

# Impact

Autumn

## term 2024 Newsletter



### Thoughts from Jane Spencer, Chair of Impact.

You are the light of [Christ to] the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

**Matthew Chapter 5 vs.14-16**

It is great to be looking ahead to an exciting year for Impact and for the work the workers will be busy leading in our local schools.

Many people think schools still have Christian assembly every day, a time to pray and that each child will sing a song or hymn each week at least. This is not how schools generally operate now and only in schools with a Christian foundation would this now still be the norm. So for many children getting to hear about and learn more about the life of Christ, what Christians believe and God's love for them comes through the time shared with Impact workers in schools.

The workers do not 'hide their light' as they work in schools but share the light of Christ as they work and as they witness to those they meet (both the children and the staff). Do please pray for them in the term ahead so that they are protected and encouraged. May they see and hear many children interested and excited as they ask them all about Christianity.

We continue to be so grateful for all our supporters and volunteers and we give particular thanks for the life of Jenny Roberts. Jenny was a remarkable woman who gave her time and energy selflessly in so many ways for the Lord, including volunteering and supporting Impact. Following her Thanksgiving service at Three Rivers Church, Impact were privileged to receive donations of over £480 and a regular gift in memory of Jenny as well.

We currently have 10 churches that regularly commit to give to Impact as part of their local mission giving. We hope to encourage other churches to support this year maybe by praying, volunteering or giving. Our **Church Champion** event will explain this vision and how we hope to tell you soon of new churches that will be joining with us.

Do encourage your church to send someone along to find out more-it's always good fun and you meet super people when supporting Impact! There is more information as you read on through this newsletter.

Finally may I ask you to continue to pray for Jo-Ann Gaunt and for her husband Steve, their family and friends. Jo was a primary worker for Impact for many years and inspired many of us. We pray the care and support she is receiving from Willen Hospice will be a blessing to her and her family and that the peace of the holy Spirit will be known to her especially at this time. Thank you.



### A message from

## Trish



A couple of enthusiastic volunteers from a local church and myself went into a school linked with their church, over the summer term to run RE sessions with the year 5 and 6 children.

I ran interactive Creative Prayer stations, which linked to the theme of prayer and I taught the children about 'tsp' prayers ('Thanks, Sorry, Please'). It was top and tailed with a short introduction about what prayer is and ended with a time of feedback from the children about their favourite station. The four stations were:

**First:** Thanks - focus on family and friends they are thankful for.

**Second:** Sorry - focus on saying sorry for things they have done wrong.

**Third:** Please - focus on praying to God and making requests about anything that they wanted to.

**Fourth:** Children made prayer spinners which focused on praying in all areas of their lives ranging from family and friends, the world around them and for themselves.

It was a great opportunity to teach the children about prayer as well as meet and build a relationship with staff and children.

We ran transition sessions for Year 6 children moving up to secondary school. We visited 17 schools and were able to help 695 children. The children on the whole seemed to engage and felt the sessions were beneficial. I had secondary school students join me for a Q&A session at some schools too.

Overall it was wonderful time with staff and children and at times personally moving as I have known some of these children from when they were younger and been 'part' of their lives, which was special. My prayer is that the many seeds planted over the years by all of us schools workers and ministers will grow and flourish.



## A message from **Becky**

We were approached by Matt Farley, our Local Mission Enabler for Scripture Union, to ask if we would be willing to help him pilot some new resources he was developing. The idea was that over the course of a half term we would work weekly with a school to run a Prayer Space themed lunch club.

The resource helps the pupils understand what prayer is and how it's rooted in the Bible by exploring different stories and verses. It also helps them to think about how they can help create their own prayer space in their school. I thought it was an amazing idea so I approached some of my schools and had one church school take me up on the offer.

During the last half of the summer term I met weekly with a group of children and their teacher. As the weeks passed, the children grew in confidence and it was a real privilege to be able to work with them. The teacher that I worked with was really passionate about it and secured a whole room-sized tucked away space that was being used as a makeshift storage for school equipment. She had it cleared out, applied for funding from the PTA and Diocese. With input from the children, she brought furniture, rugs, decorations and equipment for the space and the children helped put it together ready for it to be used by others.

As well as learning more about prayer and the Bible, the children learned to think deeply about creating their own reflective space, and how they could enable others to pray. I took in some examples of prayer stations for them to explore and various items to help them come up with their own ideas for how they could be used to pray. Some of the ideas they came out with were so deep and moving that they nearly brought me to tears. I'm even going to use some of them to create stations to use in Impact's prayer spaces.

Although the space was not quite ready for use during the last week of term, the children unofficially 'opened' the space by all praying for those that would use it in the future. There will be an official 'Grand Opening' in September, with parents/carers, governors, clergy and Matt all invited to share in the celebration.

I look forward to being able to show you photos in our next newsletter.



## General News



The summer was a busy time of planning and preparation but we also had the chance to help some of our amazing supporter churches with their summer holiday activities.

At one holiday club, we explored creation and had great fun zooming around in a rocket, getting wet (although that was by accident because the pool for the boat race deflated in the heat!), singing, dancing, playing with slime, making fruit kebabs and cheesy cracker boats and so much more.

In other churches we helped with their family activities, taking part in Olympic themed crafts and games, making more boats to float (and getting wet again but not from a deflated pool this time!), making lots of great art and crafts, playing and having lots of fun.

