

Newsletter

Spring 2016



Over the weekend I watched a bird of prey hovering gracefully over a newly cut field, which the farmer had just cleared of debris and wild growth. Our picture for this year's **Pray for School's Fortnight** of a magnificent eagle created by Lesley Hollingworth, is a wonderful representation of our theme of **Freedom**.

The Bible verse is 2 Corinthians 2 v 17 (New Living Translation) "*For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit is, there is freedom.*"

The beautiful image of a bird soaring through the sky reminds us of the wonderful liberty we have in knowing Jesus. Freedom from sin; Freedom to be ourselves and to fulfil His wonderful plans for us; Freedom to pray to the Father with confidence. Celia Bowring has written some Bible study notes expanding these ideas and some new prayers to use during Pray for Schools Fortnight.

Pray for Schools fortnight is from 8th -22nd May.

So why not get together with other groups in your area to pray together during PFS Fortnight for your local schools and neighbourhoods? If you are a home intercessor, perhaps you could join with other like-minded people to pray for children and their education in your area. We can help you link up with others. For more information please email us: england@prayforschools.org

We are thrilled that the **Archbishops of Canterbury and York are inviting churches to pray for the evangelisation of the nation** during the first week of PFS fortnight. One day is set aside to pray for work places and schools. Further details on page 2 of our newsletter. We are also working with the Neighbourhood Prayer Network to include prayers for "schools streets".

Maureen Jones from **Cheltenham Prayer For Schools Network** (CPFSN) has shared her thoughts with us on being a home intercessor (see page 3). After many faithful years Maureen and Sheila Bowden, the CPFSN coordinator, are both retiring. Although I am sure that Maureen and Sheila will still be praying! If you are living in Gloucestershire or moving into the area, and would love to get more involved please take a look at the coordinator advert and get in touch.

A **new prayer group** has just started in Leeds, with its first prayer meeting this month and we have heard from Christians in London, Middlesex and Derby all keen to pray and support their local schools just like so many others throughout the country. As we enjoy the warmer weather do remember schools that were affected by flooding over Christmas. There are still some that have been closed since the New Year.

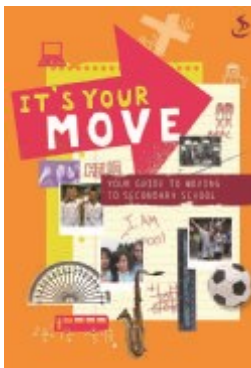
Just a reminder that **Education Sunday's new date is 11th September 2016** and will run alongside Back to School with God. More details in the Summer Newsletter.

Jane Newey PFS England Coordinator



The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are inviting every church in England to join a week of prayer this Pentecost, from 8th-15th May – let's pray for every Christian to receive new confidence and joy in sharing this life-transforming faith. Find out more at www.thykingdom.co.uk

Let's join this great wave of prayer.



It is lovely to hear of so many prayer groups and churches donating the SU booklet—**"It's your Move"** to children in Year 6 as they head to secondary school

Free Assemblies and lesson plans can be found on the SU website

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/ItsYourMove/112817.id>

A new book has been published by the Bible Society, HOPE and LICC to mark the Queen's 90th birthday, in April called **"The Servant Queen and the King She Serves."**

Her Majesty says 'I have been – and remain – very grateful to you for your prayers and to God for his steadfast love. I have indeed seen his faithfulness.'

Scripture Union has produced a 12-page schools' version of 'The Servant Queen' aimed at children aged 10+. This is available from

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/queen>

in packs of ten with an assembly outline and lesson plan. Perhaps order some for your school today.





Cheltenham Prayer for Schools Network - Home Intercessors

Over half the schools in the Cheltenham area are supported by a prayer group which is part of the wider Cheltenham Prayer for Schools Network. The network itself is coordinated and supported by a steering group of 4 and a larger team which includes 5 area coordinators who look after prayer groups, and school and church contacts in their 'patch'.

So who prays for the schools that don't have a prayer group and for the Network steering group and team? That's where our band of nearly 20 **Home Intercessors** comes to the fore. Mostly older folk, many now grandparents, they intercede for us regularly at home for every school in the Cheltenham area by name, using a lists of all Cheltenham schools and the names of prayer group leaders, so we are grateful that, thanks to their commitment, every school in our area is a 'prayed-for school'. They also include 'Open the Book' teams in their prayers.

Home Intercessors also pray regularly for the steering group and team, referring to the regular updates from their meetings, and other news of prayer groups sent through three times each year as a confidential prayer letter. They also receive our termly network prayer letter, Lamplight and some of them attend our termly Network prayer meeting.

I think of our **Home Intercessors** as like the **engine room of a ship** - down below and out of sight- but, powered by the Holy Spirit, of vital importance in keeping the Network going. We are so grateful for them and their faithfulness in prayer. At a recent 'prayer and share' meeting for South Cheltenham, we introduced ourselves in turn. When it was her turn to speak, one of our Intercessors said, with a beaming smile, 'I pray for you regularly by name and it's so lovely to put names to faces.' We thank God for the faithful commitment in prayer of our Home Intercessors, our 'prayer warriors'.

Written by Maureen Jones, CPFSN Home Intercessors' Coordinator.

CAN YOU MAKE PRAYER HAPPEN?

Cheltenham Prayer for Schools Network is looking for a new coordinator. Suitable applicants need to have a heart for praying for schools and for Christian work in schools. They need to be good at networking and encouraging others and have the skills necessary to lead a small ecumenical team.

This is a voluntary role, involving working from home for approximately 10 hours per week, including some evenings.

For more information and a full job description, please contact Helen Alderton via email: helen_alderton@blueyonder.co.uk



Cheltenham Prayer for Schools Network

Interdenominational Christian network supporting Gloucestershire Schools

- Praying** for all Cheltenham schools
 - Supporting** pupils, parents, staff, governors
 - Providing** a prayer meeting and resources each term
 - Building** a network of Christians involved in schools
- Part of Pray for Schools www.prayforschools.org



Our **Pray for Schools resource pack** is still available to download from our website and can be used at any of your events. It offers an introduction to Pray for Schools plus details of our Partners.

<http://wp.me/P3Ezfr-8i>

We now have over 975 followers on Facebook and try and post prayers and details of events around the country, several times a week.

If you haven't already done so please Like our page and do check that you get our notifications.



Local groups know their local schools best. Many groups have Facebook pages and or Twitter accounts. Some are part of the local diocese page or the local charity that works in schools.

Why not start a Facebook group or page for your schools prayer group?

One London group has its own website

<http://www.schoolsprayergroup.org/>

And this charity reminds supporters of all the local schools <http://www.cicscalderdale.org.uk/pray-for-schools.html>

Ideas for Praying for Teachers from Geoff Worth, Pate Grammar School, Cheltenham

- Time pressures
- Ever increasing complexity of needs of students
- Pressure to deliver academic success. Less time for fun/madness
- Reforms and staggered changes/mixed picture for different year groups
- Recruitment Crisis—Christian teachers now rare breed

Do give thanks for the patience, commitment and dedication of all teachers

