



## editor's thoughts

### Happy New Year!

Welcome to the Spring 2005 edition of *ACT Now*, the magazine for Christians in education.

A New Year brings with it the promise of a fresh start. As we exchange last year's tatty-looking calendar for this year's pristine version, we are reminded that we get a chance to leave last year's mistakes behind us and start again.

We tell ourselves: 'This is the year I keep on top of my marking... instead of letting my marking get on top of me!' or 'This is the year I get each week's planning finished the Thursday before... not on the Sunday night or the Monday morning!'

As Christians we are reminded that whatever we resolve to do, we really ought to consider God's position on the matter. Firstly, we need to reflect and pray on whether our resolutions will bring honour to God. Secondly, we need to ask ourselves whether we have the mental, physical and financial resources to see each project through. Thirdly, whatever we resolve to accomplish, we would be well advised to set out in God's strength rather than our own.

'Ah! You resolve, 'This year I shall be a model Christian teacher; I shall teach all things Christianly.'

### The right way

But, for those of us engaged in education what is *the Christian way* to teach? What is *the Christian way* to teach students how to read? Or *the Christian way*

to teach modern history? Or *the Christian way* to teach the multiplication of fractions?

How can we reconcile ourselves to the fact that two Christian teachers (both obedient to God and highly professional in all they do) can demonstrate contrary approaches to the learning process, or have opposing views about what constitutes 'good' classroom management?

Well, is there one 'Christian' way to plough a field? Is there one 'Christian' way to build a house? Or to be a politician? Or a doctor? The answer is – as we might expect – both 'yes' and 'no'!

Yes: those who are faithful to God will live according to God's will. Micah (Good News version) says: '... the Lord has told us what is good. What He requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God.'

No: there is no monolithic, universally applicable Christian way to teach anything that will work for every generation and every culture in every age. (As a teacher I cannot remember the last occasion I taught something new to a class so that every single child grasped the concept in the same way at the same time.)

So what should we resolve to do this year? Proverbs 3:5 (Good News version) offers us a resolution worth resolving: 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and He will show you the right way.'

### Have your say

Whether you want to write a letter or article in response to an item in this issue; express your views on a topical educational issue from a Christian perspective; share personal testimony about what God has done for you in an educational setting; review a book or film; share a lesson plan or classroom resource; write a poem; or submit a prayer request, please send your contribution to: The Editor, *ACT Now*, 94a London Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 1NX.

#### Presentation

Individual prayer requests should be 20–40 words in length. Longer prayers, poems and book/film reviews should be a maximum of 300 words in length. All other items should be 500–1,500 words in length. Longer articles may be considered for publication in an edited form or in more than one part.

All items should be submitted as a Microsoft Word document on a CD or as an email attachment. Naturally, items should have been carefully spell checked by the writer prior to submission. All items must carry the writer's name and contact details. Articles and letters must also come with a

brief biographical note about the writer (50 to 80 words in length) written in the third person. Photographs, illustrations and logos may be included where these are relevant (see below for technical specifications).

#### Administration

All items received will be acknowledged as long as they carry adequate contact details.

The editor's decision to publish or reject material is final. The editor reserves the right to edit or amend the content, grammar and style of all items.

Once accepted for publication, a prayer request, article, letter, etc becomes the copyright of *ACT Now* magazine unless it is reprinted with the permission of another publication with prior copyright.

#### Illustrations and photographs

Photographs provided digitally should be as large as possible and as high a resolution as possible eg 5+ megapixels (3.3 megapixels is the absolute minimum accepted). Non-digital

photographs should be sent as clearly labelled unmounted originals (eg with a sticky label on the back).

Line drawings should be in black ink on white paper.

All artwork should have a plain original without lettering or numbering and a labelled copy.

#### ACT Now deadlines

##### Summer (May) 2005

All prayer requests (for the period 1 May to 30 September 2005), articles, letters, etc should arrive at the ACT Office no later than **15 February 2005**.

##### Autumn (September) 2005

All prayer requests (for the period 1 September 2005 to 31 January 2006), articles, letters, etc should arrive at the ACT Office no later than **15 June 2005**.

##### Spring (January) 2006

All prayer requests (for the period 1 January to 31 May 2006), articles, letters, etc should arrive at the ACT Office no later than **15 October 2005**.