

ICE WALES

Initiatives in Christian Education

Serving schools and churches throughout Wales

**Jesus said,
“Whoever
welcomes a
little child like
this in my name
welcomes me. But
if anyone causes
one of these little
ones who believes
in me to sin, it
would be better
for Him to have
a millstone hung
around his neck
and to be drowned
in the depths of
the sea”.**

Matthew 18 v 5&6

There is much in our current climate that hinders the spiritual development of children and spurred on by this fact Ice has again worked tirelessly this year to do our part to help rectify this.

It has been an exciting year.

In January we appointed in partnership with Village Hope a S.E.Wales Rural Schools Worker. Laura Toomer took up this position and has made many contacts with schools and churches in rural areas. She has been encouraged by the number of volunteers that have come forward and approx. 8 schools are now open to her and her teams. She has also been recognised as a trainer for the new Bible Explorer programme, OT Mini, and we are training 6 people this summer. This will help greatly with the demand for this programme in all areas where Ice works. The Trustees of Ice Wales would like to thank the churches, organisations and individuals who have supported financially the Rural Schools Project.

Praise Points.

We have renewed contact with a school we were not able to continue working in a few years ago and the new Rogerstone school is opening its doors to us in September.

A new person has joined the team in Merthyr. This is a great encouragement to the volunteers there especially after the loss of Anita last year.

Some new faces in the annual thanksgiving service in January reflected an increased interest in Ice from the churches. Rev Marc Owen recognised the work Ice has done for 19 years and speaking from Nehemiah, he emphasised the need to keep the vision fresh and stressed the need for prayer support for the work.

There have been more opportunities this year to speak about Ice in churches than has previously been the case. We trust that these contacts in time will result in more support for the work.

The Christmas and Easter events were again well received by the schools and there seemed to be a special blessing on them this year. We were also



encouraged by some new volunteers helping in these events.

Malpas Road Evangelical Church hosted the Counties "Life Exhibition" in May and were thrilled when 2 members of staff asked for Bibles in order to use the follow up lessons with the children. Another school accepted the Gospels the Church offered to each child as they too could be used with the follow up lessons.

Three families have started to attend Church as a result of the Open the Book assemblies in Monmouth.

One of these Mums will soon be baptised.

Approximately 4000 children in 10-12 different schools in Monmouth have the opportunity to hear the truth from the Bible and consider the claims of Jesus for themselves at least once a year through clubs and assemblies.

Stories from the schools

Story 1

The final visit of this academic year to Trinant Primary school was a delightful and memorable experience for me. We told and acted out the story of the wise and foolish builders. The children watched and listened intently and then responded with their own rendition of the old favourite Sunday school song "The wiseman built his house upon the Rock". The children knew the song so well and it was wonderful to watch the whole school's enthusiastic participation in the actions and the singing.

We pray that the children and staff take to heart the meaning of the story and build their lives on Jesus Christ the solid rock.

The headteacher and staff are very welcoming and seem genuinely supportive of what we are trying to do. In return, we try to help out, if asked, by adjudicating at the annual St David's Day Eisteddfod and, this year, by making ourselves available for assembly during the Estyn inspection. This is the message in a card we received at the end of term - along with a very nice tin of biscuits - "Thank you for making our assemblies fun and interesting. We all really enjoy them and we have learnt a lot of Bible stories". In all, we are very privileged to be able to share God's word and plant seeds of the gospel.

Ruth Speed. Chris Powell

Story 2

A year 3 girl attending Guardians of Ancora club would weekly tell me that her family didn't believe God was real and neither did she. In response I would say that I was pleased that even though they felt that way at least they would allow her to come to club.

This same conversation continued for several weeks. And one day I told her if she really wanted God to prove he was real, she could ask him and he would show her. The little girl instantly put her hands together and bowed her head for a moment, before saying "nope, nothing has happened".

I explained that whilst God had the power to show himself there and then she would most likely get her evidence at a point in the future. Maybe through creation, or an event that would ring true in her heart and confirm that God was real. The weekly conversation changed to "I am still waiting" to which my reply would be "keep searching because God knows if you really are looking for him, and he WILL answer you".

The young girl transitioned into Discovery Club and attended weekly.

One day I was asked to cover the club for a few weeks and met this little girl again. On the second week of cover, she handed me a small folded piece of paper and told me to put it in my pocket until I got home.



placed it in my pocket and led the group. On getting home the little note read - "Dear Helen, I believe in God now". The following week I asked her how she knew and what had happened for her to believe. Her reply "I just know".

That same day she handed me a second note which read "I can hear God".

Helen Jones

Story 3

One of my hardest lessons this year was a first visit to a new school to teach the 'Walk Through the Bible' session on Genesis. For a few different reasons, it had felt like a bit of a battle just to get through it and I was feeling pretty discouraged. At the end of the hour, I just asked the class what they would take away as a message from Genesis, wondering if they had managed to take anything in at all! Two year 6 boys threw their hands up straightaway: one said, "God is *really* powerful" and the other one, "He's our Dad!"

