

CIS Newsletter

(Autumn 2021)



Pray for:

Restarting lunchtime clubs at Etonbury Academy, Fearnhill, Highfield and Knights Templar.
Christopher's preparation for assemblies etc.

Booked Assemblies

Etonbury Academy - 11-15th October, 13-17th December
Norton St. Nicholas - 11th Oct, 16th Nov, 14th December
St. Francis College Prep. - 11th Oct, 15th Nov, 14th December
Grange Academy - 20th Oct, 24th Nov, 15th December
Pix Brook Academy - 14-15th Nov, 11-12 Nov, 2nd-3rd December
St. Mary's C of E Academy, Stotfold - 19th Oct, 16th Nov, 14th Dec
Roecroft Lower School - 2nd December

Christmas Journey

St. Paul's Church, LGC - 6th - 10th December

Information and Events:

The very enjoyable September Concert raised £540.30 in donations, so thank you to all who contributed!

CIS Annual Celebration - 19th October at Grange Baptist Church at 7.30 pm.

CIS Quiz - 26th November at LGCC at 7pm. Teams of six.
Adults £10, Students £7. (We can now take contactless payments). Baked potatoes, tea, coffee, squash provided.

Data Protection Statement

Christian Initiative to Schools (CIS) will use the information you provide to send you relevant news of our work, and sometimes about our needs. We will treat your information with respect. For more information about our privacy practices please contact the Data Protection Trustee at dpt@cisletchworth.org

Safeguarding

You can see our safeguarding policy on our website at <http://www.cisletchworth.org/contact-us/4585639654>

The tranquil, idyllic landscape shown in the photo above was captured by Christopher on his summer holiday. It reminds me of some verses from Psalm 65: 'You.. formed the mountains by Your power.'(v6.) 'You care for the land and water it; You enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water.'(v9)

Thankfully, many of us have been able to enjoy times of refreshment over the summer and opportunities to appreciate the beauty of God's world.

Now that the new academic year has begun, let's pray that staff, pupils and parents will have fresh enthusiasm and strength for the challenges ahead, and especially for Christopher as he has more in-person opportunities in the schools.

Psalm 65 is also often read at Harvest time. 'The valleys are mantled with corn; they shout for joy and sing.'(v13) As we praise God for His goodness and seek to bless others materially, Jesus reminds his disciples that 'the fields are ripe for harvest.' (John 4:35) Let's pray that there will be a rich harvest of children and young people (and staff!) in our schools hearing the good news of Jesus and responding to it this term.

Penny Bainbridge, Trustee.

Christopher Baker's Report

After a long period of being unable to be present in school, I've just taken my first "in person" assemblies in schools for over a year. It is so good to be back in front of children and staff and reconnecting with them! It means for me that, instead of staring at a camera, I'm once more able to see their reactions to what is being said and shown, involving them, asking questions and generally getting a response from them.

The welcome back from the schools I have been into has been so positive. It almost feels like being reunited with family after a long absence. Staff have been incredibly warm in their welcome to me, and children, so I've been told, have been excited to have me back in to take assemblies.

Although it's good to be back to some kind of normal it has felt a bit like starting again, starting afresh. One of the activities that CIS was unable to be involved in was the lunchtime clubs. For nearly 18 months we've not been able to run them, and as a consequence we have lost touch with many children and young people. As I write we're in the process of re-engaging with schools to enable these valuable meetings to be re-established. In some cases, staff that we have worked with in running them have moved on; that means establishing new relationships and connections in individual schools. Alongside that, some schools are now concerned that groups are not exclusive but inclusive. As a consequence using the title Christian Union or CU for short is a problem for some schools. However, when thinking about the make-up of the groups very few who attend are Christians or go to church. In most cases 80% of attendees had no link with a local church or had a faith. Therefore we'll be reverting back to The Hub name for the majority of our groups.

One thing that we've known as a ministry over this past 18 months or so is that God is faithful. Although there have been new challenges to face, new skills to learn and develop, new ways of communicating the message of God's love and all that Jesus has done for us through His death on the cross, the one constant that has never changed is that God is still God and He doesn't change. This has been shown through the feedback that we've received from the recorded assemblies that have been sent out for schools to use. God is using them to impact the lives of both staff and pupils.

I may not have been physically present in the schools of Letchworth and District, but Father God has. Here are just a few of the responses we've received:

"Your use of appropriate clips in incredibly inventive ways and your openness and honesty make a HUGE difference to the way your messages are received - by adults as well as pupils." (*Teacher, Etonbury Academy*)

"Thank you so much for your video assembly; it went down brilliantly across the whole school. In my class you could have heard a pin drop whilst they were watching." (*Teacher, Grange Academy*)

"Thanks for the video. It works and is fantastic. I know the children are going to enjoy seeing you and listening to your message." (*Teacher, Norton St. Nicholas C of E (VA) Primary School*)

"Thank you for the assembly, the whole school watched it in their form rooms last week. I thought it was really good and personable which is key to a topic they have heard many times before." (*Teacher, Fearnhill School*)

Thank you for your support and prayers over the past 17 years of CIS's Ministry, but particularly during the last 18 months. Your prayers are incredibly important to the work to which God has called us. Please do continue to pray for CIS, especially now as we begin to transition being back within the school environment. Although we have been unable to be present within schools due to Covid-19, God's presence has never been absent. He has been walking along the corridors, been in the classrooms, standing with pupils and staff as He always has.

Our prayer is that God will continue to use the ministry of CIS to draw people to Himself. that in all that we are involved with in assemblies, lessons, lunchtime clubs and pastoral care that the message of the Good News of Jesus may be relevantly and effectively communicated to all.

Thank you again for your continued support and interest in the work of CIS.

Christopher Baker, Schools Worker