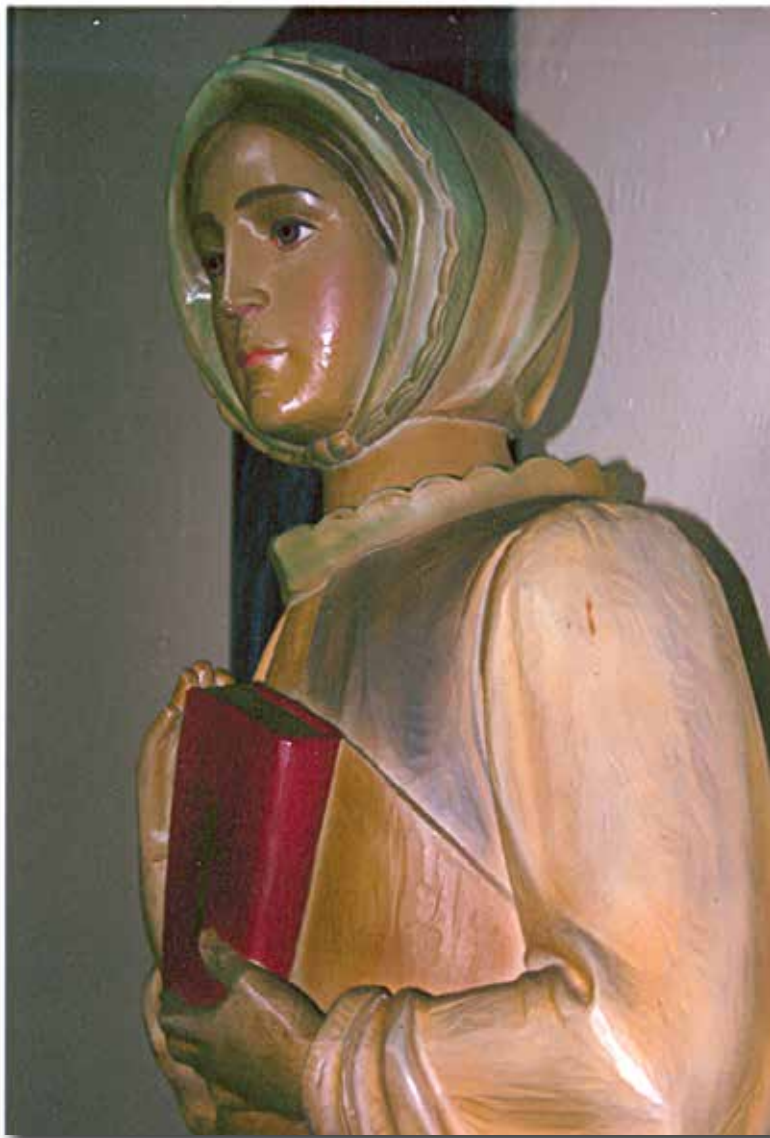


Faith and Society Files: Church and School - Sharing our Christian Heritage

This File may inspire you to share something of your area's Christian heritage with young people in your local school. It includes stories of churches which have developed resources or even a whole programme for schools.



Margaret Clitherow - St Wildrid's Church, York

Many areas of our country have historical links with people who have demonstrated their Christian faith in significant ways. Perhaps a local business was founded by a Christian family who transformed the lives of their workers, maybe the Christian message was brought to your town by a renowned Christian many centuries ago, or was your town the birthplace of someone who went on to live out their Christian faith in a remarkable way?

This File includes stories of churches and organisations which have used their local Christian heritage to produce resources, or a whole programme for schools, and may inspire you to share something of your area's Christian heritage with young people in your local school. You will be helping the school deliver the curriculum - and helping children understand the impact that Christians through the centuries have made, as a result of their faith and actions.

This can be a wonderful opportunity for the whole church to get involved:

- undertaking research using a variety of documents and resources
- sharing memories of more recent local Christians
- developing a fun but informative programme or resources for the children
- inviting the local school(s) to participate
- delivering the resource.

It can also be a good way to work together with other churches in the area as you develop ideas to put together an imaginative and memorable day for the young people.

