

CHRISTIAN CONNECTIONS IN SCHOOLS

(CCiS)

ISSUE 30. SPRING 2024



“Making Jesus known to children, young people and staff in the schools of Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead”

News from Wayne Dixon



Christmas Unwrapped

Next year marks the 30th anniversary of the first Easter Cracked presentation, which was started by the late Rev.

Jem Sewell when he was ministering at Slough Baptist Church. Locally, ten churches are now involved, serving over 45 schools and thousands of children, and nationally many areas from Gravesend to Glasgow and Altrincham to Woodley are blessed by this ministry. Along with Christmas Unwrapped which followed in November 1995, these two ministries have had a significant impact, so might a church you know be interested in presenting them for a local school? There may well be a church near you which already holds these presentations and would welcome the opportunity to share their expertise this coming Easter, and to show you the variety of ways they work in their own context.

Alternatively, check out this link for more information and insights from Slough Baptist Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvEBYlycwRA>

I have been so encouraged by how well Christmas Unwrapped has been received when it's taken place in school halls, as because of cost and staffing issues it's often tricky to attend a local church. To be in a school hall and share with hundreds of pupils over a fortnight has been very moving. At the beginning of each session, pupils are asked to tell each other their favourite part of Christmas, before giving their feedback to the rest of the group. Usually the answers are 'presents', 'parties' and 'spending time with family', although on one memorable occasion a lad called Thomas answered 'JESUS'. I was



so encouraged, and it's why I wear my *Jesus, the reason for the season* Christmas jumper!

The feedback from pupils and staff has been very positive.

Flexibility of approach pays dividends, a lesson I'm continuing to learn.

(Other options for Christmas presentations include The Christmas Story for children aged 6/7 (School year 2), which has been produced by Insight, a Christian schools work trust in Kingston and Richmond.)

Training Weekends

Held in Birmingham, the National Youth Ministry weekend is a brilliant event which provides a chance to listen, learn, worship, discuss and connect about young people both in church and in schools.

Coming up in February and held in Eastbourne, 'Hand-in-Hand' is presenting Refresh, Children and Family Ministry Conference, with guest speakers including Lucy Moore, so should be another helpful weekend away. However, recognising that it is difficult for many to attend such occasions away from home, it's worthwhile looking out for local events for those working with children and young people. They definitely enhance ministry!

Vocation & Commitment

Recently I was at St. Bernard's Prep. School for a lesson on Vocation and Commitment. I just LOVE these sessions as they give me the opportunity to share something of my story and what Jesus means to me. I often find times to share when I am in schools, whether I'm taking part in formal lessons or simply hanging around informally, perhaps at Christmas concerts, school proms and productions, sports days and



News from Wayne Dixon

around town. On these occasions 1 Peter 3:15 comes to mind: Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. I thank God for such opportunities -something that we can all be involved with wherever God has placed us!

"Wayne Dixon is a friendly face around the school. Through engaging with students via table tennis, watching productions, attending proms and generally having chats, he manages to build a great relationship with the school and the people in it. This has to be the first step to engaging youth with Christianity and the church, and I've seen and heard many fabulous conversations between Wayne and question-filled students.

Most importantly, if the students felt uncomfortable they would not pay attention, so it's clear that Wayne has found a way to make evangelising engaging and accepted. I pray he continues the good work."

Current Year 13 pupil

"Wayne visits each of our Year 7 classes and engages them immediately. Many know



him from visits to their Primary school and know that they will be involved, challenged and entertained. He brings parables and miracles alive to the students in a memorable way." David Prendiville, Desborough College

It's Your Move! 2024

Last year over 50 schools and 3400 pupils received this brilliant book for free (published by Scripture Union). We hope that we will be able to repeat this ministry, as all these schools would like to experience it again. It's Your Move!



has a natural link with Christmas Unwrapped in the autumn term, and Easter Cracked this term, something I frequently see very clearly in senior school visits and chatting to Year 7 pupils in their new schools. Let's make it happen again if we can.

