



SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER



WELCOME!

It has been a very busy last half of term. Since coming out of lock down at the beginning of the year we are fully back in the schools that we have been working with, and they are in need of our services. We are still seeking to recruit two more workers to our team to support Kt in the excellent work that she is doing in the schools, supporting young people and being able to share prayer spaces and Easter Reflections.

Thank you for your faithful prayer and support for the work of Stort Valley Trust. We know that our work has a significant impact upon the lives of the young people that we work with. Kt regularly shares with us the stories of the positive impact that listening to and supporting young people and their families makes to the lives of the young people that we seek to serve. It is from this basis of relationship, that we have been able to run clubs that seek to allow young people the freedom to ask the big questions about life and faith

Inside This Issue

Page 1 Welcome from a Trustee

Page 2 Kt's report

Page 5 Opportunities for prayer

Page 6 Celebration and Thanks.

and to share God’s view of the world and his love for others. There have been opportunities from this to provide direct Christian input to schools and the lives of young people and to follow this up and build on the relationship. This is long term slow work. Kt has been amazing as our only schools worker. Please pray for more workers to work alongside Kt: We have waiting lists of young people in our schools who want to talk to Kt and spend time with her because God, through her, affirms his love and care for the young people that she works with and changes their lives in positive ways.

He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. (Luke 10:2)

Please continue to support us all in prayer. Please also come to the celebration of our work at St James, Thorley on Sunday June 12th. Please email and let us know that you can attend.

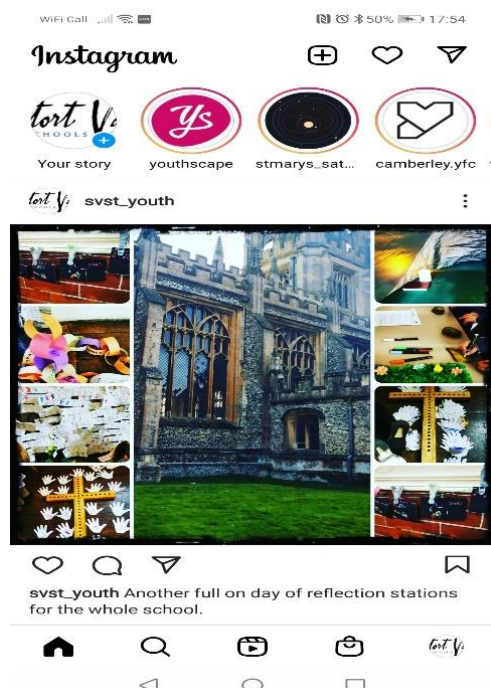
Kathryn Winfield (Trustee)



Kt’s report

As always the timetable has remained very full on in school.

Teaching staff continue to be incredible, giving their absolute all to their students. We saw in many schools a staff shortage towards the end of last term with unprecedented numbers of staff absent with covid and year groups again working from home. However, as is always the case staff stepped in to support staff wherever they could and we were there with the cake!



Our SPACE lunch clubs have paused for now to make room for other lunchtime offerings from us. Why keep changing? You may well ask - the answer is twofold. Firstly, to keep children and young people interested, thus avoiding clubs turning stale and secondly, because in each setting it takes time to discover what works for those students in that school. There isn’t really a one size fits all approach. So by trialing different types of lunchtime provision we can engage with different year groups and different demographics of young person.

Our mentoring work continues at a pace, with our services being requested by parents and waiting lists in all the schools in which we work, although our heart is still to reach and support more students in

more schools.

We continue to enjoy great partnerships with these schools and are grateful to be welcomed guests into the school communities, loving and serving. More of our young people have now, with parental consent, connected with us on Teams and this gives us an excellent platform to support them remotely should they be struggling to attend school for mental health reasons or isolating due to covid.

It is just another string to the provision we already provide that helps the student when most needed.

As I've said before the burdens carried by young people really are weighty and have only been magnified by covid. I have no doubt we will be measuring its effects upon this generation for many years to come. I would especially welcome your prayers for them therefore as we head towards exam time.

Coming up we have Y6 SATS, Y11 GCSE's, Y12 Mock A levels and Y13 A levels. Exams are a stressful time! Think back to times in your own life when you've sat exams or even been preparing for job interviews and now imagine yourself in those situations but with huge chunks of learning missed, or fragmented education or missing data or information and not because you were absent, truant, or disengaged but because the whole world around you had come to a virtual standstill! It has been an unprecedented experience for this generation to shoulder. All of these year groups have experienced significant disruption to their education thanks to covid and for many students, particularly this year's Y11 students, having to face formal in-hall examinations, having missed so much course content, disruption and catch up lessons, is truly daunting. Please pray for them all: for the protection of their hearts and minds; that they will know without any doubt that they are of far greater value than can be surmised in an exam or assessment; and that they will feel the closeness of a loving heavenly Father, who treasures them and is their greatest champion.