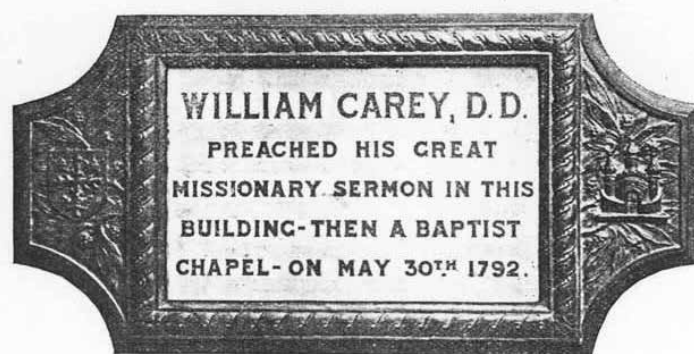
How do we get started?

For churches in England, a useful starting place may be the England's Christian Heritage website¹ which is a guide to all places of interest associated with well-known Christians in English history, arranged by county. Members of your church may also have local knowledge and memories to share about particular people and events to add to this.

Once you've done some initial research and planning, talk to the local schools about whether they would be interested in bringing a class of children to the session you are offering. Perhaps set aside a week in the year and invite local schools to book a place for their classes.

Or, if your church is one with a significant history, start off more simply by producing some worksheets which children could use when visiting. Read about the Carey Experience on page 5 and see the File *Welcoming a School to your Church*² for ideas.

Remember that school diaries get filled up early, so make sure that you give schools plenty of time to consider your offer and include it in their planning. When the programme goes well, schools will look forward to bringing children back and you could make this a regular event for a particular school year group.



1 www.englishchristianheritage.org.uk

2 Download from www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/366608/Faith_and_Society.aspx

It's your City **York Christian Heritage Walk**

Each Wednesday, from March to the end of September, a guided walk outside and within the walls of York offers adults a chance to engage with the spiritual history of York.

Stops are made at key locations where something significant has happened:

- Walk starts from statue of Constantine - proclaimed Emperor in York in 306AD, and later gave legal status to the Christian faith.
- Edwin of Northumbria - baptised in 627 by Paulinus who became the first bishop.
- Margaret Clitherow - put to death for sheltering Catholic priests in the 16th century
- George Fox - founder of the Quakers was thrown down the Minster steps for his views
- John Wesley - visited York on 27 occasions.
- Dwight L Moody - introduced American songs through Ira D Sankey
- Billy Graham - delivered 'prophetic words' to a youth audience in 1946
- David Watson - Vicar of St Michael le Belfrey had a profound influence on spiritual renewal and vision

This walk has now been reworked and shortened so that it can be offered in an interesting way to primary school children.

It's your City was launched in Autumn 2009 and is aimed at Year 5 children. Each class is offered a half day of excellent teaching (both of Christianity and aspects of history) outside the classroom, and various historical characters appear along the way. Worksheets and questions have been devised to help children ask why and what happened.



Without the support of York Schools and Youth Trust (YoYo), a group of Christian young people paid to engage with the schools of York, none of this could have happened. They not only help guide for the hour, but dress up and make appearances at relevant places! It is becoming popular with schools. In effect it is an alternative way by which children can encounter the Christian faith, but without pressure or preaching.

It's your City runs for two weeks in the autumn and early summer. For more information, contact Jenny on 01904 631148 or jenny@yoyotrust.org.uk or see the website www.yoyotrust.org.uk



York Schools and Youth Trust (YoYo)
Founded in 1996 YoYo seeks to support and serve schools in the communication of the Christian faith. It offers annual programmes to schools presenting the Christian message through fun assemblies and lessons:

- It's your City!
- Harvest
- It's your Christmas
- It's your Easter
- It's your Move
- Open the Book
- Kids Rock lunchtime and after school club
- Godly Play
- Bible Explorer

www.yoyotrust.org.uk



Carey Experience

Recognising that many visitors may like to see the places where William Carey was born, came to faith, pastored and developed his vision for world evangelisation, a group of people from churches in Northamptonshire and North Buckinghamshire worked together to highlight the connection of William Carey with this area.



'At Moulton we have the cottage where he and Dorothy lived and a third of it is a museum where you step back in time. It's full of stories that challenge young and old to have big ideas. When people called him a genius he denied it vehemently, calling himself a 'plodder'. But a plodder totally dedicated to doing God's will can easily give the impression of genius!

It was hoped that visitors would be challenged in their own lives by the inspiration and vision that Carey had, a vision that is still relevant today.

Margaret Williams, the visits coordinator, tells us:

'Stories are powerful and engaging. Carey Baptist Church, Moulton played a part in a very remarkable story in the late 18th century. A young couple moved into a nearby cottage to



set up a small school. The husband was really a cobbler but before long he became minister of the church,

despite a very basic education. During his four years here he developed a breath-taking vision for world mission. From the humblest of beginnings as a weaver's son, he'd taught himself six foreign languages before he was 30 and went on to become a very famous man in India and all over the world!

