More ideas for all-age worship

Education Sunday 2010

CALLED TO SERVE

STAND UP, SIT DOWN

Invite everyone to stand up. Then invite everyone to sit down if…,

- they last went to school over 50 years ago
- they last went to school over 30 years ago
- they last went to school over 10 years ago
- they last went to school over five years ago
- they last went to school over one year ago
- they last went to school this week

Point out at the start of the activity that 'going to school' means in any capacity – as a teacher, parent, teaching assistant, not just as a pupil.

The people standing at the end should all be currently involved in schools – as pupils, teachers, parents, schools-workers and other members of staff. (You will of course need to alter the last line of the activity if you are doing this during a school holiday.)

You could use a roving mike to find out which school people go to, or how they are involved in education. Try to show the breadth of involvement in education that your church has.

As an alternative, use the statements in the reverse order. You'll be able to see who is currently involved in school when the first lot of people sit down. You'll be left with the older members of the congregation. You could interview them to find out their memories of school, or which teacher made most impact on them and why.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Encourage people to get into groups of three or four, with people who are a different age to them. The exact mix of ages will depend on the people in your congregation, but each group could have someone under 20, someone between 20 and 50 and someone over 50. You will also need to think about to explain this sensitively so that no one gets offended at being called 'old'! It will be less intimidating for children if a parent or adult helper takes them to find an older person.

Provide a couple of questions that people could discuss in their groups. If you have the equipment, put these on a screen at the front of the church. Some suggestions:

- Who is/was your favourite teacher and why?
- What did/do you do when you got/get home after being at school?
- What's the best thing you ever did at school?
- If you could change one thing about your schooldays, what would it be?
- What did/do you have to wear to school?
- How much homework did/do you get?
- How did/do you get to school?
- What was/is the most important thing you learned at school?

This conversation shows what people across the generations have in common, as well as how schools and education have changed over the years. It also illustrates how important teachers and schools can be in influencing children's lives. Finally, it gives people in the congregation a chance to get to know each other better.

INTERVIEW A TEACHER

- Use the cartoons in the PowerPoint presentation as a background to interviewing a teacher in your congregation. You won't want to use all ten images, but pull out three or four that suit the questions that you want to ask, depending on the theme of the service. Try to include opportunities for humour, insight and talking about Christian faith.

- Use the interview as a way of exploring the theme of vocation, and how this teacher discovered their vocation to teach.

- Discuss the questions in advance with the teacher(s) that you'll be interviewing. They will of course need to be discreet and sensitive about how they talk about pupils and situations, particularly if they work at a local school. Here are some ideas for using the cartoons to lead into the interview questions.

Cartoon
'Put down the ruler…' – worrying about the first lesson
Possible questions
- What made you decide to go into teaching? How did your sense of vocation develop?
- What word would you use to describe your first year of teaching?

Cartoon
Staffroom idol
Possible questions
- Who would win your 'staffroom idol' competition – who was the teacher who inspired you the most when you were at school?
- As a teacher do you have to decide between being strict and being popular? Is it possible to be both?

Cartoon
Confrontation – boy in armour - today is going to be tough
Possible questions
- How do you cope with the tough days? Does it make you question whether you're called to teach?
- What's your strategy for winning over pupils who are more challenging?

Cartoon
Multi-faith classroom
Possible questions
- What opportunities do you have to be open about your faith in school?
- Is it difficult to be true to your Christian faith in a multi-faith setting?

Cartoon
Forklift truck of marking
Possible questions
- We hear about teachers' workloads, but then you get lots of holidays! Is it a lot of hard work to be a teacher?
- What's the worst thing about being a teacher? What would you change if you could?

Cartoon
Inspection – bribing pupils
Possible questions
- What's it like to go through a school inspection? Does it feel personal?
- (If a teacher has an inspection coming up) What issues can we pray about for your school during the inspection?

Cartoon
First good lesson
Possible questions
- Tell us about a lesson that you approached differently because of your Christian faith.
- What do you most enjoy about teaching? What makes it all worthwhile for you?

Cartoon
Playground duty – praying for help
Possible questions
- How important is your Christian faith to you in your teaching? What difference does it make to be a Christian who is a teacher?
- How can our church support Christians in schools, both pupils and those who are working there?

Cartoon
Eureka moment
Possible questions
- What was the 'eureka moment' that made you decide to pursue teaching as a vocation?
- Adverts to recruit teachers at the moment highlight 'eureka moments' like these. What would you say to someone who is considering going into teaching?

Cartoon
School visit
Possible questions
- Schools have had to become much more safety conscious over things like school trips. What changes in education have taken place during your teaching career that you regret?
- Tell us about a memorable school trip that you have been on? (It could be as a pupil or as a teacher.)

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The Education Sunday 2010 theme was devised by an ecumenical steering group co-ordinated by Churches Together in England representing the following Christian denominations and organisations: the Association of Christian Teachers, the Baptist Union, the Catholic Church, the Church of England and the National Society, the Methodist Church, The Salvation Army, the Student Christian Movement and the United Reformed Church. The material in this resource was written by members of the *Transforming Lives* Project and the Education Sunday team. All worship material in this publication may be freely copied for single-occasion use as part of Christian worship. Any organisations or individuals wishing to reproduce this material in any other circumstances should seek prior permission from the Education Sunday Steering Group, Churches Together in England, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH.