

Over the last 12 months we have seen 3 Trustees step down, having completed their terms of office. We now have 4 Trustees. It is important for the health and vitality of FACT to have a balanced representation of Christian thinking. We draw Trustees from the many and various Christian denominations. Alongside that quality, we need those people to bring their wisdom and experience from business and their life skills.

Is this something that interests you?

The Trustees meet once a quarter for an evening meeting, but most of the input and engagement happens outside of those meetings. It's possible to do a little or a lot, you choose.

The Trustees are very keen to recruit new blood to the board and over this next year they would hope to add another 2, possibly 3, Trustees. There is a particular need at this time for a Treasurer as this role is being temporarily held by one of the Trustees.

I would be more than happy to meet with anyone to chat through the details about what being a Trustee would entail. The Chair of Trustees would also be very happy to meet up to answer any questions you might have.

I recognise that this role is a 'back room' role. It isn't your skills with children that are needed just a sympathy towards the mission goals and a desire to support the work by helping in the charity's governance. FACT is not one person but a team of people using their particular skills for the good of the ministry.

If you find yourself stirred as you read this then don't put it down and do nothing, pick up the phone or drop me an email and start the process of investigation, to see if your skills and abilities fit our needs and requirements at this time. Listen out for that still, small voice of God. You won't need a pith helmet for this missionary engagement but your involvement will be Kingdom Building.

One of the down sides to being on my own is that the regular times of prayer we had as a team have been lost. These precious times taken each day afforded us opportunities to pause and pray together. Times to give thanks for what we perceived God was doing in and through the ministry of FACT, times to ask God for what we needed and sensed He wanted to give us or release in us. My challenge is to find a way to create these opportunities again, whilst recognising the difficulty of doing these things on my own.

I have decided to set aside 20 minutes each Tuesday morning at the FACT office. Starting at 8am, I will simply pause to pray.

There is an open invitation to anyone to come and join me at the office for this short time. I recognise that this may not be possible for many of you, but perhaps you could pray on your way to work at that time, perhaps you could put a reminder in your phone and, wherever you are, you could pray for me and the ministry of FACT. As we enter August with holidays coming and going, I may not be available every Tuesday so I will start 'officially' on 28th August.

Maybe you can't commit to every week, but to attend once in a while would be encouraging to have you join with me in this time of prayer. If you are praying at that time but not at the office with me you may wish to let me to know as a means of encouragement. This isn't a perfect answer, but it's a start. I am happy to explore different times and places, so feel free to get in touch and have a chat.

The exhortation in Scripture is simple yet, not so simple to do in reality.

"Ask, and what you are asking for will be given to you. Look, and what you are looking for you will find. Knock, and the door you are knocking on will be opened to you. Everyone who asks receives what he asks for. Everyone who looks finds what he is looking for. Everyone who knocks has the door opened to him."



Faith Awareness
in Children Trust

FACT, Peterhouse, St Peter's Close
Staines, Middlesex TW18 2ED

01784-457601
office@thefact.co.uk

www.facebook.com/

FACT.FaithAwarenessinChildrenTrust

www.thefact.co.uk

Knowing certainty but living with uncertainty

The headline above is the wording of a simple poster that is on the wall in my office. It reminds me of the truth that God is a certainty; dependable and constant. Even if He is unfathomable and not totally knowable, He is certain and can be relied upon. To contrast that, life is always uncertain with possibilities for good and bad. It is normal to try and mitigate the risks that might present themselves by taking, what we consider to be, a safer path or route. These are very sensible precautions. However, in the end there is no way of knowing the future and what it might hold. Only God knows. One philosopher noted that ships are safest in the harbour but that is not what they were made for. They were meant to be on the open sea with all the possible perils and all the possible advantages and success. So life is uncertain and risky.

Recently I was given a few verses from scripture by a supporter as an encouragement. They read:

*He who watches the wind will not plant his seeds.
And he who looks at the clouds will not gather the
food. Just as you do not know the path of the wind
or how the bones are made of a child yet to be
born, so you do not know the work of God who
makes all things. Plant your seeds in the morning,
and do not be lazy in the evening. You do not know
which will grow well, the morning or evening
planting, or if both of them alike will do well.*

Ecclesiastes 11: 4-6

Solomon is attributed with writing this and it is typical of much of his wisdom about who we are before God and that life is full of risks.

