



Christians and Sheffield Schools
connecting ● encouraging ● resourcing

in association with
Scripture
union

**“A few seeds make a small harvest, but a lot of seeds make a big harvest.”
2 Corinthians 9:6 (CEV)**

CaSS Summer Term Newsletter 2015

The final term of this academic year has arrived! The Summer Term tends to be short, but very busy for both pupils and staff - with exams, visits, sports days, reports to write, transition preparation, pupils and staff leaving or retiring, new staff being appointed, all in addition to normal activities!

The stress teachers are under has received press attention recently. It is reported that 4000 teachers leave the profession each month and that an estimated two fifths of new teachers leave the profession within five years (Sir Michael Wilshaw). Among almost 900 teachers embarking on their classroom careers who were questioned by the ATL teaching union, 73 per cent admitted having thought about quitting. The NAS/UWT report that 68% of its members are ‘seriously considering’ leaving the profession entirely. Rapid and frequent changes in the curriculum, the pressures of Ofsted, a results driven environment with targets, tests, tick boxes and paper work all contribute to this stress and many teachers are working very long hours. Young people, the so called Generation Z, are also facing many pressures, as indicated by the rise in the use of food banks, poverty, exam pressures, self - harming, family breakdown, eating disorders, depression, bullying via social media, abuse, alcohol/drug misuse and the rising use of pornography. Schools really need us all to prayer for

them, to offer them encouragement and to work together to serve them.

Last term CaSS invited Phil Togwell of Prayer Spaces in Schools (www.prayerspacesinschools.com) to speak in Sheffield and CaSS was very grateful to The Oakes and The Montgomery for acting as hosts. Prayer Spaces are a fantastic way to serve a school, offering schools space and time out to reflect and to pray. A variety of people from across the city attended the events – parents, grandparents, youth workers, head teachers, clergy, teachers, a school chaplain etc. They heard Phil’s inspiring and motivating talk, which was sprinkled with wonderful examples of school’s (both pupils and staff) reactions to Prayer Spaces. There will be a Prayer Space set up at the CaSS conference (see further details below) as it would be in a school, with ideas to take away and use. Do come and find out more.



Next term CaSS will be part of a Scripture Union working party meeting in Sheffield to explore ways to support Christian staff in schools, another group will be looking at supporting Christian pupils in schools. CaSS would then like to gather a Sheffield group to look at implementing ways to support stressed staff and pupils in our city. Do contact me, if you are interested in getting involved.

The **CaSS Conference** will be held on **Saturday 20 June** at **Victoria Hall Methodist Church, Norfolk Street, Sheffield S1 2JB**. The format of the conference, the venue and the price are all different from previous years. There will be great speakers, the chance to visit a transition themed Prayer Space (www.prayerspacesinschools.com) you could use in a school, an opportunity to donate to a food bank and to donate good quality school uniform (no logo) to PreLoved Uniform (www.preloveduniform.org.uk), a market place of Christian organisations, the chance to connect with others serving schools, to learn of opportunities to serve, to get resources, to inform your prayers for our schools, to hear Sheffield short stories and it is a time to refresh your vision. Please spread the word about it. Cost £15 (plus £1.55 booking fee.) which includes a packed lunch from Feast. Booking via eventbrite at <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cass-conference-tickets-16504317859?aff=es2> or via a link on www.cass-su.org.uk. Please help us by putting the CaSS Conference poster (on back of this letter) up in your church, on your website or in your notices. Contact CaSS if you'd like an electronic version. Many thanks.

We are delighted to report that CaSS has received a donation, with the instruction it be used to employ a permanent part-time administrator. CaSS is grateful to Abi Wood for her 20 hours of work this term, starting to get the CaSS database in order. We would like to be able to communicate with you by email from time to time. Please would you email your address to admin@cass-su.org.uk

CaSS is looking forward to celebrating its 30th birthday in September with some special events, do look out for these at the conference, on our website, facebook page and in our next newsletter. Could you please be prayerfully considering whether you might make a birthday gift of a donation to CaSS, in order to help the work continue.

I continue to meet with the CaSS trustees, and others, each month to pray that **together** we can 'plant a lot of seeds' and rejoice in 'a big harvest' across the city. Fiona

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