

Faith and Society Files: Church and School - The Teachers in your Church

Ideas to help you acknowledge, resource and challenge the teachers in your church.



The teachers in your church are a unique Christian resource. They are called on a daily basis to be among young people and fellow educationalists. They are called to an environment where a diverse swathe of your community finds representation. Teachers have wonderful opportunities to share their faith in their school by their spoken words and lifestyle. Their influence (and Christ's influence through them) frequently coincides with crucial formative stages of the development of their pupils and students.

The teachers in your church need to be supported by the Body of Christ so that they can ever more effectively fulfil Christ's calling to reach out to all of creation with the Good News. One way of doing this is for your church leadership team to try and build an **ARC!** The teachers in your church need to be **A**cknowledged, **R**esourced and **C**hallenged.

The teachers in your church ...

... need to be **ACKNOWLEDGED**

Are you aware of all of those involved with schools or teaching within your congregation, and are they aware of each other? Get to know your teachers and those who work alongside them. The scholastic environment is unusual in its demands and issues. Make a point of investigating which schools have staffroom representation within your congregation and discover the good things, and the less encouraging, that go on in local schools. While maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality, use your awareness of the local educational environment to raise the congregation's level of awareness. Enable and encourage the wider congregation to pray for, and otherwise support, your teachers; ask your teachers to suggest ways in which they would like to be supported and resourced by the church.

... need to be **RESOURCED**

Prayer is one aspect of resourcing your teachers. You might like to also consider including a presentation by one or two of them as an element in a service. Many would be encouraged by being given an opportunity to share aspects of their particular school environment, their role within this environment and their vision for the development of Christ's kingdom at the school. This might prompt practical and prayerful support from your congregation. Perhaps teachers could be included in a 'This Time Tomorrow ...' series of talks during your Sunday morning services?



PRAY FOR SCHOOLS is an exciting new initiative, encouraging Christians to hold events that will increase prayer for schools in their area.

The vision is to bring together people from local churches and those involved in education – parents, pupils, teachers, meals supervisors, Governors and anyone else with a heart for young people – to pray strategically for schools in their area and those involved in them.

Two very successful pilot events were held in Nottingham and Norwich, and nearly 20 around the country in May 2009. People are being encouraged to organise similar evenings across the country. The Schools Prayer Network has resources for you to download from www.schoolsprayernetwork.org.uk

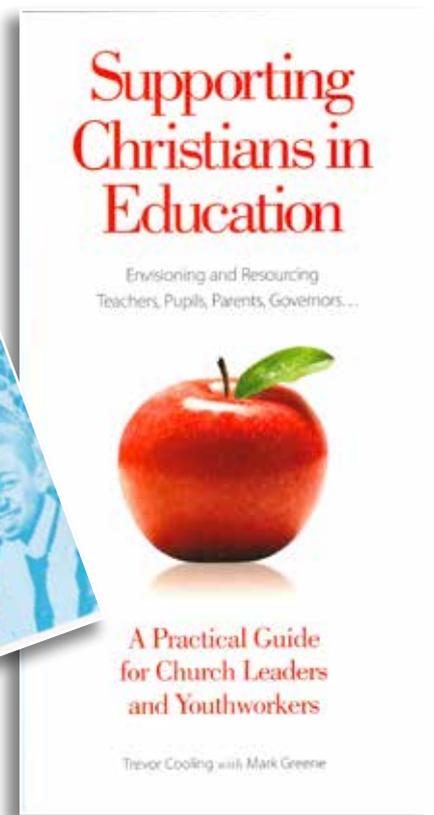
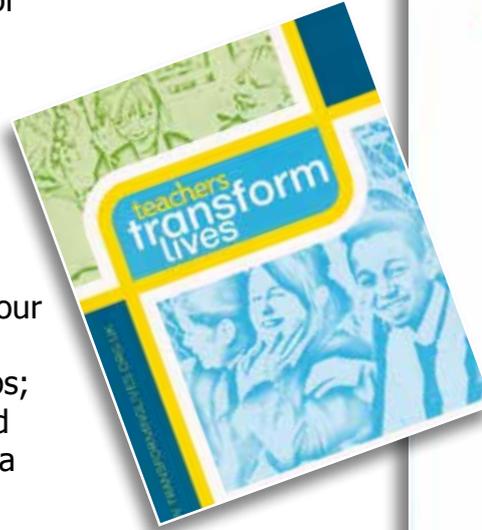
Find out more about holding a PRAY FOR SCHOOLS event in your area by emailing spn.england@care.org.uk

You could consider beginning an 'Adopt A Teacher' scheme - there are many similar schemes for students. The cycle of intense work followed by vacation creates a staccato pace and singular pressures for teachers. It often leaves members of the profession in need of regular times of comfort and support from members of their Christian family.

Your leadership team might be able to offer a 'Spiritual Inset Day' to your teachers. A morning of discussion, Bible study and focusing on Christ would be seen by many teachers as a welcome preparation for a new term, and a complement to the more usual elements of Inset provided by schools ...

Your leadership team or other suitably qualified individuals from the congregation could:

- volunteer to lead assemblies or collective worship at schools;
- offer to support RE department trips to your church;
- consider applying for school governorships;
- take an outspoken interest in SACREs and other local government bodies that have a religious influence in schools.



... need to be **CHALLENGED**

The school is an environment for evangelism. It is reasonable to expect Christian teachers to organise or attend a staff prayer meeting; to be involved with school assemblies and collective worship (this can range from personal involvement, to actively seeking Christian speakers and content); to be prepared to honestly answer questions of faith in the classroom; to instigate and run a Christian Union for the students or to support students as they gather in Christ's Name; to approach the senior management team of their school to outline the benefits and excellence of such endeavours...

These brief suggestions serve as an introduction to the excellent *Teachers Transform Lives* DVD and *Supporting Christians in Education* booklet produced by LICC - check out your church copy or contact us for more information.

The Transforming Lives Project

The Transforming Lives website has many useful resources for Christians who are teachers, people thinking about teaching, and for churches wanting to support teachers in their midst.



It can be accessed at: www.transforminglives.org.uk/home/about-us

Also there are short YouTube video clips available at: www.youtube.com/user/transformlives teach

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