I was reminded once again that the sowing of seed should be done regardless of its perceived likelihood of success, as we are not the ones who make things grow, it is God, a theme often taken up elsewhere in the Bible e.g. 1 Corinthians 3:6 Today we live in a society that is becoming increasingly risk averse and that way of living can so easily infect our walk of faith.

Since returning from my sabbatical and trying to move forward with new projects and enterprises it has been very apparent to me that there are many unknowns and in some cases huge risks. Failure is an option and generally people are willing to entertain that but, in a warped sense, people are less comfortable with the idea of 'waste'. It's ok to try and not succeed, but there mustn't be any waste. One Christian reminded me that there is no waste in God's Economy only unknown paths that we travel along.

FACT's desire to be 'cutting edge' means we are risk takers and, quite possibly some or all, our attempts could be wasteful or bear no harvest.

As we come to the end of this school year we are already preparing for the next one, with projects and schemes that will involve sowing in 'the morning or evening' yet having to trust our God of the harvest. I'm glad it's not about being dependant on our own abilities.

Simon

Time to Wonder



The start of July saw the FACT team of myself, and a good number of volunteers, spend 2 days running our **Time to Wonder** project. Christ Church, Staines generously hosted this event. Once the chairs had been cleared to one side, the gazebos erected and draped with translucent cloth, we were soon ready to accept the first of 4 classes from Buckland School. Y3 and Y5 attended with their teachers and support staff. All joined in and all appreciated a time to pause, to still and to reflect.



These 2 picture show a few children taking time to reflect on someone who is special to them. This is one of 3 activities in the prayer tent that they all enjoyed.



Plant early in the morning, and work until evening, because you don't know if this or that will succeed. They might both do well. Ecclesiastes 11:6

Time to Wonder

There was equal levels of engagement and discovery in the other two tents: The Good Fruit Tent and the Rock Tent.

The picture shows the Rock Tent and the children hearing about some 'Rock Facts', before holding stones and gems that allowed for a moment of wonder and consideration about hidden beauty and value.



The Circle Time is always a good time to re-enforce thinking that has started to emerge. For some children being able to state what they had learnt, that they are special and important was a pleasing and confirming experience. For others it was another opportunity to simply be still and think things over, without having to share with the class.



The two comments that stood out for me were:

I am unique and I can see things my own way
I've learned that God is always with me

Plans are on the drawing board to expand the number of opportunities for Time to Wonder from September. As always, get in touch for more details.

Toddler Groups



This half term, I visited 5 Toddler Groups in the local area. The picture above is at Buggies and Bikes, Staines Congregational Church. It's a pleasure to see the delight from the children (and adults!) when I introduce a puppet. This time it was 'Wilf's' turn to comment on the story of the healing of the 10 lepers. We thought about saying thank you, as well as spending time counting to ten. We also sang a thank you song with lots of pictures to look at as we all joined in.

This is an area of work that will be increased from the autumn. I am currently contacting other groups in the area to offer them the same level of input as these five groups have experienced. I have already had one new group say yes and we are working out dates.

If you know of a group that might like a visit then do get in touch. I do a very simple, 'Try before you buy' scheme which avoids any uncertainty about giving it a go. I would love to send them *their* own leaflet with *their* name on the front.



Standing alongside

Buggies & Bikes

Working together to stimulate children's Moral & Spiritual development

Curry Fundraiser

FACT's first 'Curry Fundraising Evening' was a fabulous event. There was superb food supplied by the School of Spice in Shepperton, a raffle with top prizes and a free bar (with a large donation bowl in front of it!) 30 people sat, ate, chatted and heard a short talk from Simon on the latest developments of the ministry.

A number of people had contacted prior to the event to send their apologies along with a donation towards the evenings total. Once all the the costs had been taken into account a profit, including the donations totalled **£725**. Thank you to everyone who made it happen, especially those who came and enjoyed the evening together.

Time to Share



The Faith in the household project has a new name and logo. 'Time to Share at Home' materials are now being created in

readiness for the autumn. Packs with cubes and a covering letter are starting to stack up in the office. Conversations are being had with interested parties and its hoped that September will see the initial roll out of this exciting new scheme. The feed back stories of how households met together in simple yet profound ways have been extremely encouraging and bode well for the future. It will cost you nothing to come and have a look and find out how it all works. I can promise good coffee and chocolate biscuits! Let's talk together and see if this material would benefit you, in your situation.

