



Spring Newsletter 2022

Welcome to our Newsletter

‘Let’s spend some time Dreaming Dreams and creating a vision’!!! This was my challenge to everyone at a recent staff and board ‘away day’. We had planned a morning together giving us time to reflect and talk through how we wanted to see Watford Schools Trust develop in the coming months and years. This brought lots of ideas and ‘dreams’ out and we are now looking to see how, where and when we may be able to put some of those ideas into practice.



Recent weeks has seen some real encouragements with a very good response from schools to our Easter programme. Johanna and Tricia have been fully stretched over the last weeks trying to fulfil all the invitations received from schools. It hasn’t always been easy, with some illness, some challenges, but most of all just with dealing with the volume of work.

In light of this, one of the first things we are looking into is whether, or not, we might be able to employ another school’s worker. Obviously, we, as a Trust, like many others are suffering from a drop in income so employing a new worker may not be easy at this time. But, we feel that God is giving us increasing opportunities to go into schools and work with both staff and children in this way. Due to the hard work of our present team, a good relationship has been built between the schools and the Trust, meaning they are happy to invite us in and for us to continue to develop the work. Can I ask you, therefore, to pray with us about this – that we would know clearly what God wants in this. That if we are to employ a third schools worker, we will be able to find the right person to join and compliment the present team, and that we will be able to work out the finances.

Another thing that came out of the ‘Away Day’ was the fact that there is a real need for us to recruit new Trustees. Some of our Trustees are having to leave us at the end of this academic year and we are, therefore, looking to replace them and also add to the number of trustees in general. If you, or someone you know, might be interested in finding out more about this opportunity then please get in touch, either through the WST administrator info@watfordschoolstrust.org or write to me direct at chair@watfordschoolstrust.org.

We, as Trustees, have every confidence in our team and we know that, with your support in so many ways, we will be able to carry on providing the contact, resources and support that is so badly needed in our schools, as they continue to work through the implications and impact of the events of the last couple of years.

As I draw this to a close then, let me take a moment to thank you for your ongoing support. Without you, WST would struggle to continue in the midst of the current challenges. These are incredibly difficult times for all of us, filled with uncertainty and a feeling of vulnerability. What a blessing to know that God knows what the future holds, and our overall security is in him and know we can trust him in everything.

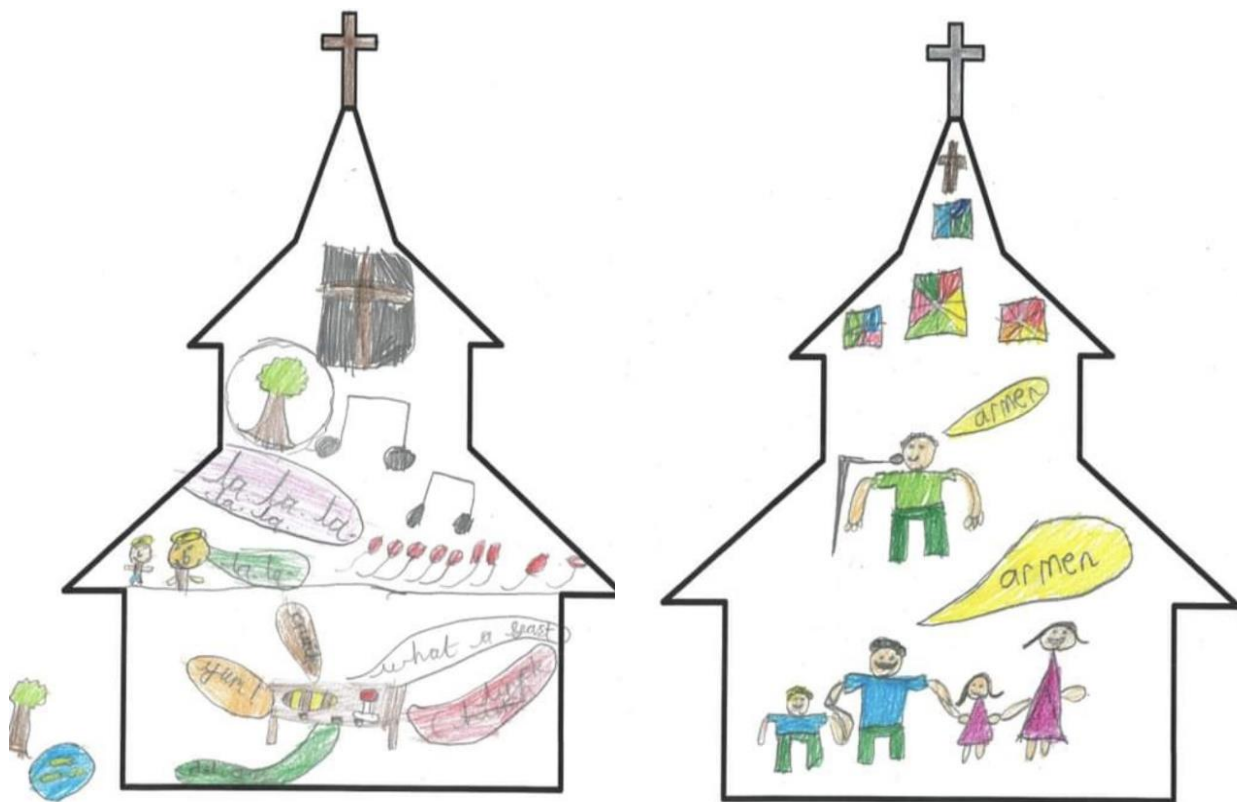
Maureen Hider, Chair of Trustees.

