

Connecting you

Spring
2021



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Scripture
Union

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Last year, St John's Methodist Church in Bangor faced unprecedented barriers in their children's outreach work. But, through your support, God blessed this time of trials, and turned it into a time of great opportunity and new beginnings.

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Taking God's love back into schools

For 12 months, COVID-19 has disrupted Christian work in schools. But thanks to your support, Scripture Union continues to be there to help mission practitioners share God's love and hope with students and teachers alike, at a time when they really need it.

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My favourite Bible verse: Deuteronomy 31:6

Brandon, 19, didn't grow up in church. He became a Christian six years ago, and now he's a Faith Guide, passionate to share the good news of Jesus with other young people. He reveals his favourite Bible verse and why it's special to him.



Connecting You is Scripture Union's supporter and prayer magazine, keeping you up to date with what God is doing through the work you support.

Connecting You magazine is also available online at: www.su.org.uk/connectingyou. If you have a

story for *Connecting You*, or a suggestion on how we could improve our service to you, please contact the editor: eddien@scriptureunion.org.uk

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Myles' opening letter



.....

“Now may the God of peace ... equip you with everything good that you may do his will”

Hebrews 13:20,21

Having started 2021 with more lockdown restrictions in England and Wales, it is hard to hear about the impact that education during the pandemic has had on so many children and young people's mental health (see **page 16**). I'm sure that, like me, you have been moved to pray for pupils who have had to adapt to so many changes this year. It's so encouraging, therefore, to see how your support has enabled us to stay connected with schools and pupils.

I have also been encouraged to see the many ways churches adapted to offer online and socially-distanced activities with holiday clubs over YouTube and Zoom, Christmas trails with QR codes and plenty more. As church volunteer Sue Eckersley says on **page 10**, 'What started out looking like a "fallow" year God has blessed and turned into an opportunity.'

That's our prayer for churches across England and Wales as they join us in the Revealing Jesus mission framework, commissioning Faith Guides to reach the 95 in their local communities. We pray that even though life and circumstances seem forever changed, they will see God bless opportunities as they look to do things differently in sharing God's

love with the youngest generations. Francesca's story (**page 4**) is a great example of how a Faith Guide can help nurture those early stages of faith as a young person discovers who God is and the life-changing difference he makes.

Please do join me in praying for Faith Guides as they create opportunities to open the Bible with children and young people, that they would know God equipping them for this calling, just as Hebrews 13 reminds us: 'Now may the God of peace [...] equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ' (verses 20–21).

I'm looking forward to hearing more young people like Brandon sharing their favourite Bible verses with us (see **page 22**) as they discover the life, love and God-given guidance contained in the book, and journey into relationship with him.

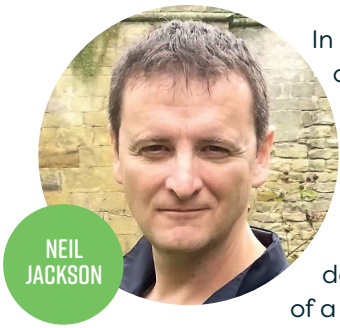
As ever, thank you for your prayers, gifts and all your support for Scripture Union.

Myles MacBean,
National Director



Where faith is seeded, gardeners are needed

Our Revealing Jesus mission framework seeks to help churches connect with children and young people and then journey with them as they explore the Bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith. SU Mission Enabler (and Faith Guide) Neil Jackson explains why it's so important, and the difference it's made to one teenager who doesn't come from a churchgoing family.



NEIL JACKSON

In the parable of the sower, Jesus explains that many things can threaten the development of a spiritual seed into a mature

plant of faith. In the same way, if we introduce children and young people to Jesus but don't nurture and encourage them on their spiritual journey, they may falter before faith has the opportunity to develop.

As a volunteer for my church (and as a Faith Guide), I run 'Recharge', a monthly youth club with limited spiritual content, for young people without church backgrounds. We have recently added an extra session, 'Precharge', which, in the language of our new mission framework, is what we call a Grow Community. Basically, it's a group run and shaped by young people where, guided by adults, they explore and grow in faith in a setting and manner that work for them rather than hoping they'll adapt to the very alien culture of formal church services.

Francesca, a friend of my daughter Millie, attends both groups. She's not from a churchgoing family but does have some familiarity with the Bible and the Christian faith, thanks to her attendance at a Church of England Primary School when she was younger.

However, once Francesca moved on to secondary school, that

Christian input ceased – and so did her spiritual development. Joining Recharge helped to reawaken her spiritual interest!

“ More recently I've understood that Christianity isn't just about knowledge ”

Francesca says, 'I've believed in God from a young age. But it's only more recently through these groups that I've understood that Christianity isn't just about knowledge, it's about having faith. I also like reading the Bible because it tells me more about how I should live. I went on SU's Quantum holiday with Millie in 2019 and, when we got home, we started reading and discussing it together every week.'



Francesca and Millie

Francesca also prays. 'I try to pray every day. I whisper rather than pray in my head, as it helps me to focus. I'm a bit in awe of him, like I would be of someone famous or important, but I also talk to him as a friend. I'm mostly open with him; tell him what's on my mind. I pray about family and friends - I might ask God to bless them, or for help with specific things. And I tell him what I'm thankful for.'