A celebration of Christianity and football

Held at Wembley Stadium, this was a truly memorable, significant and enjoyable event, which I was glad to attend. Interviews, testimony, challenging stories, humour and refreshments were all included, followed by a service pitch side under the floodlights at this world-famous stadium. Pastor Agu spoke on Luke 2:1-7, the Salvation Army provided the music and were joined by beautiful contributions from the London Adventist Choral. It finished just before 6.00pm with a chance for a cup of tea and cake before driving home. Sports Chaplaincy, Christians in Sport, the Church of England, Premier Radio and the Evangelical Alliance were among those involved in putting it together, and all under the umbrella of the Football Association at the home of English football in The Bobby Moore Suite. Psalm 133:1 came to mind: How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity. I don't know if there will be another event like this, but I do know that this was a very special afternoon. What a witness to our God.

The Jem Sewell Fund

In August 1983 I was able to attend a Scripture Union Holiday for the first time. I loved it. Those ten days were life-changing and led to me starting work as a local Schools Worker five years later. 35 years on, I thank God that these opportunities have continued, and the link below gives information about those available for 2024.

We hope that cost will not be a barrier for any child or young person who wants to attend one of these holidays. General financial help is available, but through the Jem Sewell Fund, which was set up in October 2022, we administer a limited amount of money that has been set aside specifically to fund children or young people from schools in Slough, Windsor or Maidenhead.

We are currently working on final details, which should be sorted by the end of January. In the meantime, if you know someone who might benefit from this funding, please advise parents or carers to apply directly through the Scripture Union Holidays link, referencing the

Jem Sewell Fund, and confirming that the child or young person attends a school in Slough, Windsor or Maidenhead.

<https://events.scriptureunion.org.uk/events.php>

News from the trust

Opportunities in Schools Ministry

On Monday 5th February 8.00-9.00pm, we will host a meeting via Zoom, which gives information about many opportunities for schools ministry throughout this year and beyond. These include:

Introduction to a Church - Primary School initiative:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvEBYlycwRA>

Christmas Unwrapped:

<https://youtu.be/U-lcp5dOTaM>

Easter Cracked:

<https://youtu.be/lv07rOYbl4M>

Examattack:

<http://www.examattack.org.uk/>

It's Your Move!:

https://youtu.be/OM_ndo-RmOg

The trustees are continuing to seek God's direction as we pray for an additional schools worker. We have spent time evaluating the needs of schools and are grateful for the input we received recently from those who currently work or volunteer in our schools,

bringing God's word and demonstrating His love to them. We hope that in due course we will be able to present specific details about this role, but in the meantime, we value your prayers and discernment.

Ways to donate

To maintain and develop the work in our schools we are looking for individuals and churches prayerfully to consider giving to CCiS. If you would like to support us financially there are several ways you can do it, all of which will bless us:

- **Visit** <https://www.cafonline.org/> - I'm an individual > Giving to charity > Connecting you to charities > I want to donate.
In the search box type: **Christian Connections in Schools**
- **Make** a bank transfer to *Christian Connections in Schools*.
Account number: **00032898**.
Sort code: **40 52 40**.
- **Send** a cheque (payable to *Christian Connections in Schools*) to:
The Treasurer, CCiS, Westfield, 3c College Avenue, Maidenhead SL6 6AR.
- **Leave** a bequest to CCiS in your Will. Your solicitor or will-writer should be able to help you, using our charity name *Christian Connections in Schools* and registered number 1150149.

Pause to pray for...

“Prayer is the most SIGNIFICANT contribution we can make to our schools”



- Christian staff, children, and young people in our schools every day.
- Wisdom as we discern what God is saying to us as we seek to call an additional CCiS Schools Worker
- Opportunities in Schools Ministry: Monday 5th February 8.00-9.00pm (on ZOOM)
- Easter Cracked Prayer Focus: Tuesday 5th March 8.00-9.00pm (on ZOOM)
- It's Your Move! 2024 presentations in over 50 schools for 3400 pupils
- Those in our schools and churches continuing to face bereavement, illness, redundancy and other issues
- The mental health and well-being of staff, children, and young people in our schools
- Issues related to anxiety: eating disorders, depression, self-harm, suicide, exam pressures, low self-esteem, bullying connected with social media and family breakdown.



**Christian
Connections
in Schools**

We very much appreciate your interest, prayers and support as we seek to make Jesus known to children, young people and staff in our local schools.

Please let us know if your contact details are incorrect. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know by replying 'unsubscribe' via email, or by getting in touch via the contact details below.

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CCiS in association with
Scripture Union



Scripture Union

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Work of CCiS - check out the video from the link below:

<http://ccischools.org.uk/about-ccis>