As part of St Mary’s, North Mymms’ curriculum audit in the summer, teachers wanted to provide opportunities for children to acquire knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. As a result, ‘Inspiration Fridays’ were born. The first was an RE focus day entitled “Christianity Around the World” with a spotlight on Tanzania, South Africa, Nepal and Ecuador.

Children learnt how Christians worship in different countries, the cultural differences that make each country distinctive and what all Christians have in common. In Year 6, the children wrote bible passages on prayer flags to give messages of hope to people affected by earthquakes; Year 3 wrote about what they had learnt about life in Ecuador and wrote prayers to reply to a boy who had sent letters to the class. Reception focused on England and the job of a vicar, creating some wonderful artwork. The children discussed how Christians can bring people together: “Listen to other people’s worries, give time to do things for others and forgive people.”

Cranfield Achieve the IQM

Cranfield CE Academy is proud to have achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark in June 2019. The IQM provided the school with a nationally recognised framework to guide their inclusion journey and enable them to ensure their Christian Vision, enabling the entire Cranfield family to live life in all its fullness, is successfully delivered. The two-day inspection identified “Cranfield Church of England Academy as a fully inclusive school” and that “the school has a vision rooted in theology and… this connects to the church and the values of Cranfield Academy.”

Weston’s Reverse Advent Calendar

During December this year, Weston Primary School’s community will be taking part in a ‘Reverse Advent Calendar’ - a calendar that gives back. The school will be asking families to make donations over a two-week period to give to a local food bank.

St John’s, Digswell, Celebrate Black History Month

St John’s pupils took part in a range of activities to celebrate Black History Month during October. Children enjoyed taking part in various workshops including Djembe drumming sessions; a ‘Black Icons’ performance workshop; an art afternoon where children created artwork inspired by African culture and dance; and a talk from a parent in which she shared about her journey to the UK.

The activities encouraged pupils to reflect on and develop their understanding of the identity and background of others. "It is great to see children learning about influential figures such as Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela," commented Mr James Sadler, Assistant Headteacher, "...it helps pupils to recognise and value the inspirational individuals and events that have shaped the world we live in."
**Townsend School**

History Ambassadors delivered collective worship on ‘Remembrance’ in November as part of Remembrance week. They covered themes such as diversity, poetry, bravery, implications of modern warfare and led the school in prayer. A parent volunteer concluded the assembly with the Last Post on the trumpet, followed by a two-minute silence.

The St Albans and Harpenden Christian Education Project (STEP) also ran a ‘Remembrance’ café in the Discovery Centre at lunchtime during the week, covering a range of topics such as peace and freedom.

STEP also organised the Remembrance Day service in collaboration with Ms Sheppard, Head of Worship, the school’s RE Ambassadors and pupils involved in cadets. It was a moving service, featuring the Head Boy reciting ‘Where the Poppies Grow’, two Year 9 pupils performing ‘Somewhere Over the Rainbow’ and cadets reciting war poems. All staff and pupils had the opportunity to remember a loved one by writing their name(s) on a poppy and placing it on the ‘Poppy Hill’ as a memorial display for the Fallen.

**St Ippolyts CE Primary**

This year for Remembrance, children in the St Ippolyts School ‘Young Worship’ group independently led the whole school, staff and governors in their annual Remembrance service on 11 November. They recited famous war poetry, wrote very thoughtful prayers and reflections, and led everyone in the two-minute silence.

**All Saints Academy, Dunstable**

The Remembrance Service at All Saints Academy is one of the major events in their school calendar. In the week running up to Remembrance, students in Years 7 and 8 had a special Remembrance lesson as part of their Character Education programme. This linked into the theme of the week which was ‘Courage’. The lesson considered how soldiers on the front line would have had to show courage in order to perform their duties.

On the morning of their Remembrance Service, all the pupils in the school had a special Remembrance Day house assembly that looked at what, and why, we remember on that day. The service involved students in their organisational uniforms laying wreaths, readings celebrating those we remember and the scattering of poppies bearing the names of loved ones. Once again the school was joined by their bugle player, Raymond, who had celebrated his 82nd birthday the day before. Over all, it was a moving and thoughtful ceremony.