Finally, we had the absolute pleasure of supporting two superb teams of young leaders as they led their schools through Easter reflection stations. The young leaders worked so incredibly hard and were an absolute credit to their schools. They provided well planned and thought provoking activities around the theme of Easter and Lent. To give you a taste....

Making an Easter cross

This station gave students the opportunity to think about the cross at Easter. Students were encouraged to decorate the cross and focus on one person that they wanted to pray for over Easter. Then every time they held their cross, it would remind them to pray for that special person, knowing God heard our prayers and that talking to Him doesn't have to be complicated.

Fear Tent

In the fear tent, students were encouraged to bring their fears and worries before God. There were times leading up to Easter when the disciples were scared, it's a normal thing to feel. The tent was set up to be calm and soothing. Whilst in the tent students wrote or drew their fears, worries or anxieties.

When they emerged from the tent the young leaders told them to screw up the paper and throw it away. This was symbolic of leaving these fears behind with God. They then watched bubbles floating up again to symbolise those worries floating away upwards to God, knowing we can trust Him with them because He loves us.



Sorry stones

We all do things wrong, that's just life. God knows we're not perfect because He knows what humans are like but the things we do wrong often cause us to feel heavy, sad or burdened. The students wrote the thing they were sorry for on the stone, held it whilst they prayed and then used the water to symbolise the washing away of the thing written.

Hopes and Dreams

The Bible tells us that God has plans and purposes for our lives but He's really interested in our hopes and dreams. Students were encouraged to draw or write them onto the rainbow cards and then leave them at the foot of the cross, knowing God is faithful.

Help sticks

All of us need help sometimes. Just before he was arrested, when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, he asked God to help him. Students spent time thinking about what they need help with? They then wrote or drew their thoughts or prayers for help onto a lolly stick and planted it in the garden as a symbol of their prayer.

Praying for the world and Ukraine

In the Easter story, after Jesus had come back to life, he told his disciples to share his message, to heal the sick, feed the hungry, to care for the poor. Jesus encouraged them to make the world a better place. Students were encouraged to think about things in the world that don't seem right. What could they do to make the world a better place? What could God do? They then wrote those thoughts onto little flags and placed them around the world. They also had the opportunity to pray for Ukraine and place a star onto the flag to denote their prayer.

As always, an exhausting day!

Kt Haynes



Opportunities for prayer

EDUCATION SUNDAY

Education Sunday is a National Day of Prayer and Celebration for everyone involved in the world of education. It's celebrated on the second Sunday of September which this year, is the 11th. Do join us in praying for our local schools, staff and pupils on the day. You can also access resources put together by Churches Together in England by visiting their website – cte.org.uk/educationsunday



PRAYER GROUP GATHERINGS

Our next Prayer Group gathering will take place on **Monday 27th June** from 10.30am to 11.30am at Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church. Please join us to pray for local schools, staff and pupils and to hear more about what's currently happening within our schools ministry. All are welcome and refreshments are provided.

Linda Peake & Nikki Jamieson

National Volunteers Week



1 – 6 June 2022 is National Volunteers week. We would like to use this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all those who have volunteered for SVST in any way over the past year.

Maybe you would like to volunteer for us. We would love to hear from you. In particular we are looking for a new Treasurer and also Trustees, but if you have other talents, please still get in touch.

Maybe you or somebody you know would be interested in working for Stort Valley Schools Trust, we still have a vacancy for a permanent Schools Chaplain 3 days a week. We also have a vacancy for a Schools Support worker to cover Nicola's maternity leave.

Check out the website for more details of what the job entails and how to apply.



ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS!

Our 30th Anniversary Celebration is just a couple of weeks away! Please join us to mark this milestone occasion with food, fun and thanksgiving.

The event is free and everybody is welcome so do spread the word amongst your church, family and friends! If you can let us know if you are coming, then please RSVP to the email address, but if you can't, you are welcome to just turn up on the day.

For more information, please visit our website www.svst.org.uk or email us via enquiries@svst.org.uk.

Nicola Williamson & Nikki Jamieson

Thank you to everyone who has supported us over our 32 years, whether you have been a supporter for many years or are new to SVST. This is very much a partnership with the churches and individuals. We can't do this without your support both in praying for the work and in giving financially. God has done so much through SVST over all these years and many youngsters have been reached with the good news of a loving Saviour. If you feel that you would like to help us financially, there are several ways in which you can do this. We can accept **online donations** - go to our website www.svst.org.uk and click on the donation button. There is no cost to you to donate this way and we will receive Gift Aid where appropriate. You can also pay directly into our Barclays Bank Account. **Sort Code: 20-17-35**

Account Number: 93400956 alternatively, cheques made payable to **Stort Valley Schools Trust** can be sent to:

SVST Secretary
43 Leigh Drive,
Elsenham
Bishops Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM22 6BY

Email us at: enquiries@svst.org.uk ... from whom Gift Aid and/or Standing Order forms can also be obtained.

Stort Valley Schools Trust is a Registered Charity No. 1001619

