

Thanking God for new support group members

Huw Iley
Bethesda Church,
Brampton



Michelle Graham
St James' Church,
Carlisle



Chris Walford
St Mary's,
Wigton



Jo Phillips
St Michael's,
Dalston

Join with us in
thanking God for the
provision of a strong
support group for
our area.

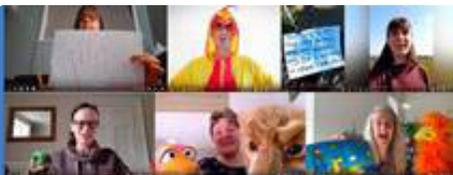
“What we love about NISCU is...”

Jo Phillips, (above) who is with us temporarily to support our communications, writes: “The fact that it grasps the open-door opportunity there is to get into schools to reach and bless pupils and staff for God’s Kingdom. This is a front-line location for both adults and young people either trying to live out their faith in what can be a tough environment, or wanting to hear about Jesus. I’m so grateful for the work they do.”

Chris Walford, (above) who joined us this year, writes: “The members’ amazing love for God, their passion sharing the good news with children and young people and the high level of care and support of each other.” As a former teacher, Chris is happy to be rejoining the ‘adventure’ in this new way.

Margaret Hughes who has been involved for a number of years, says what she loves about NISCU is: “...that we get to see God’s ongoing goodness in allowing NISCU to support children and staff in our schools.” She continues: “Please join us in prayer that some of these young people will find their way to our churches and be built up within the body of Christian people.” Robert Cox, our prayer secretary, continues to be amazed and rejoice at the way God constantly answers our supporters’ prayers and our workers’ faith, opening up unbelievable opportunities.

Video resources for you and your children through this time of Social Distancing. Visit www.niscu.org.uk



Find us too on **YouTube**: NISCU North Cumbria
and on **Facebook** pages: NISCU North Cumbria • NISCU North Cumbria Puppet Team

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niscu

Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union

newsletter Christmas term 2020



...joining with you to worship the coming King!



Welcome to our Christmas newsletter.

As the image above reminds us, Jesus’ birth was announced in all sorts of amazing ways to all sorts of people. Looking forward we are told that in eternity he will be praised by a multitude from every tribe and tongue. Just think about all the different ways those singing will have heard about our wonderful Lord Jesus – some from stars and angels and others from the likes of YouTube, Zoom and Microsoft Teams!

Please join with me in thanking God that he is a communicating God – calling out to his lost sheep in many and various ways. For 2020 has certainly not put a stop to speaking of Jesus in our schools – but rather challenged us to find new ways of doing so.

...continued overleaf



A taste of what's been going on from our amazing schools' workers to give you a flavour of the various ways in which they have been communicating the good news about Jesus this term.

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We have also had to find new ways of keeping in touch with you – our wonderful supporters.

In light of this we really want to build our relationship with our supporters – even at this time when meeting together is not possible.

I am very aware as the new Chair that there are many of you that I don't know.

Hopefully via the Prayer Updates and the AGM (bit.ly/NISCU_2020AGM) you have had a chance to find out a little bit about me – but I would love to hear from you. If you get the chance please do email me (niscunorthchair@gmail.com) and let me know how you became involved in supporting NISCU; and what most helps you partner in the gospel with us?

And while we're on the subject of 'getting to know you' and partnering in the gospel – turn to the backpage to hear what some of our area support group members love about NISCU. and to "meet" four new members – a wonderful answer to prayer.

And finally, if you are in any doubt that we have got your details, preferences or permissions up-to-date please go to bit.ly/NISCU_keeping_in_contact or fill out and return the enclosed questionnaire. Thank you so much.

And so, from all of us at NISCU North, we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a 2021 of fixing our eyes on Jesus.

Jo Boddam-Whetham,
chair, NISCU North Cumbria.

Niscu and Friends advent calendar (North Cumbria)

by Rachel Gleave



Schools' worker Rachel writes:

Happy Christmas!

This term has certainly been very different to any other since I joined the NISCU team seven years ago.

We have all heard the rumours that 'Christmas is cancelled' over the past few weeks but that has reminded me that Christmas can't be cancelled, as it is when we celebrate the Lord Jesus being born as a baby.

Over the past few weeks we have been working alongside other friends across the area to build an online 'NISCU and Friends' advent calendar. bit.ly/NISCU_advent

It has reminded me that the joy we all share at Christmas is unchangeable and eternal. Christmas 2020 may be celebrated in a slightly different way but the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

Schools work this term has also looked different but I have been humbled and blessed to see many doors to our schools still open even if digitally rather than physically. We have seen many of our pupils through virtual assemblies via Zoom and some schools have even welcomed us in.

This Christmas, more than ever, the hope and joy of Christmas needs to be shared and I am so grateful for the opportunities we have to do this – even if it is different.

We have also been supporting our schools in other ways too. We are putting together care packages for the staff of our schools (if you would like to be involved contact Hayley) as well as praying a great deal for our schools.

Thank you for all your support during this difficult time – for us and for our schools.

Rachel (left) and Hayley (right) would love to visit a screen in your school, church or even home!

Our very own Advent Calendar is available online: bit.ly/NISCU_advent

Over the 24 days we go through the Bible looking at the very first Christmas.

You can also still access our chirpy AGM online: bit.ly/NISCU_2020AGM



An individual care package given by a Wigton church to encourage school staff.

Schools' worker Hayley writes:

Wow! What a change in the world around us since the last newsletter! Life this term has not been unlike being in a boat in a storm – I can see where I want to go, but the waves keep blocking the view.

I look around and I know what we would ordinarily be doing in schools and yet the waves are blocking that... so try something different and yep, another wave blocking that...

Just like the disciples when Jesus walked on the water – all of a sudden we see Jesus and get a little bit of direction back, but – and here's the big "but" – in order to keep going where Jesus wants us to we've had to face the technology, face the fears, throw the tantrums when it doesn't do what we want it to, shout into that wind and keep going!

And what a response we've had when we've done that, when we've fixed our eyes on Jesus and not on the waves!

The care packages Rachel mentions are a great example of what has come out of us fixing our eyes on Jesus and listening for his voice in the storm – just little gifts for school staff to say 'you are loved, you are cared for, you are special'. A little gift – but a message worth more than people can say – a message that has got through to many schools via lots of churches and that has really made a difference.

And to think, for a while all I could see were the waves and the problems... **Thank you Jesus!**

Closed school doors don't daunt the Puppet Team



Whilst the weather and Covid restrictions were more clement the puppet team were also able to go virtual – we even led everyone in a song at the AGM!

More recently we were able to provide a harvest assembly for James Rennie school. We have also produced a couple of assemblies about light for schools which have been greatly appreciated and even make an appearance in the advent calendar (on Dec 19th). We look forward to being back in action once the weather and the rules allow.

CARE PACKAGES TO ENCOURAGE

Maybe your church could do something similar for your local schools?

As both Rachel and Hayley mention above, many churches have been giving these out over the past two months.

Ask Hayley for details



Buy our Christmas cards: it's not too late! £3 for 5 cards.

All profits go to NISCU. Contact Rachel Gleave if you want some!