**Tewin Cowper Primary**

On 11 November, Eagle Class at Tewin Cowper Primary led a beautiful and poignant Remembrance service at St Peter’s Church, and made poppies for each of the Fallen from Tewin.

**St Mary’s Primary, Rickmansworth**

In October 2018, St Mary’s Primary, Rickmansworth began their poppy project by introducing the children to the symbol of the poppy for remembrance.

Each class from Nursery to Year 6 made their own poppy out of stoneware clay. The school then enlisted the help of one of their wonderful parents, Amanda Toms, who has a small kiln, to begin the process of bisque firing all the poppies.

In the second half of the spring term 2019, the school embarked on glazing their poppies, painting on three thin layers of glaze. They then needed to find somewhere to glaze fire all of them. A local mum, Katie, who was on a Reception tour of the school, noticed the poppies and asked about them. Although not a parent of the school, her passion for ceramics resulted in the extremely generous offer of firing them all!

The prayer garden in the school playground was selected as a place to display the poppies. The project has been hugely enjoyed by the children, and the school would like to recognise the hard work of parents Amanda and Kate whose time, commitment and patience in firing the poppies enabled them to produce a beautiful Remembrance Memorial for the school.

**Clifton All Saints Academy**

Clifton All Saints Academy took part in the Remembrance Day services on Sunday 10 November. The morning commenced with a service at the War Memorial, followed by a special service in All Saints Church. The church was full to bursting this year and as part of the service, children from the Academy choir sang two songs – “We Will Remember” and “This Day” – reminding everyone of the service people who had given their lives, then about the importance of living every day to its fullest. The children sang beautifully and were applauded at the end of their songs.

On 11 November, the school had their own Remembrance service where they were reminded of the reasons behind Remembrance Day. They held a two-minute silence after listening to the Last Post, followed by the Reveille.

After lunch, three children accompanied the Headteacher to the War Memorial and placed crosses to remember their own family members who had given their lives in service of their country in the First World War. Their names were also recorded in the school’s Book of Remembrance.
Bayford Take their Learning Outdoors!

The new Headteacher at Bayford Primary, Malcom Foster, has a background in Scouting and has therefore seen the benefits that outdoor learning can have on young people. He has encouraged his teachers to start designing and implementing a new curriculum at Bayford to ensure that children are exposed to outdoor learning as much as possible. Staff responded with enthusiasm and already, children have been outside for lessons in Art, History, English and Maths. One Science lesson of particular note saw the Year 1 and 2 children enjoy a body-parts activity, drawing round their friends with chalk on the playground floor and labelling the outline.

The children have also enjoyed getting outside into the Sacred Garden to take part in forest-school type activities. Every half term, each of the four classes will be spending a day with Tim from TWiGS (Teaching Within Green Spaces). Last half term, some of the activities included learning about how the Great Fire of London spread through fire-lighting; making shelters the children had designed in their D&T lessons; making stone-age tools; creating woodland art and exploring God’s wonderful creation through bug hunting. These whole-day sessions are an ideal opportunity for the children to put the school values of Courage, Appreciation, Respect, Peace, Responsibility and Love into action.

Congratulations, Mr Wellbeloved

Congratulations to Andrew Wellbeloved, Headteacher at Townsend CE Secondary School, who was installed as a lay canon of St Albans Cathedral on Saturday 9 November.

St Giles’ Mini Police Scheme

This term, St Giles’, South Mymms Primary took part in the ‘Mini Police’ scheme. Hertfordshire Constabulary came in to work with the children and the day culminated in an assembly in front of the parents. The children really enjoyed the opportunity and it will hopefully support links with the police and community further.

Todddingon St George’s Prayer Stations

In October, St George of England Church, Todddington and All Saints Church, Chalgrave created special prayer spaces for children in Years 1 to 4, to enable them to reflect on how special each of them are in God’s eyes. They used heart-shaped card to write prayers of thanks on one side and things they need or questions they want answered on the other. They then thought about the truths anyone can hold onto by being a child of God, selecting words such as ‘chosen’, ‘accepted’, ‘loved’, ‘special’, ‘treasure’ and ‘precious’ to stick to a crown as a reminder of how God sees each and every one of us.