'The list of William Carey's achievements is a long one. By the end of his life he had translated the bible and other books into over 30 languages. He inspired other denominations to become involved in world mission. What did world mission mean to him? It meant evangelism, education, medical work, agricultural improvement, campaigning for social change, fighting against slavery ... and much else.

'As well as 'the sense of place', we have developed materials for children. We did this with financial support from the Baptist Union's Mission Projects Grants initiative³. It's a photocopiable activity pack, suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities. It tells the story of William Carey and contains a variety of activities from word puzzles to creative writing, from colouring to cutting, folding and sticking. There are also questions to discuss aimed at challenging children to explore their own world-changing dreams. Nearly 100 have been sold and it is hoped teachers of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 are finding ideas in it for work in RE, citizenship, English and Humanities.

'But the Carey Experience covers five heritage sites, all of which welcome visitors: Paulerspury, where Carey was born, Hackleton where he found a personal faith and became a Baptist, Olney where his call to ministry was affirmed, and Kettering which saw the foundation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792. At least two have their own quiz or 'detective trail' for children. The children's pack applies to all five.'



School or college parties are welcome to arrange to visit any of the sites, given sufficient notice. For further information see:

www.thecareyexperience.co.uk

or contact Margaret on 01604 719187 or info@thecareyexperience.co.uk

³ Contact your association for details



Lifepath

Lifepath is a Scripture Union project to help Christians in local communities organise an event to which they can invite local schools. It aims to give Junior school pupils the opportunity to explore the Christian faith through the lifepath of a well known Christian from history with a link to their location. The event can be used as a springboard to encourage them to reflect on their own lifepath.

As an event, Lifepath

- happens in term time during the school day with teachers present
- can work in indoor or outdoor venues
- can take a story from any century
- can last for as many days as there are schools wanting to attend
- can happen at any point in the school year.

For schools, Lifepath

- is appropriate for pupils of all faiths or none
- is a day trip with special emphasis on RE or spiritual development
- provides an opportunity to learn outside the classroom
- is educationally valid, tying in with the national curriculum
- fits within one school day.



For churches, Lifepath

- is a great way for churches to work together on a larger project
- is a great way to link in to the life of local schools
- can provide opportunities for volunteers who may not be able to get involved in other church activities.



Lifepath details

Lifepath looks different in every location because it has its own stories to explore, yet there are some consistent elements to the programme wherever it takes place.

- A commitment to the core values and ethos of Lifepath – its educational validity in the context of a spiritual event based on the underlying theme of journey.
- A pre-Lifepath assembly or visit to introduce schools to the concept.
- An event which is professionally run on a sound financial basis with adequate public liability in place and a team which is appropriately vetted and trained.
- A standard format to the day which includes four streams of workshops and opening and closing times together with elements of Collective Worship
- A commitment to small groups led by volunteer group leaders.
- A commitment to follow up which could be delivered in a range of ways.

For more details, and to find out whether you could be involved in organising an event in your area, contact the Lifepath team:

Tel: 01908 856120

Email: lifepath@scriptureunion.org.uk



Lifepath in practice

From 19-21 May 2008, nearly 500 children from schools from Milton Keynes, Bedford and Northamptonshire had the chance to learn about, and from, the life of John Newton. Lifepath took place at the Cowper and Newton Museum, Olney and was organised by Milton Keynes Bridgebuilder Trust, Bedford Schools Trust and the local churches of Olney with support from Scripture Union.

Lifepath Olney helped children to explore John Newton's Christian faith through games, workshops, music, drama, art and lace making. Each day concluded with a celebration presentation, where the children let off balloons to signify the freedom of former slaves.

The event saw 40 volunteers give up their time to act as group leaders, run workshops and act as stewards as activities stretched around Olney including the Baptist church, The Cowper and Newton Museum and the Parish church.

Lifepath is an interactive community event, run by Scripture Union with local volunteers and



churches. Lifepath was designed as a school trip for primary age pupils, allowing them to explore the life of a notable Christian figure in history, through music, drama, storytelling, craft, art, humour, and games.

The objective of Lifepath is broader than learning history: its aim is to explore the past to make sense of the present, and to learn about the importance of faith for the path of life today.

Lifepath photos provided by Scripture Union