



# Annual Report 2019

# niscu

north cumbria

Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union

***Note change to September this year!!***

**Supporters, families and friends  
are all invited to our**

## **Late Summer Buffet**

**On Monday 16th September  
6.30 to 8.30 pm  
at St Peter's Church, Carlisle, CA3 0BB**

**To help catering please let us  
Rachel Gleave or Barbara Gardner know  
if you are coming. *Contact details below***

### **Church reps**

If there is no **NISCU church rep** at your church, please let us know if you are willing to take on that role.

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### **Data Protection Regulations**

Please make sure you are kept on our list in order to receive newsletters, prayer updates and invitations to special events.

There will be sign up sheets available at the AGM. *(Please ask for more information if required)*

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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# Staff Team Reports



## *Rachel Gleave*

I love Easter and the promise of eternal life with the empty tomb! This year seems to have been an incredible Easter, not just because of the incredible weather but with so many more opportunities

than normal! As you will know, here in North Cumbria - Easter didn't fall in the school holidays this year! It seemed to be a hard thing for some to get their heads round but for me it certainly opened up the door for so many more opportunities to talk about Easter in our local schools, with Easter lessons going on for weeks! I was reminded on facebook that in 2016 we led 15 lessons investigating the evidence for the resurrection. This year - I was blessed with the opportunity to lead 40 lessons in 17 different school, with over 1000 pupils investigating for themselves the Easter story. A great big opportunity that I just simply couldn't have done on my own - Thankfully I didn't have to, and over the Easter lesson season I partnered with 8 church partners from 7 different churches (as well as Fiona and Hayley) to bring the message of Easter to life! Matthew 9:37 reminds us that the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few but by working together literally hundreds of children have explored Easter in a more memorable way and been given the opportunity to hear that Easter is really a love story, about how far Jesus was willing to go to demonstrate that great love for us!

This year certainly seems to have been the year of open doors, with so many different opportunities to serve the schools in so many different ways. It was such a blessing to introduce nursery and reception children to the Christmas story - many for the first time but also to lead many question and answer sessions with those in years 5/6 answering questions like why I go to church, has God ever answered my prayers and does everyone go to heaven? Such opportunities to talk about God and what he has done for us all.

**Schools visited.  
June 2018- April 2019.**

**L=Lesson, C=Club,  
CW=Collective Worship,  
O=Other e.g prayer space,  
RE week, Christingle day**

### **Primary**

Brampton - L, CW, O.  
Longtown - CW, L.  
Shankhill CofE - CW, L, O.  
Lanercost CofE - CW, L, O.  
Hallbankgate Village - CW, L.  
Crosby on Eden CofE - CW, L.  
Scotby CofE - CW, L.  
Kingmoor Junior - CW, L.  
Fir Ends - L.  
Castle Carrock village - L.  
Gilsland CofE - L, O.  
Hayton CofE - L, O.  
Pennine Way - L.  
Warwick Bridge - L, CW.  
Great Corby Village - L, CW.  
Houghton CofE - O.  
Inglewood Junior - L.  
Upperby - L.  
Stanwix - L.  
Belle Vue P - L.  
Brook Street - L.  
Lees Hill - L, CW  
Bishop Harvey Goodwin -L, CW)

### **Secondary**

William Howard School -C, CW.  
Central Academy - C, CW, O.

### **Special school**

James Rennie - CW.

But, it is not just the pupils we are looking to support. We have run training in a few schools this year on the “Understanding Christianity” resource, which helps equip schools to teach Christianity in a new way with the aim to increase bible literacy and help children (and teachers) explore what the bible says and how it relates to Christians today but also themselves. We have also teamed up with Acorn to be able to offer people in churches training in active listening skills with a view to equip more Christians to be able to support their local schools by being a friend with a listening ear, not just to pupils but staff and parents as well. We all value being listened to.

## Hayley Wisbey



What a year! I have now been with NISCU for over a year and I am still as overwhelmed with the opportunities to share the gospel now as I was last year! Some of my highlights this year include a Christmas lesson in a school where I got to share the birth of Jesus and how it fulfilled prophecies made years and years before, not only doing 4 lessons in one day, but also being asked to show all the teachers in the staff room the lesson and sharing the gospel unexpectedly.

