

## What's Coming Up?

It is exciting that after more than a year of covid restrictions we are now being welcomed back into schools! For me (Ruth), this has involved joining a church team for outdoor prayer spaces at Maryport Primary School and a return to regular collective worship at All Saints Primary, Cockermouth. Other schools are also now asking for "in person" assemblies and lessons. I am currently working closely with the Puppet Teams on their upcoming assemblies which tell the story of the first Christmas from the point of view of "The Weary Innkeeper and his Wife" (played by the colourful monohan puppets!) and include props, songs and interaction with the children. Puppet Assemblies and events are booked for these dates!



- 17<sup>th</sup> Nov (Allerdale team) at St Joseph's, Cockermouth
- 20<sup>th</sup> Nov (Workington team) at Workington Christmas Lights
- 21<sup>st</sup> Nov (Puppet Videos) at Cockermouth Christmas Lights
- 24<sup>th</sup> Nov (Allerdale team) at Allonby
- 26<sup>th</sup> Nov (Workington team) at Frizington Christmas Event
- 1<sup>st</sup> Dec (Allerdale team) at Dean
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec (Workington team) at St Michael's, Workington  
and at Kirkland, Lamplugh
- 4<sup>th</sup> Dec (Workington team) at St John's Church, Hensingham
- 8<sup>th</sup> Dec (Allerdale team) at Crosscannonby
- 10<sup>th</sup> Dec (Workington Team) at Beckstone

A version of the Puppet Assembly will also be recorded, so that the schools we can't visit in person this time will still be able to watch on video! In addition, all our primary schools will be sent links to an online "Mini Advent Calendar" of 5 videos looking at key characters in the Christmas Story – this is a joint project involving schools' workers from all the NISCU areas.

Thank you so much for all your support and prayers as we approach the Christmas season. In particular, please pray

- For the health and protection of our staff and volunteers as we visit schools.
- For the Clubs at the Whitehaven Academy and West Lakes Academy, as we re-establish the links and build relationships with the young people there.
- That school children and staff will hear the message of hope this Christmas, whether through our in-person visits or our videos.
- For the new opportunities that are now opening up, that we would be able to use our time and resources wisely.

*No longer want to receive information from NISCU? Please let us know by writing or emailing, saying you wish to "unsubscribe", to NISCU, c/o 119 Balmoral Road, Whitehaven, CA28 6XA or IHarvie@aol.com.*

## PRAYER LETTER Autumn 2021

### To all our NISCU Friends

Thank you so much to everyone who supports NISCU in any way – by prayer, financially, or as a volunteer. Thank you for continuing to care about sharing the good news of Jesus with young people in West Cumbria.

Best wishes for a Happy Christmas.



When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said,  
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will  
never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"  
(John 8:12)

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#### Northern Inter Schools Christian Union

NISCU West Cumbria is part of the Northern Inter-Schools  
Christian Union. Charity No. 1135880. Company No. 7203313

## Hello from Primary Puppets

### Introducing Nathan .....

We are excited to welcome a new member of the NISCU West Cumbria team who will be working as a part-time intern, based in Whitehaven. We've asked him some questions to help us get to know him better, but first he's going to introduce himself....



*Hi, I'm Nathan Walkingshaw. I've just finished school and am working this year with NISCU. I was born in Whitehaven and have lived here all my life. I went to St James Infants and Junior schools, then to the Whitehaven Academy for Years 7-11. During the past 2 years I've been studying for my A-levels at Keswick School.*

How and when did you first hear about NISCU?

*My first experience of NISCU I think would've been a puppet show I saw at Junior School. However, my main interaction with NISCU was at the Whitehaven Academy lunchtime club. I attended first in Year 7 when Alice was running the club, and then later in Years 8-11 when Alex was the NISCU schools' worker.*

Tell us about your experience of local youth groups or camps.

*I have grown up in St John's Church Hensingham, and attended the youth groups there from age 7-18. I have also been at CCYC every year of my life, first with my parents as they were leaders, and then as a camper from age 11-16. For the past 2 years I have helped to lead camp online, and also the day camps that were run this year.*

What are you doing now?

*My role this year is to be the link between schools and churches, with the aim of linking the school children to church life and showing them that the church is not full of aliens, but actually really nice people who love Jesus. This involves my hours being split between St John's and NISCU. So as well as NISCU schools work, I also help to lead some of St John's youth groups. I also attend the North West Gospel Partnership bible training course every Thursday.*

It's early days, but what are you planning to be involved with for NISCU?

*At the moment I'm involved at the Whitehaven Academy lunch club, and will soon be joining Alison Riley at West Lakes Academy for a break time club. I may also be involved with the puppet teams near Christmas.*

How would you like folk to pray, for you and your work with NISCU?

*I would stand boldly on the foundation of God's word and not be ashamed of his gospel. I would be growing in my trust in God and leaning on him for my strength. I would be able to connect and build good relationships with the children that I'm serving. That they would come to know Jesus as their Saviour. For those that don't accept Jesus that they would know that church is a safe place to go to, in times of trouble especially. For wisdom in how to best use my gifts and skills to make the most of this year.*

Anything else we should know about you .....

*I'm a big fan of the outdoors and love to go paddle boarding on the many lakes of the Lake District, and walking up its many fells!*

#### Contact the Team

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Cockermouth, CA13 9RU [www.niscu.org.uk](http://www.niscu.org.uk)  
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*"I love to see your puppets...they always cheer me up!" (a Primary Head)*

Although the Primary Puppet Teams were not able to visit schools in person during the last school year, the video assemblies that we've been able to send to Primary schools have been really well received. Our final video for the summer term was based on the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the positive response of many schools can be summed up in this really encouraging feedback ....

*"Thank you so much for this. It will be brilliant for the end of term. Thank you for all your support this year. NISCU has been mentioned so many times by staff for all the videos you have made. They have been brilliant!"*

At the start of this term, we sent out a new video assembly called "Kindness Counts" which is based on the story of The Good Samaritan. Children are encouraged to think of ways to be kind at school and at home, and to reflect on how it can be easy to be kind to our friends and people we like ... but what about those we don't like so much? This was the response from one head ...

*"Thank you for this .... perfect timing as always! We are currently having a focus on dignity, one of our values, and last week we held a Dignity Adventure Day. We have defined dignity along the lines of kindness, for our younger pupils, so this will be perfect for next week. Many thanks again."*

During September we also filmed our vibrant, fun-filled Harvest Assembly!

It explores the theme of thankfulness to God, our Wonderful Provider, and also encourages the children to think about how we can share what we have. The closing fun puppet song called Grace Mambo was BRILLIANT! We know that many schools watched and enjoyed the video - it has been viewed more than 100 times!

We have great news! The Puppet Teams are now back practising in person and are preparing for some Christmas Assemblies and other events (more news on these in 'What's Coming Up?'). We are taking things slowly, modifying what we do to still enable social distancing where possible, but it's great to be able to offer some 'live' puppet events. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported the work of the Puppet Teams in recent months, and as we move forward - prop makers, script and sound makers, narrators, our faithful team members and schools' workers, our editors and video makers ..... and to YOU, our faithful "pray-ers".

We are reminded that without Jesus we are nothing - He is the reason, He is our Hope Eternal.

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in Him" [Ephesians 2:8-10]*

#### Primary Puppet Team Leaders

##### Allerdale Team

Maggie Cowles, 12 Harrot Hill, Cockermouth, CA13 0BL Tel: 01900 824466

##### Copeland Team

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##### Workington Team

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