



niscu

Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union

Spring Term 2016

north cumbria

Who rolled the stone?

Rachel & Michael with Deborah Smith

Easter is early this year, which means there is not much time to prepare for this year's lesson to local primary schools about Easter. We are aware that today children may know some parts of the Christmas story, but often very little of the Easter story. It was only a few years ago a secondary student asked in all seriousness: "did Jesus die of cancer?"

Put "Easter Images" in Google and the first 51 pictures are of Easter eggs, bunnies and flowers. Yet the death and resurrection of Jesus is the central truth of the Christian message. So this year we have met up with Deborah, our chief officer, to prepare a special exciting lesson entitled

"Who rolled the stone?"

It is a an investigation into a "crime scene" complete with police tape beside an empty tomb. There will be eye witness accounts and give the

opportunity for the children to investigate and discover the central facts of the Christian faith.



Please that we may produce a vibrant and accurate lesson. Also pray for schools to respond by allowing us to share this to their year 5 and 6 students. We sent a letter out to schools last week offering 15 possible times available between Mon 14 and Thurs 24 March. Within two hours we had two positive responses, which is an encouraging start.



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Rachel

&



Michael

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Praising God through the storms!

Rachel Gleave

What an end to 2015! Thanks to the visit of Storm Desmond the end of 2015 will certainly be remembered by many of us for a very VERY long time! Since then we have had 'Eva', 'Frank', 'Gertrude' and 'Henry'. In one school I had a conversation with a receptionist trying to guess what the next one would be called! (I had just arrived looking a bit soggy and windswept!) - We know it will be 'I' and a girl – according to Wikipedia it will 'Imogen'. Hopefully Imogen will not be visiting anytime soon!

As I am sure you know, several of our schools were badly damaged by flood water and were forced to close early for the Christmas break, not that some of the young people seemed to mind!

Having talked to a couple of head teachers it appears that the repair work will be ongoing for the rest of the academic year with a view to the schools being fully repaired for September! A long process!

Although the glue on my shoes has dissolved and my toes have got wrinkled

I have been greatly encouraged (and have been blessed with the opportunity to be an encouragement to others)!

I was greatly encouraged for many reasons but one of them was the puppet teams determination to keep going with the planned visits even though Eden bridge was closed for two weeks and it took



Floods at Trinity school

The school hall, not the swimming pool!

so long to get anywhere! Even though I had some cancellations it was great to know God's word was still going out! I was especially encouraged by the puppet team visit to Norman Street school. Having made the decision to stay open even though much of the local area was flooded to provide some normality for the pupils and help their families, our puppet team was already booked in for a visit and were able to support the school in this way!

Another encouragement was Warwick bridge reopening just in time for me to be able to pick up James Edgell, from Holme Eden parish, and take him with me for an assembly at William Howard. When I dropped him back the road was beginning to flood again, but the Lord knew just how long we needed!

I also tried to use this as an opportunity to be an encouragement to others and show God's love and care. NISCU has a link already with 3 of the schools that were flooded so I just sent very quick emails to the contacts I had saying I was thinking and praying for them and anything I could do just let me know. We don't however, have a contact (yet!) for Newman school who were so badly affected that they have needed to temporarily relocate to a new site. I wanted them to know I was thinking and praying for them too, so I sent them an email as well, not really expecting to hear back as they had so many other things to think about. Within minutes I had a reply from the administrator saying how much they appreciated our kind words and prayers. The next day I



Richard Rose Central Academy

had another email from someone on the senior leadership team saying *'Thank you very much for your message of support. It is very comforting to know we are in people's thoughts and prayers'*. Although there was nothing practical I could do, I can always pray.

Please pray for all our schools, but especially Crosby on Eden C E Primary, Central Academy, Trinity and Newman Schools over the coming months as they find creative ways to teach with limited rooms, sports facilities and resources. It has been a very stressful time for them.



Caldewgate

Give thanks that all school NISCU clubs are now running again. Assemblies continue to be booked and in many ways things are back to normal. Pray Rachel and Michael will continue to give positive support to staff and children.

... that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” *John 3:16*

It’s days like this that I ask myself “Why do I do this?” This morning as I tried to write this article for the NISCU newsletter, I kept getting distracted: a phone call here and email there; nothing was going to plan. Having failed in my attempt to get it done, I gave up, had a cup of tea and then headed out to visit my regular lunch club. I do enjoy lunch clubs and am often surprised at the conversations that young people bring, however today I was left wanting: nobody turned up!

Now we have had bad weather and today was literally the calm between storms, but, in all my years as a NISCU worker I can count on one hand (and have fingers to spare) the amount of times that this has happened. So as I sit here typing (another cup of tea to hand) I’m reflecting on why I do this?

There is no such thing as a typical day when you work for NISCU, you may start in the morning where a school has given you the assembly topic of “kindness” and then head to another school for a lunch club where the topic of “judgment” may arise or maybe a heartfelt question: “Why does God allow bad things to happen?” You could even have a lesson thrown in, where you are interrogated by a bunch of young people (no spotlights shining in your face, well not to date anyway!) Throw in meetings and admin

and you start to see the plethora of challenges that face NISCU workers on a day to day basis. And that is before you even look at how to turn some topics into a meaningful Christian message!