RE Week at St Mary’s Junior, Ware

This term, St Mary’s has held a celebration of not only Christianity around the world, but also of the vision and aims of everyone in St Mary’s Junior school, Ware. Using art, design technology, internet research, first-hand experiences, poetry, questioning and deeper thinking, the children truly immersed themselves in RE week. Through the activities organised, they were able to clearly and passionately explain the school’s Christian values of Love, Respect and Friendship and how they are reflected in school.

The children have learnt that Christians can be found all over the world and identified the key aspects of some celebrations as well as the deeper issues of how for some, being a Christian actually puts their lives in danger.

Years 4, 5 and 6 visited St Mary’s church and, with the support of Revd Yslena and Revd David, investigated how love, respect and friendship are shown in and around the church. On their visit, Year 6 also had the opportunity to take part in Morning Prayer and talk to members of the church community about their beliefs on the three school values.

St Lawrence’s Understanding Christianity

The whole school at Ardeley St Lawrence worked together to show the eight core concepts of the ‘big story’ of the Bible from the Understanding Christianity resources. All classes had their own concepts to work on and completed them using a variety of materials and techniques. The school then came together for a whole-school collective worship. Each class spoke about the concepts they had completed before looking at them all as a whole, revealing the ‘big story’ of the Bible. The key concepts represented were Creation, Fall, People of God, Incarnation, Gospel, Salvation and Kingdom of God.

The canvases will be displayed in school and used to help pupils as they develop their understanding of Christianity, as part of their understanding of the world and their own experience within it.

Cockernhoe Build a Sukkah

At Cockernhoe Primary, as part of its learning about Judaism, Amber Class created a sukkah (a tent). The class thought about why celebrating is important and which people and items they would include in a celebration. The children learnt about why Jewish people build a sukkah; how it is made and how it forms part of the Sukkot celebration.

When Amber Class had finished building their sukkah, they invited staff to join their celebrations with food, drink and music. One of the pupils, Caitlin, commented “I thought it was the best time ever!”
Tring School Explore their Gifts

Tring School students have been exploring the school’s vision and chosen biblical narrative from 1 Corinthians 12:4-5. There has been a focus on exploring the variety of ‘gifts’ that each student possesses and contributes to the school community. In tutor time, each tutor group has created a display to summarise the gifts that it offers.

In Philosophy and Religious Studies lessons, Year 7 have also been exploring the school’s values and vision and how they link to the school prayer and the impact on their behaviours. They then made their own interpretations of what this means to them.

Finally, during the school’s open evening, Year 6 students were asked to share the gifts they are proud and excited to bring to Tring School for the following year.

St Augustine’s Church and Academy Work Together to Receive Community Life Fund

St Augustine’s Church and St Augustine’s Academy worked in collaboration to apply for a grant from the Diocesan Community Life Fund. They were delighted to be successful, and the grant has enabled the purchase of a projector screen that makes it much easier for those attending the church to read words to hymns and watch video clips and slide shows.

The photograph shows the new screen in action as children, parents, carers and staff took part in an afternoon service at St Augustine’s church, with the theme of ‘Courage’. Children led the prayers and readings and all had the chance to reflect on a personal fear. Everyone was given the opportunity to take a paper flame with the words, “Don’t be afraid. My love is stronger than your fear,” written on it. The flames act as a reminder that God is always with us, whatever we are going through.

A Symbolic Day at Codicote Primary

This term, for their RE focus day, Codicote Primary focussed on symbols. They started with whole-school collective worship, where the concept of pictures representing an idea was introduced.

The first half of the morning was spent learning about symbols from different faiths – their meaning, their origins and their significance.

Next, children were given a heart to decorate, symbolising ‘Love’, one of the school’s core values.

In the afternoon, the children worked on a variety of Art and Design projects to explore symbols associated with Christianity.

To end the day, the children shared their learning with each other, before working in teams on the challenge of forming themselves into heart shapes.

New Classroom at Sutton Lower School

Wednesday 27 November saw the official opening of a new modular classroom at Sutton VA Lower School. The grand opening of ‘Larch Classroom’ was celebrated with the whole school community and representatives of the construction team and services. The Bishop of Bedford conducted a blessing and cut the ribbon to mark the opening.

