

Prayer Items

Thank God that Christopher has been able to return to work after his bout of ill-health. Pray for continued healing and stamina with all aspects of ministry to the end of the term.

Pray that the true meaning of Christmas will be communicated effectively over the coming weeks.

Diary Dates

CIS Quiz - Friday 24th November, The Icknield Centre (Home of LGCC)

Assemblies

Etonbury Academy 27th-30th November and 1st December

Norton St. Nicholas 28th November and 12th December

St. Francis College Prep. 11th December

Pix Brook Academy 12th-15th December

Grange Academy 13th December

St. Mary's C of E Academy 19th December

Other Activities

Christmas Journey at St. Paul's 4th-8th December

Speaking at King's Baptist Church, Stotfold. 19th November

Speaking at New Life Church. 26th November

Speaking at St. Thomas Church 17th December

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CIS Newsletter



Christian
Initiative to
Schools



Autumn
2023

in partnership with



Scripture Union

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The perils of preaching!

How good it is to know that God is working out His purpose in the world. As we look at all the problems in the world there is so much that might discourage us. But God is sovereign and one day Jesus will return. This gives great confidence to Christopher and to each one of us as we seek to live for Christ in the world. It is fair to say that we are on the winning side.

Thank you for your prayer and financial support of CIS. Christopher does a wonderful job of being an ambassador for Christ in the local schools. His work is greatly appreciated. Please pray for ongoing opportunities.

We live in a society which has forgotten about God and His Word but it is great to know that God has not forgotten about us. Elijah became depressed and discouraged following his triumph on Mount Carmel complaining to God that he was the only faithful believer left. God responded that He had reserved seven thousand in Israel who were faithful to Him. In the same way Christopher can know that as he goes into schools there are those among the students and staff whom God is calling into relationship with Himself.

Only Eternity will reveal how God has used Christopher over so many years. Please pray that Christopher and all of us will be encouraged as we see God at work in the coming days.

Rev. Chris Jenkins - Chair of Trustees

Christopher Baker's Report

We're halfway through the Autumn Term and to be honest, it hasn't been an easy one. Ill-health prevented me from getting back into an established routine which was discouraging. Assemblies, lunchtime clubs and speaking engagements had to be cancelled, which hasn't happened often in my fifteen years with CIS, but the feeling of letting schools and churches down is one that I struggle with. Yes I know that there is nothing I can do if I'm unwell and signed off by my GP, but even then...

So my first assemblies of term took place much later than expected, as did attending the lunchtime clubs. The good news is that staff and pupils were pleased to see me back and the assemblies were well received by those who attended.

From this point on the focus is of course December 25th. For those of us who are Followers of Jesus a day of celebration when the status quo of life was changed. At one point in history the birth of a baby would change the course of people on this planet, past, present and future. God coming to earth to live with us, living as one of us in the person of Jesus, God's Son.

For those who don't know Jesus, well the focus is very different. A celebration which is more about family, giving and receiving gifts, good food, decorations and for parents ensuring that children and young people have the best time ever. And the Christmas adverts on our TV screens seem to emphasise that fact.

In the last Prayer Pointers I mentioned a conversation with staff at one particular school who were disappointed that I wouldn't be taking an assembly on the theme of Christmas this term. Even though they may not be Followers of Jesus themselves, they felt that it was important that the religion our nation is based on and follows should be taught whenever possible. Therefore, the real meaning of Christmas needs to be presented and not just the be kind to one another, share with one another, think of those less fortunate than ourselves. Those ideals are all good, but that's not the real message of the Nativity.

In a few weeks time I'll again be involved with the Christmas Journey at St. Paul's Church in Letchworth. An opportunity for children from

schools in the church's parish to come and discover the true story of Christmas and the meaning and purpose behind it. For a week I will find myself in a cave with the sheep, rudely woken up by the children who enter. No wonder I'm grumpy! But as they watch and listen the children get to hear how the message of the angels impacted the shepherds and how they had to leave their sheep behind and go to see what had happened in Bethlehem.

The children continue their journey by visiting Mary, Joseph and a Magi and then finally arrive at the stable where all the characters are gathered. I won't give the game away about what happens next, but as they watch the story unfold the realisation of who Jesus is becomes real to them, and to the staff that have come along too. Eyes are truly opened to who it was who came into the world, and why Christians celebrate.

It's a joy to be involved in such events as well as taking assemblies leading up to the end of this term. To be able to communicate why this time of year is important to children and young people in our schools is a privilege that we cannot take for granted. Doors are open to us for all kinds of involvement and we can truly thank God for that.

In Isaiah 9:2, 6 and 7 there are familiar words of prophecy concerning the coming of Jesus and words that will be used in Carol Services in the coming weeks. Isaiah writes,

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned...For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

My prayer is that children and young people will discover Jesus, the Light of the world, over this Christmas period. That they would discover for themselves that the story of Jesus doesn't begin and end with the baby in the manger, but goes on to the cross and an empty tomb.

I hope that you have a peaceful and Christ centred Christmas and thank you again for your continued prayers and practical support of CIS.