

Education Sunday

20 January 2008

COME AND SEE!

When two of John the Baptist's disciples recognise Jesus as a rabbi (teacher) they want to know more about him. Their response prompts Jesus to invite them to "come and see". After a day spent with Jesus, learning from his teaching, they recognise Jesus as the Messiah. It is the beginning of a shared life-long commitment to follow Jesus, absorbing and reflecting on his teaching and example.

Today, we are those disciples who are asked to recognise and respond to Jesus. To come and see, but also to go and tell. Paul reminds us of the grace given to us in Jesus which enriches our speaking and our knowledge. As we celebrate education, we look to be attentive to Jesus' teaching and the impact of living out his example in our lives, as well as remembering the gift of teaching and learning that sustains communities around the world as they grow from generation to generation.

This pattern of finding Jesus and being invited to continue a journey with him is important to Christians around the world. In the centenary year of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Christians across denominations are considering what it means to 'pray without ceasing'. We are also called to respect all of God's creation. When we are in communities and situations where we do not see God's justice and love we are called to pray, reflect and act, to help to change the world into the likeness of the Kingdom that Jesus taught about.



SUGGESTED HYMNS & SONGS

- Go forth and tell
- Go tell it on the mountain
- Open our eyes Lord, we want to see Jesus
- Come and praise the Lord our King
- Come and go with me to my Father's house
- Tell of the Lord's goodness
- Sing a new song unto the Lord
- In Christ Alone
- Come, now is the time to worship
- Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
- All that I am (The Salvation Army - *Magnify*)
- Knowing you, Jesus
- Jesus, be the centre
- Beautiful Lord, wonderful Saviour

Children's songs

- I'm special because God has loved me
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
- The way it's gonna be (Doug Horley)

LECTIONARY READINGS

- Isaiah 49:1-7
- Psalm 40:1-11
- John 1:29-42
- 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Education Sunday is a national day of prayer and celebration for everyone involved in the world of education. For more than 100 years there has been an annual recognition of Education Sunday in England and Wales, traditionally on the ninth Sunday before Easter.

The ideas in this leaflet are designed to help you prepare for your own celebration on or around Education Sunday. If you feel unable to devote a whole service to celebrating the theme, you may want to use some of the ideas on other occasions, such as at the start or end of the academic year, either in your church, or in local schools, colleges and universities.

Next year Education Sunday will be on 8 February 2009.

PRAYERS

Father, we thank you for the talents and strengths that each one of us possesses. Help us to be able to face times of failure with confidence, persistence - and even good humour. And help us to remember that we have value in your eyes for reasons that have nothing to do with our success - or unsucces - when measured by the values of the world.

Amen.

Lord, my life is full of questions. There are questions at school, questions at home, questions when I am with others and questions when I am alone. Help me to think about the answers you have given us, and to keep trusting and searching for the answers we don't yet know. Thank you for teaching us, for caring for us and for loving us.

Amen.

O Lord, whose way is perfect:

Help us, we pray, always to trust in your goodness;

that by walking with you in faith, and following you in simplicity, we may possess quiet and contented minds, and cast all our care on you, because you care for us;

for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Further resources including prayers, sermon outlines, ideas and material for meditations, all-age talks, assemblies and youth groups are available from the Education Sunday website. The following churches and organisations also produce supplementary material:

Association of Christian Teachers

94a London Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 1NX
www.christian-teachers.org.uk

Baptist Union of Great Britain

129 Broadway, Didcot, Oxon OX11 8RT
www.baptist.org.uk

The Catholic Church Catholic Education Service

39 Ecclestone Square, London SW1V 1BX
www.cesew.org.uk

The Church of England & The National Society

Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1 3NZ
www.natsoc.org.uk

The Methodist Church Education Office

25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR
www.methodist.org.uk

The Salvation Army Schools & Colleges Unit

UK & Ireland Office, 101 Newington Causeway, London SE1 6BN
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/schools

Student Christian Movement

Unit 308F, The Big Peg, 120 Vyse Street, The Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham B18 6NF
www.movement.org.uk

The United Reformed Church

86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT
www.urc.org.uk

IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS FOR SHARED WORSHIP

- Ask some pupils and students and adult learners to share what they find difficult or challenging at school, college or university and pray for those issues.
- Ask a few people to share one thing that Jesus has taught them which they want to thank him for.
- Pray for each of the schools, colleges and universities in your town or local area.
- Pray for each of the teachers in your congregation or school.
- Invite someone to talk about their personal journey of faith, from their first encounter with Jesus to the present.
- Use a dramatic reading from *The Gospels Unplugged* by Lucy Moore (www.brf.org.uk) called 'Blessing children'. It's a humorous but challenging poem which talks about Jesus the Rabbi and his attitude to children, based on Luke 18:15-17.

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The Education Sunday 2008 theme (and most of the material in this resource) was devised by an ecumenical steering group representing the following Christian denominations and organisations: the Association of Christian Teachers, the Baptist Union, the Catholic Church, the Church of England and the National Society, the Methodist Church, The Salvation Army, the Student Christian Movement and the United Reformed Church. All worship material in this publication may be freely copied for single-occasion use as part of Christian worship. Any organisations or individuals wishing to reproduce this material in any other circumstances should seek prior permission from the Education Sunday Steering Group, Churches Together in England, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH.

