

Please pray for:

Assemblies at:

St. Mary's C of E Academy, Stotfold - 19th March
Grange Academy - 3rd April
St. Francis College Prep. - 11th March and 1st April
Etonbury Academy - 2nd to 5th April
Norton St. Nicholas C of E Primary School - 3rd April

Other initiatives:

the Easter Journey at St. Paul's, 25th -28th March
the creation of the SPACE Mat resource to be launched in the Summer Term
the new Pastoral Care role at St. Francis College for Staff
the ongoing Chaplaincy Role at Etonbury Academy

The CIS Annual Celebration - Tuesday 15th October at Grange Baptist Church - put it in your diary!

CIS Quiz Night - Friday 1st November at LGCC - put it in your diary!



Thank you to all who came to the CIS quiz last November

We raised over £700.

Roger Aldridge

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CIS Newsletter

(Spring 2019)

in partnership with



Christian
Initiative to
Schools




Scripture
Union

Registered charity no 1104698.

An assembly on "love" at St Francis Preparatory School

A Message from Kevin How, CIS Trustee

Over 2018 the depth of CIS's ministry under the guidance of Christopher has increased. For example, the Easter story at Etonbury and the Christmas journey at St Paul's, Letchworth are now regular features. He has also been at the 'coalface' regarding schools' inspections – particularly where they have not gone so well, leading to staff and pupils needing much encouragement.

Also over the past year Christopher has been greatly and profitably used regarding mental health education – something which was 'swept under the carpet' when I was at school in the '60's and '70's.

Recently Christopher was accepted as staff chaplain at St Francis College which beautifully complements his similar role at Etonbury.

Young people today now face increasing pressure from mass and social media, shouting its version of success, relationships and popularity loudly to our young people. Yet they can sense that this is not the full story. There must be more to life than this!

Going forward in 2019 I believe what we say as Christians to these young people needs to be honest, relevant and helpful to enable them to have healthy relationships, realistic expectations and fulfilled lives. Jesus said: "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."

Christopher Baker's Report

As I write we've reached the halfway point of the Spring Term. Signs of Spring are very much in evidence and around Letchworth itself there are splashes of colour as crocuses rise up from the ground. Spirits are lifted as a consequence as days are getting lighter. The darkness of the Winter months is dispersing as Spring and Summer come ever closer.

During the first part of 2019 the work in schools is continuing at a steady pace. The lunchtime clubs are running with good numbers attending each week. I continue to take assemblies in a number of schools which gives me a great opportunity to share the message of the Gospel to many children and young people. This past week I've been able to talk about the difference between love as the world knows it and God's love, and how that love is clearly revealed to us in Jesus who defeated sin and death on the cross. The impact of that particular assembly at St. Francis College was reflected in an email received from a member of staff who said, "Thank you for a lovely start to the day today. Your assembly was super as always!"

In 2018 I took 80 assemblies across 6 schools in Letchworth and District in which I spoke to approximately 2,600 children and young people. The seeds sown in those assemblies will be watered by God. In Isaiah 55:10-11 we read, 'As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.'

God's word is living and active. It holds within it the power to transform lives, something of which I was reminded of a few weeks ago at Scripture Union's National Conference. The title of the conference was "Unleashing the Bible" and challenged those of us involved in children's and youth ministry as to how Bible centred we are. How much time do we spend in God's Word on a daily basis, how often do we take children directly into the Bible, to look at what's written and help them to grapple with the truths held within its pages?

For me the time away was affirming and encouraging but also, and possibly more importantly, a boot up the backside! In some ways I had become complacent, relying on old resources and material, looking at issues that children and young people face in life rather than focusing in on Bible passages and stories that reveal God's truth for our lives. My time spent in reading and studying God's word on a daily basis is also not as effective or as regular as it should be, something I've always had a struggle with since becoming a Christian at the age of twelve - that's forty four years ago. Yet I know that the more Bible centred I become, the more I can share of a living and personal relationship with God to those I minister to and work with.

This morning I read these words from the UCB Word for Today, quoted from author Reimar Schultze: 'No man can become much like God, accomplish much for God, be intimate with God, be used much of God, unless he has learned to be much alone with God...and what a classroom you'll find yourself in. You won't become a carbon copy of other Christians, because there'll be no one in the class but you and God...Here time is designed to meet your particular needs, to equip you in your unique calling...to fine-tune you...to draw the foolishness out of you...and mould you into His likeness. He may start with a chisel, but eventually He will only need sandpaper...Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice and...follow Me" (John 10:27 NKJV). He'll not only teach you to hear His voice...He'll show you what's hindering you from hearing it. He'll teach you as quickly as you surrender to Him, yet slowly enough so you don't miss a lesson. He'll teach you what it means to be yoked together with Him and to walk at His pace and in His time.'

My prayer is that all of us will become so Bible centred that God's word would flow out of us at all times and in all situations; that we would become people of The Bible, the best-selling book of all time and that as a result we would see lives of all ages changed and transformed as we make spending time reading and studying God's Word a priority.

Again, can I thank you for your continued support to all that CIS does in the schools in Letchworth and District. Without that support, particularly your prayers, we would not be seeing all that God is doing in the lives of children and young people.

May you know the blessing of God in all you do.

Christopher Baker