Another highlight is Easter! Easter is amazing! It is that simple. Easter is amazing! I was at “Living Word” and heard it said that Jesus’ tomb is the most boring tomb to visit in the world as it is empty. How amazing is that? And to share that gospel with so many young people again this year just blows me away! Not just the sharing of it, but the questions they ask and how they want to know more. I recently was reminded of what a privilege it is to be free to share the gospel with a story of an Indian lady who attends church every week even though her husband disagrees with her and each week when she goes home after the service, she is beaten by her husband. She says ‘but it is so worth it to be able to spend time with God together with people’. Here we are not beaten for following our faith, we do not have to meet in secret, and we are welcomed into places to share the Good News of Jesus! The privilege of sharing Easter with young people really is a WOW moment for me and I pray it never stops being so.

### Schools visited. June 2018- April 2019.

**L=Lesson, C=Club,  
CW=Collective Worship,  
O=Other e.g prayer space,  
RE week, Christingle day**

#### Primary

Holme Cultram Abbey, L, CW, C,O  
Wigton Infants L, C, CW  
Thomlinson Juniors L, C, CW, O,  
St Cuthberts, Wigton CW  
Bolton Low Houses CW, L  
Fellview CW, L  
Kirkbride CW, L  
Thursby CW, L  
Wiggonby L  
Bowness- on Solway O  
Kirkbampton L, O, CW  
Belle Vue CW, L  
Newlathes Juniors L, CW  
Newtown CW, O  
Yewdale L, CW  
Rosley CW, *booked for June*

#### Secondary

Nelson Thomlinson. L, C.  
Morton Academy. C  
Lime House. C

## **Fiona Crouch**

This has been such an exciting year. When I think back to the start of the academic year and the nervous excitement of starting for NISCU it seems a very long time ago indeed. In that time I have presented assemblies to over 3500 students plus staff and sometimes parents and that is without all the joint assemblies and the ones that Rachel and Hayley have done. Jesus' commandment to us was to go and carry on the work He had been sent to do and for this He blessed us with peace and the Holy Spirit. In a world where even young children are anxious, to be able to tell them of God's love for them and the peace He can give is a wonderful witness. Telling a Bible story that to me is so familiar and yet watching these young people, many of whom have not heard it before, who are wondering what will happen next, is something to behold. Knowing that we go out at Jesus' command, blessing others with the peace He blessed us with and having the Holy Spirit to help us is comforting. That verse of scripture I learnt as a child, John 3:16, telling us how God's love is for everyone is still a verse I hold close, for if these children do not hear then how can they believe in Him?



**Schools visited.  
(Nov 18-April 19).**

**L=Lesson, CW=Collective  
Worship, C=Club,  
O=Other e.g prayer space,  
RE week, Christingle day.**

Cummersdale, CW  
Cumwhinton, CW, O  
High Hesket, CW  
Kingmoor Junior, C, CW, L  
Raughton Head, CW  
Robert Ferguson, CW  
St Michael's, CW, L, O  
Stone Eden Nursery, CW, O  
Stoneraise, CW

### **Secondary**

Caldew, C, O  
Lime House, C, CW, O  
Trinity, C, CW

## **Chair's report** *Barbara Gardner*

I'm sure you will be encouraged by this annual report. There is so much confusion on the national and international scene, mental stress is widespread and help is hard to find. As Hayley would say the fact that so many schools are welcoming Christian input is really something we can say WOW about!

I am encouraged that one of our long term prayers is being answered. We have wanted to work more with churches as we believe that is the family where children will find nurture, good teaching and care. With new initiatives including Prayer Spaces and Easter experiences, we have worked with local Christians. I believe this is just the beginning of an answer to linking children with local churches.

The Christian message is truly unique. Visiting a lady who had served Jesus for many years and now is unable to even get to church, I was reminded of the chorus: "I'm special because Jesus loves me". It isn't because of what we do, or are, that gives us our identity, but because we are loved by an amazing God. He loves us and if we turn to him he forgives us not because of what we do, or who we are, but in spite of all our failures. How much our children need to know the truth of that. In all their fears and concerns, the real anchor is "Jesus loves them" and we have the opportunity to share that news with them. ***Thank you for being part of the team!***

# Puppetual Fun report

Ailsa Taylor



God is ever faithful. I love the line in Acts 2 v 26 (Msg) ***“I’ve pitched my tent in the land of hope!”*** We take the message of our hope in Jesus into schools, sharing our joy in his wonderful love for us - it’s a privilege that never gets old.

In September and October 2018 we took ***The Lost Sheep*** and ***The Lost Son*** assemblies into schools.