Looking at the ten commandments with one class this year, I gave an

explanation of 'adultery', as grown ups cheating on their spouses or partners. "Well," huffed one child loudly, "they don't pay any attention to that one, do they!"

I was teaching the 'Walk Through the Bible' course in one small village school, and we cover the main storyline of the Old Testament, showing children what is in the Bible. Taking questions at the end of one lesson, a year 6 girl looked at me with great curiosity, and asked, "Do you really believe in God?" She looked at me as if I was some sort of crazy alien. I said "Yes", and she said "Why?" I glanced at the teacher, who nodded at me to answer, so I was able to share with the whole class why I trusted God and how faithful he had been to me throughout my life.

Laura Toomer, Village Schools Project

Story 4

In one school whenever the teacher leads a drama session the children all ask to do Open the Book stories and act them out themselves. In this school teachers have also told us that the children know the answers in the RE session because of the Bible clubs they've been to. The work really is making an impact on young hearts! We have two new initiatives with clubs this year. We have developed a Science Discovery Club, exploring the laws of science and God's hand in it all. This is increasingly helpful to those who have done Ancora. We have also piloted with great success a cooking club called Bake Through the Bible. Based on a book of that name, with our own adaptations, we have seen 10 - 12 children coming each week to this after school club. The school likes it and children get a clear overview of the Bible and the Gospel through the things they make, including creation cookies, wilderness quail and manna, King David jam tarts and resurrection rolls.

Jonathan Greaves, Monmouth.

Story 5

At a school in Tredegar there were children who were disappointed they had to miss the "Open the

Book" assembly to go on a school trip. Parents and grandparents from that school have also expressed their delight that the children were learning and enjoying the Bible teaching.

Children from another school love dressing up, acting the stories and singing "I'm in the Lord's army".

Ann Ford, Tredegar.

Story 6

A child (Muslim!) came to Discovery Club to play a game but didn't return her permission letter.

When we asked her, she said that her Dad wouldn't sign it thus preventing her from attending.

She was absolutely gutted but the following week said she could ask her Grandma to complete the form because her Grandma allows her to eat ham and not tell Dad.

Needless to say, we had to discourage this. She then said that her best friend would continue to attend and tell her the stories about Jesus that she so desperately wanted to hear.

Amanda Petersen

Story 7

In the 2018/2019 academic year we had a small group of children who came along to Discovery Club to play a game and do puzzles and craft, all related to a Bible story. If you were to ask them about some key things they learned you would be informed that "God is always with us!" - and you'd be treated to a sign language version too. They would also tell you how important it is to listen to Jesus and would tell you the story of Mary and Martha. Of course we covered the major messages of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, as well as other Bible truths and it was a particular blessing to see one girl developing a delight in reading from one of the Good News Bibles in the room.

Chris P, Shirley and Sue

Prayer requests

- My commitment to a ministry in local primary schools has dwindled over the last few years because of family responsibilities.

Please pray that I will have His strength, His vision and His opportunities to return to this vital work in September.

Janet Price

- Please pray for the churches and volunteers in village communities who are starting to reach out to their schools for the first time. Please pray that they would have encouragement and open doors as they step out into this ministry. Pray that I would lead wisely and be able to support schools and churches in an effective way.

Laura Toomer, Village Schools Project

- Please pray for more workers to come forward in the Heads of the Valleys so that more children will be taught the message of the Bible.

Ann Ford

- For the new OT Mini presenters as they go into schools in September.
- For the schools where we already work to remain open to us.
- For all volunteers with Ice. That they may be encouraged and blessed in the work they do.
- For Christian Heads and staff. May they be strengthened as they work in an environment where their beliefs are slowly being undermined.



OT Mini training



Afternoon tea held for the volunteers

Comments

“ I never realised how awesome Jesus is! I say this because I know now that He’s still alive!

From a child visiting the Life Exhibition

“ I now know anyone can follow God. I’ll think about it.

After Bible Explorer lessons

“ I’ve learnt we need to forgive people. It’s hard!

After Bible Explorer lessons

“ I know Jesus died because he wanted to save us. I wouldn’t do that.

After Bible Explorer lessons

“ I like parables because I like to guess the meaning.

After Bible Explorer lessons

Future Events

Prayer meetings

Held the first Thursday of each month at Bethesda Baptist Church, Rogerstone at 7pm. Everyone welcome.

“Y Christmas”

Will take place in the schools 27 November - 12 December. This is a fresh look at the Christmas story for year 3 children.

Thanksgiving service

Will be held towards the end of January.

Easter Eggsplained

An exploration of the Easter story for year 6 children, will be held 23 March - 2 April.

The Life Exhibition 2020

Bethesda Baptist Church, Rogerstone 22 - 26 June 2020.

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