



# niscu

Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union

Spring Term 2017

north cumbria

## KNOCK -The Door will be opened! *Matt 7:9*

### Prayer meetings:

24 Apr, 15 May, 21 Aug, 18 Sept, 16 Oct, 20 Nov

*Usually 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month*

7.30 -8.30 pm at St Peter's Church,  
Kingstown Road, Carlisle, CA3 0BB

After each prayer meeting we send out a prayer update by email, including a detailed prayer diary. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the list. [north.cumbria@niscu.org.uk](mailto:north.cumbria@niscu.org.uk)

### Diary Dates

#### The NISCU North Cumbria AGM

Monday June 19<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm at St Peter's Church,  
Kingstown Road, Carlisle, CA3 0BB

- Hear what is happening
- Meet the schools workers
- See the Puppets
- Elect the committee.

#### The Summer Supper

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July, 6.30 - 8.30 pm at St Peter's Church,  
Kingstown Road, Carlisle, CA3 0BB

This is an event where we have the opportunity to thank all who take an interest in the work of NISCU in any way.

Families and friends are welcome too!

CONTENTS	Page
Diary Dates	1
An Open Book A treasured possession <i>Rachel Gleave</i>	2&3
An Open Invitation To children throughout the world. <i>Ruth Evans</i>	3&4
What Next? Moving on.	4
Michael's Return	4
Puppetual Fun <i>Ailsa Taylor</i>	5
Teachers' Supper report	6
Money Matters <i>Geoffrey Pearson</i>	6
Where next? <i>Future Strategy discussions</i>	7
Doors of Faith Barbara Gardner	7
Contact details	7
Prayer Diary	8

# An Open Book - What is your most treasured possession?

Rachel Gleave



Quick question – What is your most treasured possession or the thing you wouldn't live without? We are currently enjoying Lent when some people give up things and focus on God. This year I have given up caffeine and surviving (so obviously can live without it)! We all have things we are attached to and would rather not be without, but how important is your bible?? It sort of reminds me of the parable of the pearl of great price and how a man was willing to sell everything he had because that pearl is far more valuable than anything he

already has. The Kingdom of heaven and a relationship with God is worth far more than any earthly thing we might treasure and worth everything we might give up for it, but how do we find out about this treasure we are offered? Through God's word – the Holy Bible.

I have been recently reminded of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. As part of the ceremony she was presented with a bible and told '**Here is the most valuable thing that the world can afford**'. As a Christian I have several copies of the bible in different translations and here we are told it is the most valuable thing the world can afford – not because it is of a high price, you can pick up a copy of the bible for a few pounds, but because of its amazing and life changing content.

*2 Timothy 3:16 says All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. (NLT).*

That is what makes the bible so valuable – I know of no other book that can shape our lives the way that the bible does and all because it is God's very own words – given to us so we can know Him better.

Recently, I was privileged enough to go on a training course called *Understanding Christianity*. This is a new resource that has been recently written to support the teaching of RE in any school and is aimed at 4-14 year olds. The aim of the resource is to help children and young people to understand Christianity by rooting it in the bible (increasing biblical literacy), helping children to develop the skills they need to be able to make sense of biblical text and see the impact it has on the lives of believers and then make connections with their own lives. Did

anyone else notice how that fits quite closely to what NISCU aims to do? I don't know about you but the idea of children not only being told stories from the Bible, but being taught how to read it and make sense of it for themselves is very exciting to me. We have this amazingly valuable book and I hope it is your desire as much as mine to see this book open and being used well in all our schools.

Please pray with us that many of the local schools as well as lots nationally will take up this resource and really see how priceless the inspired word of God really is not just for Christians but for themselves too.

## An Open invitation - to children throughout the world.

*Ruth Evans*

Jesus said "*Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children.*" Mark 10 v 14

This verse is a constant reminder to me that in everything I do I have a responsibility to make sure that children feel encouraged and enabled to understand that God is interested in them and that I do not put anything in the way to make it too hard for them to see the good news of Jesus' love for them. Of course, there are certain limitations within the work we do but I am constantly aware of the privilege I have of being able to show Jesus to so many children and young people in North Cumbria.



This term I had the fun of a teaching series in a school entitled *Christianity around the world*. Due to numerous international contacts that I (and my friends) have we were able to investigate some of the similarities and differences between how Christianity 'looks' in the UK and in Iran, China, Burkina Faso, Romania, Mongolia and Russia. The impact of finding out about the persecuted church across the world, and the differences in style and freedom in some of the churches was obvious. The children were able to express their surprise at the restrictions in some countries, and their gratitude that they have the freedom to make choices here. Watching the class as they listened to a Russian Orthodox chant of The Lord's Prayer was possibly one of the most powerful moments I had – one child said 'I felt a really strong peace while we were listening to it, I really liked it.' The power of God's word is not limited by our understanding of the language! I hope to be able to roll out the series to other schools so that more children can understand that although the

working out of 'church' might be different, the God we serve and the Jesus who died to bring Salvation is the same for Christians throughout the world, and it is THAT which makes us a family, part of the Body of Christ.