Christmas 2018 was the second year presenting the assembly of ***“The Perfect Present”*** introducing to some children for the first time the real story of Christmas and why we may give and receive presents at this special time.

In Spring 2019 we started learning 2 new assembly topics. ***David and Goliath*** for the Thursday team and ***Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego*** for the Monday team. It is always a challenge for us as we try to visualise what the end presentation will be like. Does anything we do take away from the message? Is it fun for those who are watching? And can we sustain it throughout the year. Both assemblies have a message about being brave with God’s help: that when we do stand up for him he honours that, we are never alone no matter what our circumstances may be and He is always faithful. We practiced until the end of February and then began visiting schools. The Autumn term is filling up and we only have 2 dates left for the Christmas fortnight 2<sup>nd</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> December.

We have had a challenging time with illnesses this year for both team members and their family members. We would really value your prayers as we seek to continue in the commitments we have. We praise God that we have not had to cancel any bookings. We do however, desperately need new members to take the pressure off some of our team. Our teams are getting older and although the spirit is always willing the flesh is weak. Dave Roberts interviewed our oldest team member, June Dixon, for “The Way” magazine in March. We were also interviewed on BBC Radio Cumbria, in a bid to raise awareness of the work NISCU and in particular the puppets. We are “pitching our tent in the land of Hope” and pray that God will prompt you to join us in this very rewarding work. If you would like to find out more please contact Ailsa on 07786 160163 or talk to a team member. We would love to have you!

## Schools visited

### Autumn 2018

Inglewood Juniors,  
Rockcliffe,  
St Bede’s,  
Shankhill,  
Hayton,  
Brampton Juniors,  
Newlathes,  
Scotby,  
Raughton Head,  
Brook Street

### Christmas 2018

Hayton,  
Warwick Bridge,  
Houghton,  
Brook Street,  
Scotby,  
Petteril Bank,  
Crosby on Eden,  
Inglewood Juniors,  
Brampton Juniors  
Pennine Way.

### Spring, Summer 2019

Houghton,  
Stonerise,  
Petteril Bank,  
Brook Street,  
Pennine Way,  
Scotby,  
St Cuthberts,  
Hayton,  
Cumwhinton,  
Shankhill,  
Lees Hill,  
Thomlinson Juniors,  
Kirkbampton,  
Inglewood Juniors,  
Warwick Bridge,  
Yewdale,  
St Michael’s Dalston  
St. Bedes.

## **Secretary's report**     *Margaret Hughes*

During this year we said "Goodbye" to Trudi in October and welcomed Fiona in November. Rachel continued with her responsibility in a Supervisory role and Hayley increased her hours. The committee has held five meetings to support our Schools' Workers. Some of the committee meet up with the workers individually to give added support. As well as working in schools, our staff team help at inter-church events: X:site, Belong and Living Word and are fully committed to their local church fellowship. During committee meetings we hear in-depth analysis of current projects and clubs and spend time praying and planning.

Since the last AGM, as well as the regular prayer meeting, we have held a Summer Supper, a Teachers' Supper, and sought to increase the use of Church Reps so that the news of NISCU reaches a wider audience. For the whole area there was a NISCU day in March with training in Pupperty, sessions on "Listening Skills" and Volunteering amongst others. With the introduction of GDPR there has been much to do to comply with the law. We are grateful to Robert and Barbara Gardner for all the time and effort they gave to this.

We give thanks for all those who heard the Easter message and we pray for this generation who have little understanding of the Gospel. As we focus on Jesus, may he enlarge our vision. Now we look to "Transition" when the team encourage students as they prepare to move to Secondary school. At one meeting we did discuss how we might help students moving to Tertiary education as there is a great need to progress our NISCU young people from school club to church involvement. This is a matter for prayer as we look to the future.

The committee thank all who share in this ministry. The encouragement of prayer partners, faithful financial support, and many volunteers keeps NISCU in our schools today.

## **Treasurer's report**     *Geoffrey Pearson*

We are deeply grateful to all our supporters for their prayers and gifts which enabled the work of NISCU in this area to continue and expand.

During 2018 we saw a change of staff as Trudi left to get married and we welcomed Fiona. In 2019 we have seen further increase in opportunities for Easter lessons and advances all round, especially in the south of our region.

We also had a legacy of £4,660, included in other income, and an exceptional gift from a supporting Trust on winding up their affairs of £21,500.

We will probably need to use some of our financial reserves during the coming year.

# Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union – North Cumbria

## Local Income & Expenditure statement - Year ended December 2018

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Actual 2018</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Actual 2017</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>2019 %</b>
Tax-efficient gifts	10005	21.3%	10558	22.5%	10500	22.4%
Reclaimed Gift Aid tax	2681	3.6%	2647	5.6%	2700	5.8%
Other gifts - supporters	4249	5.7%	2985	6.4%	2400	5.2%
Other gifts - churches	5796	7.8%	6145	13.1%	7700	16.7%
Other gifts - trusts	46329	62.5%	23400	49.9%	22000	47.6%
Designated Gifts	24	0.0%	957	2.0%	0	0.0%
Bank Interest	41	0.1%	30	0.1%	40	0.1%
Other Income	5010	6.8%	150	0.3%	840	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>74135</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>46872</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>46180</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Salary costs	39230	52.9%	37720	80.5%	38541	83.5%
Vehicle costs	4738	6.4%	3564	7.6%	4000	8.7%
Telephone	344	0.5%	404	0.9%	320	0.7%
H/O Niscu overheads	6624	8.9%	4787	10.2%	6540	14.2%
Equipment / capital exp	348	0.5%	1137	2.4%	500	1.1%
Training & Conferences	1028	1.4%	1126	2.4%	1200	2.6%
School Resources	767	1.0%	385	0.8%	600	1.3%
Entertainment	18	0.0%	4	0.0%	0	0.0%
Residuals	0	0.0%	166	0.4%	0	0.0%
Special events	48	0.1%	1020	2.2%	200	0.4%
Promotion / Puppets	282	0.4%	76	0.2%	250	0.5%
Administration	1105	1.5%	915	2.0%	800	1.7%
Sundries	2508	3.4%	2	0.0%	100	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57040</b>	<b>76.9%</b>	<b>51306</b>	<b>109.5%</b>	<b>53051</b>	<b>114.9%</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>17095</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>-4434</b>	<b>-9.5%</b>	<b>-6871</b>	<b>-14.9%</b>

# Prayer Secretary's Report *Robert Cox*

I have to work on most Sundays; that's not ideal! But if I didn't, many folk would grind to a halt. Why? Because without the diesel or unleaded petrol I sell, many folk would be immobile.

There are similarities with our prayer in NISCU. Without the petrol of prayer, the NISCU work would have collapsed decades ago, the doors to schools remaining firmly shut, the perceptive child or the searching teacher still adrift in the doldrums of not knowing.

Praise points culled from this past year include: *"So many news school links", "Every school that I went to last year are asking for me to go back this year!". "the seven unlikely teenage girls who came every week", "the freedom to share the message of God's uncontrollable, death-defying and unconditional love"*

Answers to some prayers are currently invisible, such as ongoing funding for our CEO, a few schools without an open door, more puppeteers, more church reps. But we continue, confident that our God will supply our every need as we work humbly with Him. Whether our prayers are prompted by a monthly email, attending the monthly prayer meeting (many do) or a desperate arrow sent up to the Holy Spirit when an inquiring child asks a penetrating theological dilemma, they are the fuel which keep the NISCU wheels rolling.

*"Next customer please..."*

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Mr Nick Klein

**Operations manager:**

Dr Pam Jones

**Administrator:**

Mrs Ruth Robinson

**Trustees:**

Mr David Grime (chairman)

Mr Ian Harvie

Mrs Ruth Houston

Mr Alistair Richards

Mr William Towers

Rev Rachel Stavert

**Committee****Until 2019**

Robert Cox (Prayer Sec) *Stanwix & Belah*

Andy Graham *Hebron*

Joe Pattinson *Thurstonfield Methodist*

Geoffrey Pearson (Treasurer)

*Elim Community Church*

**Until 2020**

Karen Wilson *St John's London Rd*

**Until 2021**

Margaret Hughes (Sec) *St Peter's*

Barbara Gardner (Chair) *St Peter's*

Jo Boddam-Whetham *Burgh by Sands*

*4 possible vacancies*

**A special thank-you**

to many who help in varied ways, including many who are unseen. You are all so valuable in allowing things to happen smoothly.

A special thanks to

- churches who allow us to use their premises: St John's London Rd (office)  
St Peter's Kingmoor & St John's Houghton (monthly prayer meeting & other events)  
Hebron (puppet rehearsals.)
- the many volunteers in clubs, assemblies, prayer spaces, lessons, special events and the Puppetsual Fun teams.
- Those who support in prayer and giving.