The green modular classroom has served to provide a modern learning environment which is comfortable and fit for purpose for an increasing and more diverse school population.

Focus on Governance

Training and information for church school clerks: In October, we held a joint training event with Herts for Learning especially for clerks in church schools. We were delighted to meet clerks and provide the specialist information needed for clerking in a C of E school. Areas discussed included foundation governor appointments, instruments of government, working with the Diocese and where to find our written guidance. We hope to run this event again; in the meantime, core guidance for clerks is available on our website www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/briefing-papers, or contact us directly.

Instrument of Government (IoG): Unsure about how to amend your Instrument of Government (IoG, the legal governing document for maintained schools)? Amendments arise if a school changes its name, age range, type of provision, structure, or composition of the governing board. If your IoG needs amending, do contact us before starting the process. Amending an IoG is a legal process involving the governing board, the Diocesan Board of Education, and the local authority. We can guide you through the whole process, including advising on the legal and diocesan elements. Watch out for a new briefing paper coming soon with more guidance on what’s involved.

Belinda Copson
Governance Officer
Welcome, Marston Moreteyne School!

We are delighted to welcome our newest church school, Marston Moreteyne VC School. To mark becoming a Church of England school, in October a celebration morning was held, with an extra special collective worship event at each of its two sites. Children learned about the history of their school and had a chance to meet Bishop Richard, who formally welcomed Marston Moreteyne into the diocesan family of church schools.

Judy Ruff Awarded Order of St Alban

On 21 September, Judy Ruff was awarded the Order of St Alban at St Albans Abbey for her services to the Diocese over a substantial period of time, including acting as a consultant to church schools in the Diocese. Judith commented “It was a truly special day and one which I will remember for the rest of my life… The service was made really uplifting by it being a choral evensong.”

Pupil Leaders of Worship Event

On 24 September, the first Regional Pupil Leaders of Worship event took place in St Hugh and St John’s Church, Chells, in Stevenage, for schools in the areas of Hitchin, Stevenage, Hertford and Ware. Revd Ysmena Pentelow ran a fantastic Taizé workshop, explaining the history behind the Taizé community, and introducing the children to short songs/chants that could be used in collective worship in their schools.

Headteacher Changes

A warm welcome to our new substantive headteachers and heads of school this term: Verity Edey at St Mary’s Infant, Baldock; Malcom Foster at Bayford Primary; Joanne Fradd at St Michael’s, Bishop’s Stortford; Gail Highton at Carlton Primary; Nicholas Simms at St Mary’s High, Cheshunt; Sarah Sellek at Chirst Church Chorleywood; Maria Constantinou at St Mary’s, East Barnet (co-headship); Louise Foley at Furneux Pelham Primary; Debbie Drawbridge at Greenfield and Pulloxhill (co-headship); Lynda Cowler at Hormead First; Michelle Cohen at St Paul’s, Langleybury; Denise Kennedy at Potten End Primary; Anna Spyropoulos at Ravensden Primary; Sarah Boyle at Silsoe Lower; Kaye Healy and Katherine Taylor at St Helen’s, Wheathampstead.

Our thanks and best wishes for the future accompany those to whom we will say goodbye this Christmas: Vanessa Hunt at Northchurch St Mary’s Primary, Juliet Fraser at Christopher Reeves Primary, Podington

Our appreciation also goes out to all those who have, or are about to, step in as interim or acting heads.

Upcoming Courses

Courses coming up in the Spring term:
14 January Networking breakfast 8-10am, Marston Moretaine
14 January One-to-one RE Surgeries (must be pre-booked), Marston Moretaine
23 January How to audit your school’s website, Holywell Lodge
30 January SIAMS SEF Writing, Holywell Lodge
4 February Collective Worship in Schools, Holywell Lodge
12 February Vexatious Complaints, Holywell Lodge

More information on all of our courses can be found here: www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/schools-team-courses
For any course bookings, please contact Ruth Garman at rgarman@stalbans.anglican.org

Schools Team Twitter Account

Do follow us on Twitter at @stalbansdioedu

We wish you all a peaceful Christmas.

Living God’s Love in Education: Enabling Life in all its Fullness

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