



Network News

for SU groups

Edition 7 - September 2010

Go For It!

"Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!" (Ephesians 5:16, The Message)

Desperate days demand desperate measures. So what did Paul advise the Ephesians? To keep a low profile and hope nobody notices your faith? No. "Be filled with the Spirit," he commands. "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 5:18-20, NIV)

There's no sense of desperation or fear in that, just a sense of deep peace and joy. Do you share that joy as you begin a new term with your SU group? This is God's work, and He graciously invites us to partner with Him in it. The Holy Spirit helps us fix our eyes on Jesus, and put all our trust in Him. Our expectation rises as it rests securely in what He can do, and not what we can do.

"Encourage each other – build each other up." (1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11, NIV) You are hopefully linked with, and encouraged by, others in your region who are working in schools. You should also be encouraged by all the opportunities for young people to grow

and deepen their faith through SU's discipleship, prayer and residential events. And if you don't know where to start, this issue highlights some excellent resources.

So make the most of your opportunities, and encourage each other.

Michele Morrison



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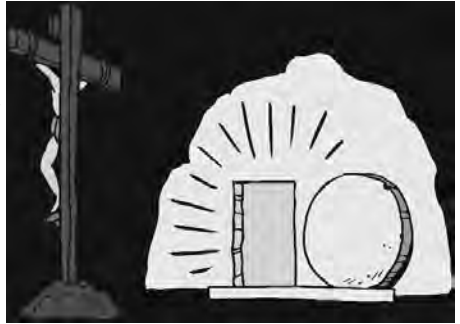
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Over the last two years, SU workers in Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian and other regions have worked with local churches to deliver Christmas and Easter presentations to a number of primary schools, in close partnership with the local church.

Aimed at children in P6 and P7, these presentations help them discover the true meaning of these Christian festivals. An hour and a half is packed with activities, crafts, quizzes and songs, and explores what the Bible has to say about Christmas and Easter. The “Nutty Professor” answers questions and points out some common misconceptions people have – for instance, did you know that nowhere in the Bible does it mention that Mary rode to Bethlehem on a donkey?



The response to these presentations has been very positive. It has enabled churches to build and strengthen links with their local schools. Davidson's Mains Parish Church, Edinburgh, is one church where volunteers have been equipped to offer the presentations themselves. P7s and their teachers come to the church, and while the children have a fantastic time, teachers and parent helpers enjoy coffee and tray bakes! It's been great to see a wide range of folk – from retired teachers to ex-

football managers and grannies – getting involved, and after a year of having help from SU workers, this church is now running the programme themselves.

Based on material originally created by Wayne Dixon, an SU worker in England, *es-team* workers have adapted it for our area. Team handbooks have been produced with step-by-step instructions, as well as children's booklets, to facilitate others running such presentations. These resources will all be available for download from early autumn from the *es-team* page on SU Scotland's website: www.suscotland.org.uk/esteam.



Saturday 2nd October – Action Group Day Conference

More information on the Action Group Day Conference can be found on page 9.

Monday 11th to Friday 15th October – SU Holiday, Alltnacrìche

The final SU Holiday of this season is open to P5-P7 pupils from across the country. You can find more details on the SU Holidays website: www.suholidays.org.uk.

Friday 15th to Monday 18th October – GO Conferences for S4-S6 Pupils

October holidays are not consistent in schools across Scotland so we try to rotate which pupils have easier access to the fourth day of this discipleship training event; sometimes it starts on a Thursday, but this year it runs Friday to Monday. Speak to your school about pupils having permission to attend if necessary (see the centre spread article on SU Groups contributing to schools). Details are on our website at www.suscotland.org.uk/goconferences.

Saturday 6th November – Children in the Church Conference, Inverness

A group, in association with ACTS and SU, is planning two Conferences that will explore

- i) how children should be nurtured in faith in church communities;
- ii) how children can contribute to the growth of their church communities;
- iii) where the Bible sits with this practise; and
- iv) what adults and children learn together on the journey of faith.

There will be workshops and displays of innovative methods of working with children in church, and also opportunities to share your experiences with others.

Tuesday 16th November – Pray for Schools Day

More information on Pray For Schools day can be found on page 11.

Saturday 27th November – Children in the Church Conference, Edinburgh (see above)

Tuesday 28th to Thursday 30th December – Christmas Houseparty

This event is open to all pupils in S4-S6 (and any group leaders who want to join the team!). Complete details are on our website, www.suscotland.org.uk/christmashouseparty.