I used to set myself a challenge: find a topic or get somebody to give you a random one then get to a gospel message within 60 seconds from that topic; go on try it, I dare you. Here is an easy one: “Fire Extinguisher!” It’s a fun exercise.



If you want to see a suggestion from someone who took up the challenge see page 7

It helps me to keep focused and because often questions are thrown at me I have to think on my feet. It helps me to do as the Bible says in 1 Peter 3:15: “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have”. For example considering a topic like “football” helps me to ‘field’ the discussion to bring it back ‘on side’!

So back to my question - why do I do this? John 3:16 serves as a constant

reminder; because God first did it for us! While we were still sinners God came to earth in the form of Jesus and gave His life because He loves us all. That is the heart of the Christian message and a message that the young people of today need to hear. That's why.

Just to assure you that there are many encouragements, looking back I noted that in one club we had 5 members in May last year and now have 22. In fact, apart from one, every club has increased

in numbers, with many young people keen to ask questions and be in a place where they can learn about the Christian faith.

Thank you for all your encouragement and support be it prayerful, practical, physical, financial or even just reading a newsletter to see what's going on. As a well-known supermarket tells us, every little helps.

Every little helps

Puppetual Fun

Ailsa Taylor

We are feeling very blessed at the moment as the puppet ministry is really growing. We had 15 team members in December. Many of you know and have been praying for us as we split into two teams for the Christmas Assemblies. I think this was our best yet. It explained the Christmas Story through Gabriel's various missions to tell people that Jesus was coming. It was very interactive and the children loved it. We were so encouraged we have performed it a couple of times since Christmas too!

Two teams means two new assemblies for 2016. We are concentrating on Promises that God made and keeps, and the fact that Jesus is not a fairy tale.

In the Promises assembly we are reminded that even though people may let us down, God has made many, many promises to us in the Bible and he never let's us down. We explore the promises God made to Abraham and Sarah in a little detail when Rob the roving reporter goes back in time to hear how God was faithful. We then finish with a song which depicts us as the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham that he would be the father of many.

Jesus is no fairy tale looks at the story of Jesus feeding the 5000 with only 5 loaves and 2 fish. We look at the story through the eyes of the baker who



made that bread for Jesus to use, and how she used her talents for God. Rob our Roving Reporter goes back in time to interview Daniel and King David about their gifts and how they used them for God. We finish with a fantastic Colin Buchanan song "Jesus is no fairy tale" which reminds us of our childhood bedtime stories and that the Bible is the word of God and is truth.

We are always humbled by knowing that so many people pray for us. Everything we do is underpinned by prayer. We go into these schools to share the love of Jesus with staff as well as students. Please continue to pray for our schools. They are on the frontline in so many ways whilst providing a safe environment for our children to play and learn. It is a

privilege that we can do this and we keep that at the forefront of our minds.

We are always looking for new members to join our teams. We practice on Thursday mornings Jan/Feb and Oct/Nov and go into schools Mondays and Thursdays during the rest of the year. If you have a couple of hours to spare each week on either of these days and would like to know more please give me a ring. The love and friendship that our team members have for each other is amazing and a real witness of God's love for us and how we should love. Come along and be a part of it. Please continue to pray for us during this time of adjustment.

Ailsa Taylor 07786 160163

"Answers to Prayer" are what NISCU is good at!"

Barbara Gardner

Of course it is the Lord who answers prayer, but I knew what the church leader meant when he said that. In the last few years we still are amazed at how many come to the monthly prayer meeting and how often we have prayed one month and get the answer by the next. We know many pray at home or in other groups too. But here are just a couple of recent examples from our prayer group -

The Lord Provides: Before Christmas we were told that a church who support us may not be able to continue. We wondered whether it was a sign of the present economic difficulties. However the church concerned doubled their contribution, another church gave to us

unexpectedly, so much so our treasurer wasn't sure it was for us, and we also received a gift from a trust fund which we had never had before. The Carlisle Mothers' Union and the Carlisle Methodist Circuit have also given us donations (that's another story!) On the other side, a church which got flooded are disbanding, so we pray for them as the members find new spiritual homes and ask the Lord to answer prayer for them too.

The Lord's timing is perfect: We were aware that Ruth Gay our treasurer needs to stand down at the next AGM. We are delighted to say Mr Geoffrey Pearson, a retired accountant, has moved to Carlisle from the midlands, is a member of Elim

Community Church and has agreed to be our new treasurer. Not only that, he has agreed to help now, which is such good timing as Ruth is having to cope with sorting things out after being flooded out. The other provision is for a temporary home for Ruth and family as the curate's house in Houghton is vacant for just the six months Ruth is likely to be out of her house.

Thank-you to all you wonderful folk who pray, give and volunteer help in many

ways. Please be encouraged and be persistent!

