

In the assembly *'What Does Easter Mean to You?'*, the Easter story will be told by our Grandpa puppet to his two grandchildren; and then also through a Lego presentation. The puppet song performed in this assembly is called: *"Jesus said I am the Living One."* It is a powerful song!

The *'Forgiveness'* assembly will feature a Lego presentation of the Biblical story of *'The Lost Son'* which will help in understanding more about God's love and forgiveness for us. We will make the connection between God's readiness to forgive us, and His desire that we forgive one another. Two puppet plays will provide excellent examples of forgiveness taking place. This assembly will end with the lovely song: *'For God so Loved the World.'*

Please pray for all those currently being videoed for these assemblies – and for those doing the filming! We are **all** learning new skills praise God, and we do thank Him for His envisioning and equipping in this new season.

Once again, we are really grateful to *Ruth Smith* for her encouragement, and her vital practical support in the forthcoming editing of our videos along with her son *Ben*! Please pray for them in this work!

And please do pray that once again, schools will be delighted to receive these video assemblies, and that they will be made available to the children in their care.

Maggie

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PRAYER LETTER

February - March 2021

To all our NISCU Friends

A big "thank you" to all those of you who support NISCU in any way - be it financial, by prayer or as a volunteer. We really appreciate your continuing care for sharing the good news of Jesus with the children and young people of West Cumbria.



"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end, they are new every
morning, great is your faithfulness".
Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV))

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As we approach the anniversary of the start of the first national lockdown, I've been reflecting on how much daily life has changed for all of us this past year, including those in our school communities. Children and young people have had to adapt to 'class bubbles' and periods of remote learning, while school leaders and staff have worked to deliver lessons and to support their pupils' wellbeing in challenging and ever changing circumstances. With most schools closed to visitors for almost a year now, NISCU have also been working in new ways, and for me this has meant getting to grips with technology!

I am not well known for my technical expertise – this time last year, if I had said "I've recorded a video and uploaded it to YouTube" my teenage sons would have laughed in disbelief! Like many people who have been 'working from home' in recent months, I have been on a steep learning curve and had moments of frustration, but I've also learnt new skills and discovered that this way of doing things has some unexpected benefits.

West Cumbria is just one of the seven NISCU areas, and as a wider team we would usually get together several times a year - we obviously can't meet up at the moment, but the fact that we're able to connect via Teams and Zoom means that we now 'see' each other several times a week. This has been a real blessing for the team as we are able to share news, encouragements, ideas and resources.

Another positive is that because assemblies and lessons are now being recorded on video they are accessible to many more schools than I could visit in person, and our schools in West Cumbria can also watch the videos produced by other areas. A video gives a teacher the opportunity to see NISCU in action, and may open up the way for us to visit in person in the future. Some schools are revisiting the series of themed videos that the West Cumbria team produced last year, and we are bringing them together in a resource pack with some extra material. We are also working on new video assemblies this term on themes requested by schools, as well as resources for Easter. Let's praise God for these opportunities that we have to continue supporting schools even when we can't visit in person.

The ongoing restrictions and uncertainty about when things may return to some sort of 'normal' pose many challenges for teachers

and parents who are supporting their children in remote learning at the moment. One teacher, who also has children of her own, told me recently that it can sometimes be exhausting and overwhelming, but she has been focussing on 'taking one day at a time' – as a Christian, she knows that God can sustain her and give her strength for each new day. Please continue to pray for all those in our schools communities who need to know God's strength and faithfulness at this time.

Ruth

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Hello from Primary Puppets

Praise God for the opportunity at the beginning of December, to send the links of our two Christmas video assemblies, to over 80 schools! One Primary headteacher emailed back immediately the next day saying: "*Thank you for these videos. It will be fantastic to see you this Christmas even though it is not in the flesh! We will put these videos on in the last week of term, and I am sure that the children will enjoy them! Thanks again!*"

We were also very grateful for the opportunity to share the good news of the birth of Jesus in the Workington Christmas Lights Online Presentation called 'Christmas Cracker 2020'. A big thankyou to *Matthew* (from Workington team) and his dad *Richard Smith* for working so incredibly hard to make this possible! The video resources were also made available to local churches.

And then, even before the start of this new year, much prayerful consideration was already going into the content of our forthcoming Easter video assemblies! We praise God for His leading... and many thanks to each of you as well, for your continuing faithful support of us in this work! It is God who enables, and your prayers which make all the difference! Thank you SO much!

And now, as we draw ever nearer to Easter, preparations are continuing..... and we are getting increasingly excited at the prospect of being able to send out before the end of term, our two Easter-related assemblies..... one entitled '*What Does Easter Mean to You?*' and another on the theme of '*Forgiveness*'.