at our most visible when responding to - or co-ordinating a response to a major event. This could be in responding to a student death or organising a vigil in response to a national or international event.

- ▶ Accompaniment and resonance

Even if a chaplain is an evangelical Christian their role as a chaplain is to accompany our souls on their own journey, not to take them on our own. In such encounters resonances may occur where we each learn something more about God

Good Quakers make good chaplains!