

CHRISTIAN CONNECTIONS IN SCHOOLS (CCiS) AND WAYNE DIXON

ISSUE 2. SPRING 2014



Greetings from Wayne

I love being in our schools so thank you for your part in making this happen. It's just such fun - unpredictable, humorous and a challenge all rolled into one. Assemblies in various schools are a good example. After one held recently a 16 year old lad was very adamant that there is no God. Well what could I say? He was very much against what I'd shared but I thanked him for his honesty and for the opportunity to listen to him and discuss his views further. Lesson time in different schools allow me to go a little deeper and build on assemblies, so that some big questions were addressed with a GCSE group as we looked at various issues like euthanasia.

Here's a flavour of other encounters: in a question and answer session a fourteen year old lad asked "Is it not technically illegal for you to come to an officially mixed-faith school and treat your religion as a faith, when it isn't to some people? People can find this offensive." What a humdinger that was!

Added to all this is the importance and value of **'Hanging Around Ministry'** or HAM which for me is such a key component of schools ministry on various levels. The opportunities afforded by this work allow me to see the pain and anxiety of many people in schools as I chat with them on a variety of occasions. The song that comes to mind is 'there is a lot of pain...and a lot more healing...'. I believe that the randomness of 'Hanging Around Ministry' has immense value as you just don't know what each visit will bring. A particularly constant need is for

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wisdom and sensitivity on such occasions and I value your prayers in this regard. Thank you.

It's been a very interesting and mixed few months. The launch of Christian Connections in Schools in October allowed us to give thanks to God for 25 years of local schools ministry, and to share just some of the many and varied ways we can take part in school life. The Jonah sketch that we use in many schools gave a flavour of the fun to be had, but a key part of the service for me was hearing different people talk about school initiatives with which they were involved, so that people could both pray for them and if appropriate join in. The key components to schools ministry are relationships, flexibility and partnerships, and the key people are the Christians in our schools every day, so it was lovely to hear Rev. Tim

Hastie-Smith, the National Director of Scripture Union, both speak to all present and to pray for everyone in schools that our God might continue to help us to shine Jesus' light in both word and deed. For me personally the words of Tim Hughes' song 'God of Justice' encapsulate the difference we can make both locally and elsewhere: "We must go, live to feed the hungry, stand beside the broken...keep us from just singing, move us into action....FILL US UP AND SEND US OUT". Let us thank God and with his help seek to share the good news of Jesus wherever He has placed us.

Thanks to Dedworth Green Baptist Church for hosting this occasion, and for all who made it happen.

Christmas Unwrapped

There is a particularly fantastic joy in seeing children in church having a great time as we share with them the Christmas story when we present Christmas Unwrapped. Since 1994 we have seen this initiative grow from one location to around forty-five, so many thanks to Jem Sewell, then pastor at Slough Baptist Church, for the original idea. Jem is now Pastor at Westbourne Park Baptist Church in Paddington and is involving new devotees to make these presentations happen there... brilliant! Amongst other enthusiasts, we find Margaret, formerly of Maidenhead but now involved with this work in Coventry; and Kathryn who took it from Datchet to Glasgow.

Staff:

“As always, an informative and fun presentation. Well organised & brilliantly presented. Thank you for starting Christmas for us.”

“It was great to see all the children interested and involved in your presentation. You’ve ‘connected’ – which is fundamental before telling your Christmas story. It was fun (for all of us) – and helps us as teachers to build-on your good work. God bless.”

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learning about Jesus.
It was fun*

If you think other churches might consider this work for Easter or next Christmas, do get in touch.

At SBC we saw various visitors including Mandy from the Evangelical Alliance. Here is a link to the E.A.’s website, which includes details of the visit, plus a video piece from Scripture Union promoting the new Christmas Bible Comic which each pupil received with great enthusiasm!

www.eauk.org/church/stories/christmas-unwrapped-brings-jesus-into-schools.cfm

vimeo.com/80454043

We had some obstacles in the way but at the end I looked back and thought WOW! Here’s some feedback from pupils, staff and visitors which has been really encouraging - we don’t take this for granted!

Pupils:

“It was a great experience learning about Jesus. It was fun....” “The ideas were fantastic! I hope to come back for Easter. Thank you.”

“The visit was a great opportunity to learn about the first Christmas, thank you.”