Lessons This Term

Since Christmas we have been invited into many more schools. During our first half term we looked at the Life of Jesus and covered lessons on Zacchaeus, The Lost Son, The Good Samaritan and the Calming of the Storm.

After half term we had a 'spare' two weeks before we started teaching our Easter lessons, so we did something quite brave and asked the schools if there was any particular topic they wanted us to cover in R.E. for them!

We were asked to cover a variety of subjects from 'Pancake Day' in Reception, 'What do Christians do in Church' in 'Who is God?' in year 6, to the 'Christian belief about care for the environment as seen in the story of Noah' in Reception and year 3!



Activity for Year 2 *Thinking about what Christians do in Church*

But by far our most challenging lessons, were the ones in two schools where they asked us to explore 'Free Will' in year 5 and whether Jesus' death was part of God's plan.

In one of those lessons, we were asked whether Jesus had committed suicide by choosing to die on the cross. It was encouraging and challenging in equal measure to see that the year 5 pupils were thinking so deeply about the Christian faith. These lessons were tricky to plan, I don't think I've ever prayed so much about one lesson!

The staff were very grateful for our help and said that looking at the whole story of God's plan for salvation, including looking at Old Testament prophecies made such a lot of sense!

We can't underestimate the challenge that staff face as they do their best to teach a subject which most of them are unfamiliar with; often tackling subject matter without the benefit of contextual knowledge and understanding. Let's remember to pray for our teachers!!

Tricia (schools worker)

Easter lessons

Easter is always one of our busiest times of the year. But what better opportunity is there to tell children about the Christian belief that Jesus died on the cross to forgive sins and came to life to give us new life!

Over the past weeks we have taught the story of Easter in year 2 (and some year 1 classes). Children acted out Palm Sunday with palm leaves and Jesus riding on a donkey into Jerusalem. They thought about the sad times when Jesus announced his death during the Last Supper and then died on the cross. And we discussed that Jesus didn't stay dead, but performed his greatest miracle by coming back to life.

I was very touched by a class of children who had many questions. We talked about how Jesus has promised to come back one day to create a new world without pain and sadness.

In year 4 (and some year 3 classes) we taught the meaning of Easter by looking at the Last Supper in detail. We discussed how Jesus knew he was going to die, as it was part of God's plan to restore the friendship between God and people.



Activity with a Y4 class exploring The Last Supper

Imagine that you were looking through the keyhole into the room where Jesus has his last supper with his friends. Draw what you would have seen.

The Easter workshop in year 6 included activities to help children think about why Jesus is so important to Christians. They discussed how long currently famous people will be remembered for, and compared that with Jesus being remembered and followed (!) for 2000 years. They opened plastic Easter eggs with little items inside (i.e. palm leaves, a nail, a Roman toy soldier, a piece of Matzo) to think about the Easter story. Then they looked at the Christian belief that God loved the world so much that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross. The workshop always raises a lot of questions and comments. One boy asked “Why would Jesus still care about us after we made him suffer so much?”

Activity for Year 6

Design a t-shirt that a Christian could wear, with words and/or symbols that convey something about the Easter message of salvation and forgiveness. The t-shirt needs to be eye-catching, and its message understood in a moment.



‘The person is drowning in bad stuff but God comes to save him ’



‘When you apologise God will forgive your sins and they will fade away.’

Apart from our usual lesson offers, we were also invited to come and teach a Reception class on Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) and a Nursery class on the story of Easter.

Children joined in singing songs, making various crafts and thinking about how Christians believe that Jesus died for his friends. Also how Christians are thankful to God when they think about that

It has been a real privilege to teach these meaningful lessons. And it’s been such a pleasure to be back in many schools this term!

Johanna (schools worker)



The nursery class thought about Palm Sunday

Assemblies

It has been great to get back into a couple of schools to take an Easter assembly. I was privileged to share with the children how much God loved the world and how Jesus stood in our place, so we can be friends with God. It was also great to be able to pie my 'willing' volunteer who stood in my place to get pied!

Tricia



Watford Schools Trust Video Lessons

Have you checked out our You Tube channel yet? Favourite comment of the term was from a boy in Year 2. 'You are famous because you were on our TV!'

He was seeing us in person after having seen us in our You Tube video lessons! Just go to You Tube and search for 'Watford Schools Trust' There are 7 different lessons/ assemblies linked to Easter!



