

Education Sunday 5th February 2012

LEARNING AND SERVING

If you are reading this, you are probably one of the 88% of the world's population lucky enough to have attended primary school. You have also been to secondary school (60%), and you may be one of the 27% who have studied beyond secondary school level. In our culture, access to education is often taken for granted and education is increasingly seen as a commodity to be bought and sold for individual gain. This was not Jesus' view of education. Jesus used parables and stories as an accessible way to help people see the world through God's eyes and challenge them to act for justice.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 9:16-17) he speaks of being entrusted with a commission — a commission to proclaim the gospel by making ourselves 'a slave to all', living alongside the poor and the weak, and serving others. As Christians we are called to work for a fairer world - to ensure that everyone has access to education, that our schools include those on the margins of society, and to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality that lead to millions of people around the world being denied their basic human rights. Last year's student protests and the debate around Higher Education funding highlight a fundamental question - what is education for? Our time in education is not simply about preparing us for the workplace; it is also about the development of the whole person and finding ways to use our newly acquired skills and knowledge in the service of others.

In Mark's Gospel we read the story of Jesus healing the woman with a fever. He 'took her by the hand and lifted her up'. How can we lift others up? Serving others can be as simple as making a cup of tea and really listening to someone's story, or volunteering in our local community, getting to know our neighbours and listening to those on the margins. We can also use our skills and talents in the service of education. For some people this might be as teachers, youth workers, classroom assistants, chaplains, careers advisors, counsellors and support workers, but all of us can do something to support young people and students in our communities and churches.

Through the service of others we can proclaim the gospel of justice, peace and love for all. Education is a means of becoming more effective partners with God, enabling us to share in God's work of redemption

PRAYERS FOR PEOPLE INVOLVED IN EDUCATION

Teachers in nurseries, schools and colleges

God of truth and grace, we pray for teachers and lecturers, from nursery level through to those in higher education. Help them to aspire to the highest standards and be signposts to help their pupils to search for you, the fount of all wisdom, understanding and truth. Amen

For Christian involvement in education Heavenly Father, please endow with wisdom and grace all Christians who are involved in education; in government, in leadership, as staff members, those contributing to schools and colleges pastoral and spiritual life, volunteers and students themselves. Amen

A prayer from Dean Oaks Primary

Dear Lord. ~ We pray for those at Dean Oaks Primary School - the staff who are dedicated to the education and nurture of those in our care; the children as they grow and mature; the families involved in the life of the school. We pray for those whose lives have been touched by illness and bereavement, especially the family and friends of the child who just this week lost his father. We ask you to be close to them in their grief and give them peace and hope for the future, as they learn to live life without their loved one. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

From the Grange Primary

Our God and Father, We pray for the fulfilment of our school vision - for all members of our school community to be happy, love learning and achieve their full potential; for the health and wellbeing of all staff, as they work so hard to provide the very best education and opportunities for our pupils; for our pupils to have high self-esteem and motivation to do well in their future life and careers. We pray that the school will continue to flourish during a period of considerable staffing change so that new pupils and staff will feel welcomed and embraced in the community of Wilmslow Grange. Amen.

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Who?	What?	Where?	Give thanks or/Pray for
Greg Aspinall	Student-teacher support	M'cr schools for Cumbria Uni.	Pray for those involved n the professional development of teachers and students.
Aleck Aspinall			
Pauline Bentliff	Teacher	Newall Green Primary	Pray for wisdom for the school in dealing with many social issues linked to deprivation.
Gareth Brown	Music teacher, brass	King's Macc. & Altrincham B.G.S.	
Moira Battersby	Manager KS4 Centre	Cheadle Hulme High School	
Jo Burmester	Compliance with regulations	Training in companies.	
Geoff Cooke	Part time teacher	Adult education	Pray for more teaching opportunities
Val Furber	Home tutor	Home tutoring	
Steve Furber	Prof. Computer engineering, School governor	Manchester University Withington Girls' School	Computing in Schools - general turmoil following Michael Gove's BETT speech -subsequent publication of the Royal Society report - hope this is all going somewhere
Steve Burmester	CiST Chairman	Christians in Schools Stockport	Give thanks for growing and exciting contacts in both primary and secondary schools. Pray that the financial needs of the Trust may be met, with a wider support base.
Chris Hall	Trust Board member	Diocesan Schools Consultant	
Karina Lemmon	Deputy Manager	Tiny Tots Nursery	
Jane Rickard	Teacher	Dial Park Primary	Pray for good relationships within the school and with parents.
Helen Rickard	Teacher training PGCE		Pray for a good placement and God's over-ruling in job applications.
Kelly Watson	Primary teacher with PE	Woodlands School, Harrogate	Pray for right decisions for the future after maternity leave.
Sue Sanders	Maths teacher	Cheadle Hulme School	Pray for the 3 Christian Clubs: J Club for Y3-6, Cross Factor for Y7-8, and the new club for Y9-13. Pray for wisdom for the leaders, and for all the children who attend.
Phil Worthington	Science teacher	Keighley	Give thanks and pray for the start of a new, temporary, full time post; pray for the future.
Mrs Jo Ashcroft	Headteacher	The Grange Primary School and Nursery	Many changes are immanent; staff leaving/starting going on/returning from maternity leave. Pray for staff taking on new roles and responsibilities.
Zee Hardisty	Teacher	The Grange Primary	Pray that changes will go smoothly, with continuity and a positive atmosphere maintained for staff and students.
Chris Jackson	Reading recovery teacher	The Grange Primary	Pray for patience and, personally, for better time management.
Diana Aspinall	Manager 'Out of School'	The Grange Primary	
Steve Burmester	Governor	The Grange Primary	
Hilary Birch	Ignite Club	The Grange Primary	Praise for increasing number of children and good response to Christian message. Pray this will continue; that amongst the fun the children will be quiet enough to listen and have open ears to hear God speaking to them
Marion Berry	Ignite Club	The Grange Primary	
Audrey Stephenson	Ignite Club	The Grange Primary	
Lynda O'Briane	Ignite Club	The Grange Primary	
Sheila Millar	Head midday assistant	The Grange Primary	Give thanks for a very good midday team. Pray that staff and children will be given all they need to work well together; for strength and wisdom for all staff.
Michelle Myers	Resource provision (autism)	The Grange Primary	
Pray also fan-			
	Headteacher	St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School	Pray for the newly appointed Headteacher
Mrs Janet Ciaputa	Headteacher	Dean Oaks Community Primary School	Give thanks for the involvement of families in the life of the school. (See also overleaf.)
Mrs Gill Bremner	Head Teacher	Wilmslow High School	Give thanks for good relationships with the, Muslim, Head of Religious Studies.