Prayer Focus

The first Prayer Focus event for local schools was really encouraging as we came together to hear news of and pray for our schools. Our next session will be on Monday, 3 March 8.00-9.00pm at Slough Baptist Church, Windsor Road, Slough, SL1 2EJ. The summer and autumn events in 2014 are scheduled for Monday 19 May (Windsor) and Monday 17 November (Maidenhead). Details and reminders to follow nearer the time, or can be found on the blog page of www.ccischools.org.uk.

Education Sunday is on **16 February**
www.educationsunday.org

These are important initiatives, so let’s continue to remember our schools both collectively and as individuals.



News from CCiS - What's On?

Holidays

The Potential of the Residential

Various Christian charities are running numerous holidays this year so please do help spread the word to people in your church. See www.scriptureunion.org.uk/holidays to request brochures.

Naomi (aged 17) attended Helter Skelter last year and wrote a brilliant piece which included that statement that "I genuinely can't contain my excitement/amazement/happiness at how powerful this last week has been..."

Credit must go to Ali & Claire Scott, Scripture Union Volunteer Holiday leaders, who along with their team made this happen for Naomi. Could you help provide such opportunities for other young people?

Are you interested, available and willing to serve on a team so that such life changing weeks can continue? The criteria are a commitment to Christ and a willingness to serve on a holiday or mission team. We are hoping to run a short local residential as a taster and stand-alone, in the hope that it will provide an introduction to a longer event held elsewhere in the country in the following year. Look out for more details on this in due course, but in the meantime please do get in touch if God is calling you to help with this work.



Sticky Faith

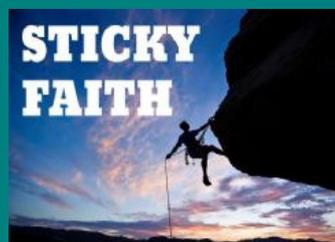
Held in partnership with Urban Saints, The Centre for Youth Ministry and Scripture Union

This was very well received at the local event back in October. On 24 February there are two further sessions, either in Oxford during the afternoon or Aylesbury in the evening. This initiative is highly recommended but if you can't make these venues please let Wayne know and we will try to arrange another local session later in the year. For more information ring the number below or see:

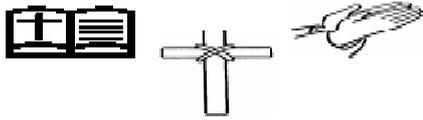
www.scriptureunion.org.uk/YourCommunity/RegionalTeams/SouthEastTeam/StickyFaith/1803117.id

Inter Schools Soccer Sevens

These will be held at Langley Grammar School on Tuesday 4th and 11th February. We have eight schools represented at the girls' event and seven at the boys. Each player will be given a copy of the new World Cup booklet full of facts and figures about the forthcoming World Cup in Brazil, plus testimonies of lives changed through knowing Jesus. Wayne was first involved with this initiative in 2006 and it provides a further opportunity to connect with schools through football.



Pause to pray for...



- For the witness of Christians in our schools everyday.
- For those pupils and staff facing a variety of difficult and trying times.
- For those facing all sorts of exams in the coming weeks and others awaiting news of which school they will be going to in September.
- For the possibility of a local residential for those aged 9-11 who are not yet connected with church
- For the possibility of Christianity Awareness Week with LZ7, to be held in Maidenhead in October.
- For School Christian Groups, both those who lead and those who attend. See www.schoolslive.org for resources.
- For 'Easter Cracked' presentations taking place throughout March. In this area, 6 churches are involved with around 30 schools and 2000 pupils attending. I am personally involved from 17-21 March.
- For real wisdom and sensitivity during 'Hanging Around Ministry' with the variety of situations that come my way. Thank you very much.

And finally...

- Give thanks for all the 'Christmas Unwrapped' presentations in churches for schools all over the country – well over 15,000 pupils saw them.

Financial Update

Three quarters of the way through our first financial year we are hugely encouraged by the level of support already committed by individuals and churches alike. We have over 40 individuals who provide regular support via monthly standing orders and several churches who do likewise but we need more! Scripture Union has been very generous with their support but, as agreed, this will reduce year on year and we need to fill the gap thus created in our finances. Do you think you could help? If so please contact our treasurer, Jon King, via our website.



If you have had this newsletter through the post or picked it up in a church and would prefer to receive it by e-mail then please let us know (andy@ccischools.org.uk) and we will add you to our electronic mailing list.

Do check out our website especially the blog which has up to date news including 'Opportunities in Schools Ministry' which was shared at the recent launch.

Thank you for your continuing prayers as we seek to make Jesus known in our schools.

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