Saturday 26th Feb (Glasgow) / 12th March (Dundee) – Beauty for Ashes

More information can be found at www.suscotland.org.uk/beautyforashes.

Saturday 19th March (Dundee) / Sunday 27th March (Grangemouth) - SCP

More information can be found at www.strictlycomepraying.org.uk.

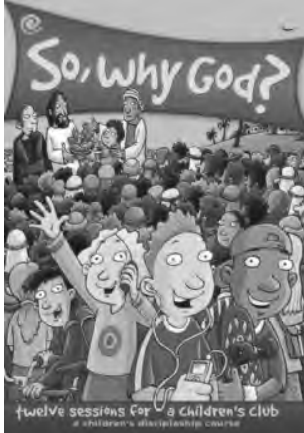
Friday 22nd April – Good Friday

Another very late Easter, meaning that some schools have a strange four-day week between their fortnight's holiday and the Easter Weekend. Could your SU Group assist chaplains in the Easter services or other curricular activities that week?

Schools are full of kids who don't know much about the Bible, and some of them will come to your groups. So where do you start?

The *Eyelevel* series of resources is ideal for introducing un-churched young people to Jesus, using everyday words to communicate in ways that are relevant.

So Why, God?



This is a discipleship course for kids aged 7-11. The twelve-session series teaches the basics by taking questions children have asked about God and Christianity and helping them find the answers through the Bible and the testimony of their leaders.

Following the life of Jesus on earth, the course examines who God is – what he looks like, how he made humans, why Jesus had to die. The second half of the series addresses hard issues such as “Why does God let bad things happen to good people?” and “Do good people go to heaven?”

Serious subjects examined through Scripture, prayer, and deepening relationships, and enhanced by fun activities, games and crafts – it's a great starting place for a new group.

Take Away

The newest offering in the *Eyelevel* series is “Take Away”, continuing the story of the early church as started in this year's holiday club material, “Rocky's Plaice”. Previous titles include:

- Awesome! (signs that point to Jesus as the Son of God)
- Streetwise (houses Jesus visited in Luke's gospel)
- Clues2Use (a quest to find Jesus in daily life)
- Rocky Road (Moses' dramatic escape from Egypt)
- High 5 (how Jesus touched the lives of others)
- Target Challenge (the story of David)
- Dress Rehearsal (eight fantastic Bible stories)

These resources are available to view and purchase at the Scripture Union England & Wales website: bit.ly/su-eyelevel.



curriculum for excellence



We considered the values of an SU group a year or so ago, and they are on our website for your reference. While they are all expressed in terms of the evangelistic and discipleship opportunities in the school (e.g. to deepen relationships with each other whilst learning dependence on God), we are also able to speak confidently in educational terms of what an SU Group – by whatever name – offers a school.

for organised acts of worship within the informal curriculum as part of a range of activities offered by groups, chaplains and other religious leaders.” Not a bad description of an SU Group!

Religious Observance guidelines mention that “suitable space could be made available

Curriculum for Excellence vocabulary will be very familiar to teachers but not necessarily to the hundreds of parents, pupils, and other volunteers leading SU Groups. Such groups can develop these aspects of the four capacities that all of us involved in Scottish education are trying to enable young people to attain:

- Confident Individuals, who have secure values and beliefs that they are able to communicate.
- Effective Contributors, who are able to work in teams, apply critical thinking to new contexts and communicate in different settings.
- Successful Learners, who are open to new ideas, learn independently or in groups and make reasoned evaluations.
- Responsible Citizens, who understand beliefs to make informed choices and decisions.



All schools are on a “Journey to Excellence” that involves taking action to ensure that Curriculum for Excellence delivers its planned

outcomes. Active partnerships between a school and local people or organisations help to provide “imaginative contexts, learning experiences and opportunities for personal development.” Excellent schools enable pupils to “willingly assume positions of responsibility while being supported and trained”, which is something an SU Group can do – or use the wider work of SU Scotland's GO Conferences or other *COMMISSION* events.



The Scottish Curriculum is underpinned by the four values inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament – wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. What great Biblical words these are! What an opportunity to teach them and demonstrate them with pupils!

So how's your group doing? Knowing these educational contexts, are there ways you could step a little further out of the boat? Take a few minutes to consider the following questions:

1. Does your group offer worship?
2. What roles could pupils or others take in leading the group?
3. How do pupils apply what you're teaching?
4. Does the school need more than one group to be able to do more than one thing well?
5. Could the group take an assembly or other activity?
6. Could you be looking for a better room?