Closer to home, partnering with other Christians from a variety of churches confirms that need to belong to the Body even more. A recent meeting in Wigton demonstrated clearly to me that, when we partner with churches in the work we do the Gospel can be so much more effective, and so many more schools can be supported, there are exciting times ahead!

At each monthly prayer meeting it is so evident that without the faithful prayer of so many supporters this work would be less impactful – it is an honour to be a small part of the bigger picture and to know that the work I do is supported by so many others. You too are part of the Body, and in God's love we work together for Him... THANK YOU!

## What next? Thank you! We wish you God's blessing!

**Letitia West:** We have been pleased to have Tisha work with us as an intern for the last two terms. Recently she has been doing some work leading assemblies on her own and we have valued her input. However she has had some health problems and has decided to have a less pressured term before she makes any decision about what the Lord wants her to do next. She will continue to do a small amount of work at Bethesda next term. Please pray for her to recover well, to experience the peace the Lord gives and have wisdom about her future.



**Kerry Stephens:** Kerry has served on the committee in these last two years and has made a good contribution to the work. Sadly we are losing her as she moves from the area. Congratulations to her husband, John, on his new appointment. We wish them every blessing and pray for them as they move home, move area and move to a new church fellowship.

## Michael's return!

We look forward to Michael's return on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Please pray for Ethan as he begins nursery and for Michael as he settles back into the work, renewing and creating new contacts. Pray for the whole family as they get used to a new routine.<sup>4</sup>



# Puppetual Fun

Ailsa Taylor

God is Good! I'm sure you have never doubted that, but his continued solutions to our problems never cease to amaze me. In December the two teams presented the Christmas story through the eyes of the angel Gabriel's surprising visits to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds. Rob the Roving Reporter interviewed Steve the Shepherd and Fluffy the sheep about their experience and we ended with a song "Angels Singing Glory" performed by an angel band. We went into 10 schools, including 4 we had not been to before: Lime House, Cumwhinton, St Margaret Mary's and Inglewood Juniors. Through St Margaret Mary's the door has opened to St Cuthberts and St Bedes.

We also had invitations to take the puppets into three mission churches: Gaitsgill, Blennerhasset and Plumland. One lady who lives near one of the churches, but had never been inside the church said it was the best carol service she had ever been to and would definitely visit the church again. For me, hearing stories like this brings home that God's kingdom has no boundaries. While NISCU's focus is quite rightly schools, the support we both have from and can give to churches within the area is so rewarding.

The term we have two new assemblies. We have resurrected an old favourite *The Lost Sheep* and I have written a new one *The Lost Son*. These complement each other very well. We have every slot filled for this term and almost all for the Summer term too. We are very excited to be going back into some schools that we haven't visited for a little while, including Rockcliffe School who we haven't been to for nearly 3 years!

God's solutions to problems are timely and so awesome. We praise God for Derek's new employment. However we were sad to lose his commitment to "team B". But we are absolutely praising God for Ken Holmes, our newest



The "A" team at Cumwhinton School

member, who is proving to be a fantastic puppeteer! We would love more puppeteers though, so please continue to promote us within your churches and circle of Christian friends. There is always the option of a third team!

I am very grateful to the puppet teams and to Wendy who deals with our bookings.

# Teachers' Supper

Christians in  
Education  
Network

This was our first event run especially to encourage Christian teachers and teaching assistants in our local schools. It was a very worthwhile evening. We had about 30 teachers come and others say they would like to come next time. They enjoyed a meal together, thanks to the committee and staff who provided it. Nick gave a very appropriate encouraging talk and there was opportunity for some discussion at the tables at the end.

Here are a couple of responses we received afterwards:

"I didn't know many people in the area and I feel I've made some new friends tonight."

"Thank you for the special evening you put on for us. The amount of time, effort and preparation you must have put into it was really appreciated. The meal was amazing - so delicious! We were made to feel valued, something that is not always felt in our profession nowadays. It was good just having rare time to spend relaxing, sharing and networking with other colleagues, particularly Christian colleagues, and the word Nick brought was timely and relevant"

We asked for staff to pass on any prayer requests for their schools. Since then a few have asked us to pray about special concerns. We are careful about confidentiality, but are pleased that this is yet another way NISCU can partner, not just with churches, but also with schools.

We will certainly hold another such event in the future. If you weren't there this time, but want to be on the mailing list please let us know!

# Money Matters

*Geoffrey Pearson*  
Treasurer

We are grateful to our faithful God that NISCU North Cumbria ended last year with a small surplus which was enhanced by a legacy received in the year. Looking forward to 2017 we are expecting some increase in costs as we plan to increase the effectiveness of our work in the schools. Thank you for your prayers and support as we impact young people's lives.

# Doors of Faith

*Barbara Gardner*  
*Area chair*

Prayer has undergirded the work here and so often we stand amazed as we see the Lord work, so graciously answering many specific prayers.