Watford Schools Trust

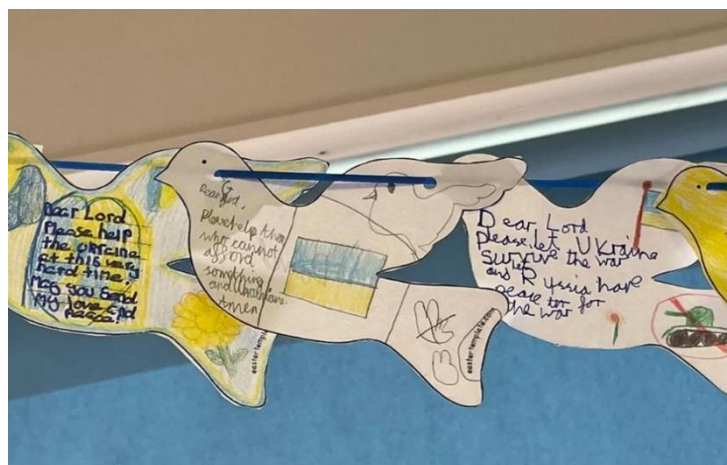
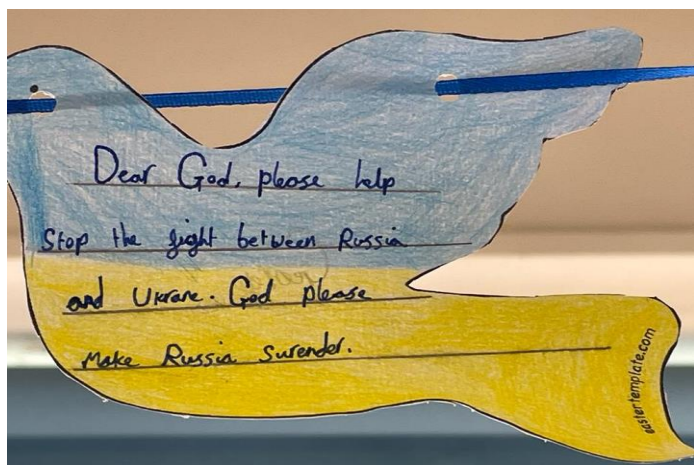
A Surprising Easter Assembly

A Dove for Peace Activity

We know that news of turmoil in the world can be disturbing. The recent news of the war in Ukraine is very upsetting for children and adults alike. It can be very easy to feel helpless in the face of such terrible news. We wanted to do something to help our school children to process their responses to what they were seeing.

We sent some dove templates into schools with a simple instruction to write or draw their thoughts or prayers about the situation. It was very encouraging to see some of these hanging in classrooms that we visited.

While we are aware of lots of different community efforts taking place, we'd like to suggest this as a simple reflective activity that may help you express your feelings.



We have a dove template (see the last page of the newsletter) which you can print and use individually or in your Church or place of work. You are invited to write a message or a prayer for peace on the doves. They can then be cut out, strung together, and used to create a display. They look lovely interspersed with blue and yellow bunting.

Watford Schools Trust is looking for new trustees – are you able to help?

We are looking for new trustees to join our team. We would welcome interest from anyone with a heart for our work and any relevant expertise. Becoming a trustee is a great way to get involved in this really important Christian ministry in Watford.

Along with those with a heart for our work we are also looking specifically for those who may be able to take on one of the following roles:

Staff Manager

Acting as line manager to our two part-time schools workers and administrator, including attending staff meetings, providing a regular point of contact and support, acting as the key link between the staff and the trustees, undertaking annual appraisals / supporting staff development etc.

Fund Raiser/ Grant Applications

Ability to organise events with the support of trustees and workers and to contact companies for donations. Experience to apply to suitable trusts for grants to enable our work.

If you would like more information please contact Maureen Hider at chair@watfordschoolstrust.org

Please note, this is a voluntary post, and all trustees, staff and volunteers involved with the Trust are required to undertake a DBS check.

Pray for Watford Schools Trust

- That we may know God's plan for our future – new schools worker and Trustees
- Pray for the teachers as they tackle subjects they are unfamiliar with
- Pray for Johanna and Tricia as they begin to prepare for next term with Y1 Daniel lessons, Y4 Psalm 23 lessons, two ExploRE week long sessions in schools (previously known as Prayer Space) and lots and lots of lessons in June and July with Year 6 children about moving on to secondary school

**We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter.
We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all
for your support, in prayer and other ways.**

On behalf of the Trustees and the staff of Watford Schools Trust
we want to wish you all a very Happy and blessed Easter



info@watfordschoolstrust.org



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Watford Schools Trust



#Watfordschtrust

www.watfordschoolstrust.org

Peace Doves

When there is
sadness and pain
And things we
cannot explain
We cry for peace
And wars to cease

On this dove
Write your message
of love
Or your prayer to
God above
To give us PEACE



In many cultures and religions, doves are a symbol of peace.
What would be your message of peace to the world? Share your thought
or prayer of peace by writing or drawing it on a dove template.
Display your **Peace Dove** in a window or hang it up to share your message
of peace with the world.

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