7. Does the school's leadership team know what the group does?
8. If you've been visited as part of the HMle inspection in school, please tell us so that we can share the experience!

A copy of the values of SU Scotland schools groups can be found on our website at www.suscotland.org.uk/su-groups. For more examples of how SU Scotland's work contributes to the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence, ask your local office for a copy of our *Explore Together* booklet (pictured) – then offer it to the school's Senior Management Team.

8 Primary And Secondary Resources

Are you looking for material that can stand alone in one-off sessions, rather than series-based resources? Material tailored for your own group, to reflect your own topic ideas? *Schoolslive* is the answer, for both primary and secondary groups.



This interactive resource enables you to register your group online, including team members, so your whole team can participate in the online planning or at least be told by email what their part is. *Schoolslive* material divides into three brands according to age:

- 1) SUPA Clubs (primary)
- 2) Re:source (11-14s)
- 3) Re:source (14+)

SUPA Club outlines are available for every week of term. Each term follows a theme, story or Bible character, breaking off to include special festivals. The material includes leaders' notes giving ideas for telling the Bible story, for games and crafts, songs and prayers and memory verses.

Re:source follows the same general presentation, offering a meeting outline for each week. Activities are differentiated and labelled as being more suitable for pupils with or without a church background.



If you want to select your own theme for the session, that's easy. The search function on the site enables you to type in a Bible reference, theme, character, season, or just a word topic such as 'treasure'. You can narrow the findings by filtering it for age group, type of activity, etc.

It's simple:

1. Go to www.schoolslive.org.
2. Log in or register. If you are already registered on the *re:source* website, you can use the same login details.
3. Click on 'Take the tour' to discover how to get the most from *Schoolslive*.
4. Create a profile for your group(s).
5. Begin planning your programme and editing your sessions via the 'programme' and 'session' tabs.
6. Print out your session notes and handouts or email them to other team members.

Where is God leading SU Scotland? What is he asking us to do with the resources and opportunities he has provided?

Without suggesting we've tapped into 'the' divine plan, here is our answer:



Our vision is to see the children and young people of Scotland exploring the Bible and responding to the significance of Jesus. Everything we do must reflect that, re-affirming that opening the Bible and making Jesus known is core to school SU groups.

But what difference do we want to make in the lives of children and young people over the next five years? It's a great question.

Our aspirations for children and young people are set out around five themes: deepening relationships, exploring the Bible, responding to the significance of Jesus, prayer and equipping for service.

There are four challenges: to prioritise the disadvantaged, to give greater attention to children's and young people's family context, to work more closely with the church and to evaluate our ministry more effectively.

But what are we going to do? Lots, but for schools and school SU groups the key headlines are: increasing the number of SU groups in primary schools, and take more opportunities to teach Bible stories at Christmas and Easter; help Secondary SU groups to grasp fresh opportunities to reach out; recruit a significant number of extra volunteers; encourage more Christians into education; equip SU group leaders in engaging with the Bible and discipling young people.

Please pray, and go to www.suscotland.org.uk for detailed information. Also, chat with your Regional Worker about the exciting implications.

Andy Bathgate

Action Group Day Conference

This conference will take place at Perth Baptist Church on Saturday 2nd October 2010, 10:30am - 4pm. It is a day for volunteers from across Scotland to explore together how Scripture Union Scotland's thinking for the next five years works out at a local level. Your Regional Worker would be delighted to hear of your interest in helping to make this happen.

You are invited to join us for this strategic event. If you would like to come, please contact Noel Slevin on (0141) 352 7631, or by emailing Noel.Slevin@suscotland.org.uk.

Why fill in annual Volunteer forms (sent to all current volunteers in September)? Because they:

- enable us to assure parents and Headteachers that you are suitable to engage in Christian work with children
- give us up-to-date contact information for the leaders of each group
- give you the benefits of cover under SU's Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance and also access to help from SU Scotland's 24hr Emergency On-Call Phone cover related to Child Protection or other incidents for all SU events.

If you were registered in 2009-10, you fill in a brief update, and obtain one reference. If you are new to SU Scotland or weren't registered in 2009-10, there is a more detailed Volunteers Application, and two references are required. We then obtain a Disclosure for you.

Please note:

1. Each school group needs one Team Leader, approved by your Regional SU Staff member, to take overall responsibility for the group.
2. Only the Team Leader can sign forms to register secondary young people on *ignite*, SU Scotland's youth website (www.suignite.org.uk).
3. The new PVG Disclosure system, to be phased in over four years beginning in November, should reduce the need for multiple Disclosures for those volunteering with several organisations.