The real test of how great an event is - whether the children want to stay or leave. They definitely didn't want to go home, even offering to help with clearing up so they could stay longer.

It was lovely to be able to work with our supporter churches and to meet with some of the children that we work with in schools outside of their school settings. It was also so nice to meet with some of the parents/carers too as we don't usually get to meet them. So it was great to be able to chat together and share about the work of Impact in their children's schools.

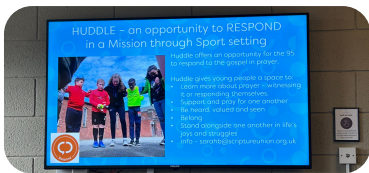
# General News Confd...

## Scripture Union Central Region Gathering

Early in June, we attended the SU Central Regional Gathering in Staffordshire. There were lots of really useful and fun filled workshops such as a Bible themed escape room, sport games workshop for the not so sporty, a Lego session - and lots more.

We found out about their latest research findings and were given lots of helpful and interesting information. We were able to get quality time with other Local Mission Partners and got to meet some of the wonderful Faith Guides from across the region.

There was social time to relax, including a quiz night and there were amazing worship and devotional sessions. All in all, it was a really helpful weekend for our work development as well as spiritual refreshment and inspiration. The good food and comfy beds were a welcome added bonus!



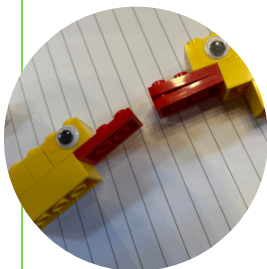
## Godly Play conference

Later in June, we attended the Godly Play conference in Gloucester. The theme for the weekend was laughter and it was certainly a joyful time. Along with meeting lots of lovely people, both seasoned Godly Players and those experiencing it for the first time, we got to take part in some Godly Play sessions, learned about what Godly Play can teach us about being trauma-informed and took part in 'laughter yoga'.

We were led through different ways to laugh using games and actions. I laughed so hard I cried and I felt exhausted afterwards. The instructor explained that it's also a way to process and let go of anything we've been holding on to that might be painful.

We had a wonderful talk by a guest speaker, Ian Macdonald. It focused on the importance of laughter and was full of the science behind why laughter is so important and good for us - also Biblical insights into the importance of laughter and amusing anecdotes.

The weekend closed with a time of worship in a very different, Godly Play style. Overall, it was an interesting, insightful and fun experience that we are sure will have positive implications for our work.



## A date for your diary

Our Church Champion launch event is happening on the 16th September. See details on the flyer below.

If you would be interested in finding out more and coming along please

RSVP: [secretary@impactbedford.org.uk](mailto:secretary@impactbedford.org.uk). Look forward to seeing you there!



PLEASE, JOIN US TO CELEBRATE  
THE LAUNCH OF  
IMPACT'S CHURCH CHAMPIONS

Help your church be part of this key local mission to schools.

- Hear what Impact now offers schools
- Be given ideas and a pack to help promote Impact at your church
- Meet other Impact Church Champions

**Date:** Monday 16th September 2024

**Time:** 6:30pm

**Venue:** Three Rivers Church  
88 Denmark St, Bedford MK40 3TJ

**RSVP:** Just email your name and the name of your church to [secretary@impactbedford.org.uk](mailto:secretary@impactbedford.org.uk)

**Impact**  
Supporting Schools,  
Exploring Christianity

## Looking ahead...

Here are some of the things the workers have planned for the next few months! Please remember to keep them in your prayers as they plan and prepare for what is ahead.

Live Nativity:  
2nd to 6th of December

Creation RE  
workshops:  
September & October

Church Champions:  
launch event  
16th September

Planning for Lifepath of  
John Bunyan at Elstow  
Abbey for May 2025

Christmas activity  
sessions:  
9th to 13th December

Christian lunch clubs  
Ongoing through the  
term ahead.

**Impact**



## Follow us on Facebook!

If you use Facebook, we'd love to be friends! 'Impact Bedford' has it's own Facebook group, where we regularly post photos, videos, updates, events and more. If you have a little look at Facebook every day, or if you only have an occasional glance, please add us. We'd love to be able to reach as many people as possible with our good news. We also get so much encouragement from the comments or 'likes' people give us, so please consider adding us.

## Points for Prayer



You will be aware that very sadly Jo-Ann Gaunt is very unwell. We continue to hold Jo-Ann and Steve Gaunt in prayer and do ask that you pray for comfort and peace for them and their family.



### A message from Jackie Vickers, Impact Treasurer.

We give thanks for all of our supporters who give financially.  
We couldn't do what we do without you!

This term we give particular thanks for Jenny Roberts' and for her generosity towards Impact. The prayer and volunteering support that she gave during her life was such a blessing. We are thankful for the money donated to Impact following her thanksgiving service. Impact is also very grateful that a donation to the work of the charity is being given in memory of her each month as well.

We pray that those churches already committing to Impact will continue their financial support as part of their local mission giving in the year ahead. We are so grateful to them for their support. We pray other churches will respond as our new Church Champions share the work of Impact with their churches.

[www.impactbedford.org.uk](http://www.impactbedford.org.uk)

Bedford Area Schools Christian Support Trust

(Registered charity number 1010412) in association with Scripture Union).



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