Recently Nick Klein, our CEO, organised a week of prayer throughout the whole NISCU area. Many joined us praying daily for the Lord to lead us forward to bring the gospel message to children in this generation. As I was praying I was challenged to pray that the Lord would open doors, but may they be “doors of FAITH!” Acts 14:27 (*Living translation*) Only this week Ruth told me of a member of a secondary school lunch club, saying he now believes in God and is seriously wanting to learn more. The Lord is not slow to answer!!

Thank you to all who pray for the work. How often do we say we can **only** pray! But that is absolutely just what is needed, because it pleases the Lord. He loves to hear and answer our prayers. So please keep up the good work!

## Where Next? Future strategy discussions

**The Brampton area** have lost/are losing 2 curates, 2 vicars, have one vicar on long term sick leave and the Methodist minister going on maternity leave. Some schools are feeling the loss of links they have built up with local Christians, who bring a Christian role model for their children. One head said to Rachel - “you are now the only one left!” We are considering what we can do to help.

**“Understanding Christianity”** Recently Rachel completed this course. It is a Church of England initiative to help RE specialists in C of E schools to understand and teach “Christianity”. Our hope is we can offer this to community schools too.

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

#### **Staff:**

Michael Fox 07772926081

michael.fox@niscu.org.uk

Rachel Gleave 07557987474

rachel.gleave@niscu.org.uk

Ruth Evans 07779267967

ruth.evans@niscu.org.uk

**Office:** St John’s Centre,

Close St, Carlisle CA1 2HA

**Puppets:** Ailsa Taylor / Wendy Coulson

07786160163 / 07894747346

puppetualfun@gmail.com

**Chair:** Barbara Gardner, 6 Hether Drive,

Carlisle CA3 0ED 01228 521673

north.cumbria@niscu.org.uk

**Treasurer:** Geoffrey Pearson, 7 Chapel Brow,

Carlisle CA1 2PP 01228 493429

[granpapearson@gmail.com](mailto:granpapearson@gmail.com)

# Prayer Diary

*Items in Blue are events led by Ruth in the Eden area*

*Regular events*

## SUNDAY

Pray for our staff, their family and churches.

**Rachel & Paul Gleave**, Isaac, Lauren, Reuben. (Members of St Peter's Church.)

**Michael & Sally Fox**, Gabriel, Ethan (Members of C.C.F.)

**Ruth & Bryn Evans**, John, Jemima, Mark (Members of King's church, Penrith)

## WEDNESDAY

### Primary club

**Calthwaite weekly** (Ruth) 15.30

### Secondary Club

**Nelson Thomlinson (weekly)** 12.20  
(Michael/ Ruth, Alan Rainford)

**Lime House** (Ruth) 13.30

**NW partnership Course (weekly)** 19.00  
at St John's Houghton (Rachel, Tisha)

### Collective Worship

Yewdale (Rachel)

Inglewood (Rachel)

Belle Vue (Rachel)

## MONDAY

### Quest Clubs (weekly)

Pennine Way (Diane, Susanne) 15.30

Houghton (Neal, Andrew, Trudi, Anne) 15.20

### Collective worship

Raughton Head (Ruth, Michael)

Shankhill (Rachel)

Lanercost (Rachel)

St Michael's Dalston (Ruth, Michael)

Bishop Harvie Goodwin (Rachel)

**North Lakes** (Ruth)

### Puppet assemblies (weekly)

**Prayer Meeting (usually 3rd Monday of month)**

St Peter's, Kingstown Rd, Carlisle CA3 0BB  
19.30

## THURSDAY

### Secondary club (weekly)

William Howard (Rachel, Tim) 12.25

### Puppet Assemblies (weekly)

### Collective Worship

James Rennie (Rachel)

Lees Hill (Rachel)

Scotby (Rachel, Michael)

**Calthwaite** (Ruth)

## FRIDAY

### Secondary clubs (weekly)

Trinity (Michael, Ben, Kristian, Trudi) 12.30

Richard Rose Central (Rachel, Brian) 13.05

### Collective Worship **Greystoke** (Ruth)

**Other** monthly

## TUESDAY

**Quest Club Kingmoor (weekly)** 15.30

(Barbara, Robert, Bruce, Helen, Trudi, Ruth, Margaret)

### Secondary Clubs (weekly)

**Caldew** (Michael) 12.20

### Richard Rose Morton

(Rachel Kristian Graham) 13.00

**QEGS Penrith** (Ruth) 13.00

### Collective worship

Kingmoor infants (Rachel)

Longtown (Rachel)

Hallbankgate (Rachel)

Brampton (Rachel)

**Skelton** (Ruth)

## SATURDAY

- **X:site Carlisle**, half termly, 6 - 8 pm at Hebron Evangelical Church
- Pray for a new committee in Penrith to be formed and good support for Ruth there.
- Pray for management team: Nick Klein (CEO), Pam Jones (operations manager), Ruth Robinson (admin)
- Pray for Trustees in their oversight
- Pray for Committee to support the staff well and have vision to see where the Lord is leading in the work in this area.

Collective worship sessions are not necessarily on the day they are put in this diary. If you would like a more accurate and detailed prayer diary we produce one each month and send it out by email. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the list. [Contact north.cumbria@niscu.org.uk](mailto:north.cumbria@niscu.org.uk)