If you have not been a registered SU Volunteer for two years or more you will not be sent forms to update; you can, however, get them from the SU website or from your Regional worker (addresses on the back page) or Associate/Local Area worker.

SU Holidays 2011

Book next year's SU Holiday this September! Bookings for the 2011 SU Holidays programme can be made via the SU Holidays website (<http://www.suholidays.org.uk>) towards the end of September. The brochure will be distributed later in the year, arriving on campers' doorsteps between Christmas and New Year.

Go With Your Group

Have you considered taking a group from your school to an SU Holiday? The longer events are a great way to get to know the young people in your group. The Holidays Team can help to make this a stress-free option, ring them on 0141 352 7621 to talk about the possibilities.

Need More Information?

More information is available from your Regional Worker, or via the Holidays Team by emailing holidays@suscotland.org.uk.

Join the rest of Europe in Praying for Schools!

On Tuesday 16th November, people all over Europe will focus on prayer for their local schools. What can you do to make Pray Day happen in your area? Here are some ideas:



- Take inspiration from 24/7 prayer and arrange prayer cover throughout the day for your local school, pupils and school staff;
- Gather together your school's prayer group, fellow SU group leaders or church folks to pray – at church, at home, at school;
- Make an interactive prayer space available at church for folks to drop in throughout the day;
- Make an interactive prayer room available in school so young people can drop in at lunchtime or after school (ask the Headteacher for permission);
- Tell your SU kids that Pray Day is happening and get them involved in thinking up ideas, or use the "Pray the Bible" cards from our website;
- Have a staff/pupil prayer breakfast;
- Mark it in your diary and pray on your own!

Primary and secondary SU Group resources will be available in the autumn to run a series on prayer leading up to Pray Day, together with an exciting leaflet called "Five", produced by our friends at Pray for Scotland. Get your SU kids praying for five minutes for five days for five weeks for five people, then share the stories of what God has done. There are two versions of the "Five" leaflet available, one for use with primary SU groups and the other for secondaries.



All resources for Pray Day can be downloaded from www.suscotland.org.uk/pray.

Email your prayer stories, including what you did on Pray Day, to pray@suscotland.org.uk. Please remember to feed back the answers to prayer! You can also email for copies of the "Five" leaflet.

Regional Office Contact Details

Glasgow Milton Street Office

Phil Wray (Director)
Jen Robertson (Regional Worker)
Steve Hall (Ignite)
Noel Slevin (Admin)
regional@suscotland.org.uk
0141 352 7631

Aberdeen Office

Andrew Thompson (Regional Worker)
Michele Morrison (Admin)
aberdeen@suscotland.org.uk
01224 211409

Ayrshire Office

Trish Archibald (Regional Worker)
Julie Bain (Admin)
ayrshire@suscotland.org.uk
01292 267637

Inverness Office

Colin Carmichael (Regional Worker)
Annette Maclean (Admin)
inverness@suscotland.org.uk
01463 791177

Dumfries & Galloway Office

dumfries@suscotland.org.uk
(Phone contact via Julie Bain at Ayrshire Office)

Dundee & Angus Office

Gavin Berry (Regional Worker)
Liz Donald (Admin)
dundee&angus@suscotland.org.uk
01382 772534

Borders Office

Esther Bailey (Regional Worker)
esther.bailey@suscotland.org.uk
01387 375638

Edinburgh & Lothians Office

Jackie Ringan (East Team Leader)
Laura Wilgus (I.S.), Hazel Jamieson,
Gavin Thomson, Jo Black, Lesley
Crawford, Gill Proudfoot, (Regional
Workers)
James Gill (Missions)
Bobby Thomson, Helen Anderson,
Tricia Roy (Admin)
edinburgh@suscotland.org.uk
es-team@suscotland.org.uk
0131 445 4125

Glasgow Challenge House Office

Kenny McKie (West Team Leader)
Adrienne Cartwright (I.S.), Martin
Boyd, Ken Coulter, David Clipston
(Regional Workers)
go.admin@suscotland.org.uk
0141 353 7950

Lendrick Muir / Perth, Kinross & Fife and Forth Valley

Gordon Roy (North Team Leader)
Bruce Lockhart (Regional Worker)
Sue Hamilton (Admin)
sue.hamilton@suscotland.org.uk
01577 842017

For further details and downloads for each regional area, please visit the regional pages at www.suscotland.org.uk/regional

Editor: Michele Morrison
Design: Noel Slevin