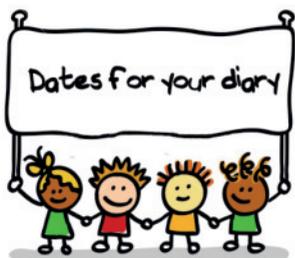
If you would like to join us at our prayer meetings you would be very welcome. *Details below.*

After each prayer meeting we send out the prayer update by email, so please let us know if you would like to be added to the list. (*Contact details on page 2*) We only send an email once a month unless there is an emergency, so you won't be bombarded with extra messages.

"The Gospel and a fire extinguisher"

Bible Verse: John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

A fire extinguisher is OK if you catch the fire early, but isn't adequate for a blazing fire. In the Bible, fire is often equated with judgement. We can use our own handy remedies for our failings: we do our best; we try to keep our temper; we try to be thoughtful etc. These can be like using a fire extinguisher to deal with our sins. But make sure you don't rely on these things when you really need to call the fire fighter! Only Jesus is the one who effectively deals with the judgement of sin. Only by believing in Him are we saved from the blaze of judgement. Let a fire extinguisher remind you of the seriousness of sin and call the fire fighter so you will not perish in the fire but instead receive eternal life!



Prayer meetings:

3rd Mon each month 7.30 -8.30 pm
15 February , 21 March, 18 April, 20 June

Thanksgiving and AGM:

Monday 16 May 7.30 pm

All at St Peter's Church, Kingstown Rd, CA3 0BB

Some of our committee members are wanting to step down, so if you are interested in joining the committee please contact Rachel, Michael or Barbara (details on page 2) or speak to any other committee member

Prayer Diary Feb - Mar 2016

SUNDAY

- 14 Feb **Wigton Rd Methodist Church**
Carlisle Circuit Service 10.30
- 21 Feb **All Saints Scotby** 10.30
- For all children and youth work in local churches.
- **Pray for Rachel & Paul Gleave**, Isaac, Lauren & Reuben. (members of St Peter's church.
- **Pray for Michael & Sally Fox**, & Gabriel; for Sally's pregnancy. (members of Carlisle Christian Fellowship)
- For churches effected by the floods, including members of Eden community Church.

MONDAY

Collective Worship

- 22 Feb Shankhill (Rachel) 13.00
- 22 Feb Lanercost (Rachel) 14.50
- 14 Mar Bishop Harvey Goodwin (Rachel) 09.00
- 14 Mar Shankhill (Rachel) 13.00
- 14 Mar Lanercost (Rachel) 14.50

Puppet Assemblies

- 22 Feb Houghton 09.00
- 29 Feb Warwick Bridge 09.00
- 14 Mar Leeshill 15.00
- 21 Mar Bishop Harvie Goodwin 09.15

Quest Clubs

- Pennine Way** weekly (Diane, Susannah) 15.30
- Houghton** weekly (Neal, Anne, Trudi) 15.30
- Prayer Meeting** St Peter's 15 Feb 21 Mar 19.30
- Committee** 22 Feb, 6 Hether Drive 19.45

TUESDAY

Collective Worship

- 23 Feb Hallbankgate (Rachel) 09.00
- 8 Mar Kingmoor Infants (Rachel) 09.00
- 15 Mar Willaim Howard (Rachel) 08.40
- 15 Mar Longtown (Rachel) 10.00
- 22 Mar Hallbankgate (Rachel) 09.00

Quest Club weekly

- Kingmoor** (Barbara, Robert, Helen, Bruce, Ben, Margaret, Ruth, Mary, Trudi) 15.30

Secondary Clubs, weekly

- Caldew** (Michael) 12.20
- Lime House** (Michael) 13.30
- Richard Rose Morton**
(Rachel, Kristian, Gabriel) 13.05

Pray for Easter Event

"Who rolled the Stone"

Lessons not booked at time of printing, but hope for 15 bookings!

WEDNESDAY

Collective Worship

- 24 Feb Lime House (Michael) 12.00
- 24 Feb Belle Vue school (Rachel) 14.30

Lesson

- 24 Feb Belle Vue (Key Stage 1)(Rachel) 10.15
- 23 Mar Belle Vue (KS1) (Rachel) 10.15

Secondary Club weekly

- Nelson Thomlinson (Michael, Anthony) 12.25

THURSDAY

Collective Worship

- 25 Feb Lees Hill (Rachel) 15.10
- 3 Mar Jams Rennie (Rachel) 09.30
- 17 Mar William Howard (Rachel) 08.40
- 24 Mar Lees Hill (Rachel) 15.10

Secondary club, weekly

- William Howard (Rachel, Tim Edwards) 12.25

Puppet Assemblies

- 25 Feb Caldewlea 10.10
- 3 Mar Petterill Bank 10.20
- 10 Mar Shankhill 13.00
- 17 Mar Wreay Infants 10.00
- 24 Mar Blackford 10.15

FRIDAY

Secondary clubs, weekly

- Trinity 12.30
(Michael, Ben Mattinson, Kristian Tjemslund)
- Richard Rose Central 13.05
(Rachel, Brian Downie, Neal Andrews)

Other event

- 12 Feb RAF Cadets (Michael) 20.00

SATURDAY

- 12 Mar X:Site Carlisle 18.00-20.00
half-termly inter church event
for years 3 to 6. Hebron Evangelical Church
(Rachel & Michael)