

Education Sunday 31st January 2010

Nationally, Education Sunday has been around for over 100 years so it was good to remember it this year in Sudbury! St Peter's Church was the venue and the congregation totalled about 180. Several local schools were represented, although mainly from All Saints Middle, and Gt. Waldingfield, St Joseph's, St Gregory's and Tudor Primaries. Then there were representatives from many of the local churches.

The purpose of the service was to celebrate education in Sudbury, and for the churches to show support for all involved in education – and that is of course a lot of people! In addition to the pupils themselves and the paid staff, there are also governors, voluntary helpers, and parents, grandparents and others who share in the care of children.

The theme of the service was “Called to Serve” (the national theme) and the focus was on service to others in school, in the local and wider communities. Five schools each gave excellent presentations about service; a teacher and a teaching assistant spoke about why they served in schools; and Helen Matter, the Diocesan Schools Adviser, convinced us of the truth of I Corinthians 12 with a range of body parts scattered around the church! Sounds and actions of noses, eyes, ears, mouths, hands and feet must have raised eyebrows of the shoppers on Market Hill...

With the addition of some songs and prayers, there was a real buzz about the service and many felt that there was a positive sense of partnership between the schools and the churches. Feedback so far is encouraging a repeat next year.

Grateful thanks to the many who were involved in the planning and presentation, including Peter Halden whose help with the projector and screen was much appreciated!

Hopefully the service picked up the words of The Chief Executive of the Association of Christian Teachers who wrote, “.. *many congregations would love to show how much they value every child and adult in their community by affirming them in their life-long educational journey (whether at school, college, university or in the workplace) and offering meaningful spiritual and practical support..*” The churches have a real role in education and in supporting those involved with it. Thank you to all who demonstrated that on Sunday – and of course all who do so much during the rest of the year!