

Newsletter

Summer 2016



On a wet and windy day, as I write, it's hard to believe it's the Summer term, and nearly the holidays. I hope you have had a good term and prayers for your school have been answered.

This May many groups took up the idea of PFS Fortnight theme of Freedom and prayed for their schools, including being released from issues like fear, exams, anxiety, family issues, learning difficulties, loneliness, health issues, etc.

A couple of reports from prayer groups are included in this newsletter. I have been thrilled to hear how many groups have been blessing their schools with cakes, chocolates, flowers and even stationery. I know this will have encouraged the staff.

I read in my Bible notes (Living Light): When life seems too demanding and we are tempted to give up because we are exhausted and worn out, that's the time to joyfully renew our hope and confidence in the Lord and drink afresh from the Holy Spirit's resources. Paul wrote "*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer*". Romans 12 v 11,12 (NIV)

This year we'd like to encourage all groups to pray for their schools at the start of the new school year. There are two resources to choose from:

'Home, Hands, Heart' is the theme for "Back to School with God" 2016. It explores the story of Jesus visiting Mary and Martha and how we can invite Him to be part of our whole life - at home, school, work and in our families. You can find the full resource pack free on registration at www.suscotland.org.uk/bsg

Education Sunday is on 11th September. The theme is "All are welcome". Further information: www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234838/Home/Resources/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday.aspx

We are delighted that Open the Book (dramatised storytelling for primary schools) has joined our Steering group team and become one of our partners. We look forward to working with them over the months and years ahead. More details in the Autumn Newsletter.

May you enjoy a relaxing Summer and feel refreshed for all God has in store in the Autumn!

Jane Newey PFS England Coordinator





The Spelthorne Schools' Prayer Group had a busy PFS fortnight taking a plant and card to all of the nurseries, playgroups, schools and school-related organisations they pray for. They had some lovely comments:

Your encouragement card arrived this morning and we are so grateful. There is something special about knowing that you are underpinning our work with such a blanket of prayer. It really does make a difference. Thank you!

Hi all our friends in the Prayer Group. I just wanted to say thank you so much for these words of encouragement and for praying for us in such a wonderful way this morning. I do hope you have a prayer time full of deep and rich blessings. It is such a support and encouragement for us to know you surround our work with your prayers.

At our church, we have recently had a sermon series on 'encouragement'. I realise that I have been very blessed with the encouragement from your group. Thank you so much for your faithful prayers and care over the years.



They also decided to have a prayer event in one of the group's homes and transformed the garden into a 'Prayer Garden' with prayer stations for each of the playgroups and schools they pray for featuring a photo of the school and a visual aid to help them take up the theme 'Freedom'.

The prayer stations included:

- ◆ Special Needs School – we used bubbles as we thought of the children being released from their restrictions.
- ◆ Senior Schools – we used chains and a picture of a bird in flight which helped us pray for children being released from those things shackling them...."my chains fell off, my heart was free....!"
- ◆ Playgroups & Nurseries – pictures of each playgroup we pray for attached to sticks in a 'funny face' flower pot.
- ◆ Infant & Junior Schools – pictures of each school pegged on washing line so blowing in the breeze, a sponge to depict how children soak everything up, and copies of the two Scripture Union books we will be donating to our schools again this year.
- ◆ Topics – We each wrote a word on a label referring to 'release from...' e.g., fear, exams, anxiety, family issues, learning difficulties, loneliness, health issues, and attached them to balloons which we then released.

Further information on this London based group can be found on their website:
www.schoolsprayergroup.org



Anne Carter from the Diocese of West Yorks and Dales explains how a Pray for School Group started in Leeds.

"It was back in March that I first met with Jane in Harrogate. She was so enthusiastic and thorough in explaining how 'Pray for Schools' works and how much she could support us. I remember wondering why we hadn't linked in with this before!

So on March 21st we held our first ecumenical Pray for Schools gathering in North Leeds. We enjoyed an evening of prayer, with some Prayer space style, interactive prayer activities. We had time to network and to share requests & needs for prayer. We are about to have our second Leeds get-together on 18th July in a different part of the city. We were able to ask friends who partner with us to host so that the whole idea and opportunity spreads further. This time we will focus on the needs of schools and all involved as the holidays approach. We hope other parts of the city take up the suggestion to host their own and we can help by offering to lead the first one for them.

Our exciting news is that the same little group of us (only 5 ecumenical partners!) are hosting a day event. On 17th September we have "Resourcing Churches to engage with Primary Schools"... a day to discover how to be more effective in this ministry. We have invited lots of organisations to do workshops and we are asking local friends to host and share their stories. Details are on the diocesan website (who are assisting with bookings):

<http://www.westyorkshiredales.anglican.org/content/resourcing-churches-engage-primary-schools>

We hope in all that we are doing to encourage others to support our schools with encouragement, involvement & spiritual development and worship for all who are involved locally."

Need some inspirations in your prayers?
Order a copy of the new Prayer magazine from the World Prayer Centre.
Celia Bowring has written some prayers on Schools for the September issue.

<https://petersbrook.myshopify.com/collections/prayermagazine>



Encouraged to start a prayer group for your local area? Do email us and we will give you a helping hand.

england@prayforschools.org

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN...



Back to School **with God** 2016



You are invited to join us at an all-age service to pray for and support our children, young people and school staff at the start of this new school year.

Home



Hands



Heart



Back to School **with God** 2016



Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if any hear my voice and open the door, I will come into their house and eat with them, and they will eat with me. Revelation 3:20



Scripture Union Scotland
Scottish Charity SC011222: www.suscotland.org.uk/pray

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