It's great that the groups I've helped to run, and the SU holiday, have developed Francesca's interest in reading the Bible and praying, but I think what's most revealing is her more recent discovery that being a Christian isn't just knowing about Jesus in your head, it's about believing in him in your heart. If her faith journey had ended when primary school did, she may never have discovered that important truth for herself.

.....
“ If her faith journey had ended when primary school did, she may never have discovered that important truth for herself ”
.....

FAITH GUIDES

That's why Scripture Union is looking for people to become Faith Guides to journey alongside children like Francesca as they explore faith. Faith Guides don't need to be professional youth or children's workers, like me, so if you're passionate about helping children and young people not just to discover Jesus but to grow and mature in faith, I'd really encourage you to find out more and consider if this is something to which God is calling you.

Find out more about our new mission framework and becoming a Faith Guide at [su.org.uk/revealingjesus](https://www.su.org.uk/revealingjesus)





WEEK
BEGINNING
FEB 28

Prayers

Please pray for Faith Guides and the children and young people in their care

SUNDAY 28

Give thanks to God for calling Scripture Union staff and supporters, churches and local mission partners to take Jesus' message of hope to children and young people who aren't part of a church.

MONDAY 1

Praise God that young people like Francesca are so open to learning more about him.

TUESDAY 2

Please pray that God will prepare the hearts of many more children and young people to hear about Jesus and the difference he makes to the adventures and challenges of life.

WEDNESDAY 3

Give thanks to God for all those who have already committed to become Faith Guides and to walk with

children and young people on their spiritual journey.

THURSDAY 4

Ask God to give Faith Guides plenty of opportunities to connect with children and young people, help them explore the difference that Jesus can make to their lives, give them opportunities to respond, and enable them to grow in faith.

FRIDAY 5

Please ask God to raise up many more Faith Guides over the coming months, and that he will help us to inspire and equip them for their vital work.

SATURDAY 6

Praise God for the privilege and responsibility of sharing the good news of Jesus with today's children and young people and pray that he makes us equal to the task.

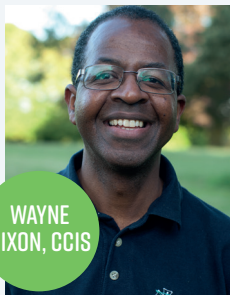
Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAR 7

SUNDAY 7

Scripture Union in German-speaking Switzerland have planned a retreat with the staff team next weekend. Thank God for the gifted and united team and pray that this will be a fruitful time.

MONDAY 8



Pray for Local Mission Partner **Christian Connections in Schools** working in Slough, Maidenhead and Windsor as this week they

run *Easter Cracked* for the 27th year either face to face or via video. Pray that children will grasp the truth of the Easter message.

TUESDAY 9

Pray for Simon Barker, Regional Team Leader in the central region, as he leads the staff team of Steve Hutchinson, Hannah Legge, Matt Farley and Karen Quinney, supports Faith Guides and Local Mission Partners in the central region and prepares for some face-to-face mission later this year.

WEDNESDAY 10

Pray for the holidays that will be happening online this Easter, in particular The SU Bake Off 1 and sailing holiday Kestrels which has new leadership (Phil Maltby is

joining Mary Jeddere-Fisher). Pray that young people will be keen to take part and not feel Zoom fatigue. Pray too for those who will be disappointed that they still can't come on a normal holiday.

THURSDAY 11

As we train new Faith Guides and help them get started, please pray for them and their communities that they would find great ways to connect with the 95 at the start of their journey.



FRIDAY 12

Local Mission Partner **Impact** in Bedford are having to replace their normal live re-enactment of the Easter story with a video. Pray that many more children and staff will have the opportunity to hear and see the story than ever before. Pray too for the production of other online resources.

SATURDAY 13

Helen Franklin (Mission Enabler in North Wales), asks us to pray that more churches will catch the vision for the new mission framework and for the development of projects in the churches who are already involved.



Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAR 14

SUNDAY 14

Pray for SU chaplains and volunteer teams in Victoria, Australia as they continue working in primary and secondary schools. Pray for wisdom and energy as they build relationships with young people, support school communities and represent Jesus' love.

MONDAY 15

Please pray for Angela Grigson, Senior Content Manager in the Development Hub team. Ask God to give Angela wisdom and insight as she works on several different projects at the same time and co-ordinates the work of many different contributors.

TUESDAY 16

Local Mission Partner **Thrive** working in around Warwick and Leamington Spa has launched a new weekly podcast *The Heart of a Youth Leader* to help youth and children's leaders stay close to Jesus in their ministry. Pray that people will discover the podcast and will find it helpful.

WEDNESDAY 17

This July it will be 25 years since Local Mission Partner **YoYo** became a trust;

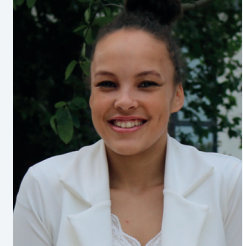


pray for wisdom as they share their story with their faithful supporters and envision a new generation

and as they creatively share the Easter story with primary and secondary schools in York and the surrounding area.

THURSDAY 18

Pray for Content Developer Esther Calvert-Jordan as she develops content for Faith Guides to use in



supporting children and young people on their spiritual journey, asking for wisdom so that the children and young people will grow in their knowledge of God and flourish.

FRIDAY 19

The SU Council meets tomorrow and this will be the first meeting for several new members. Give thanks for all those who volunteer in this capacity, giving their time to provide insights and wisdom to help discern God's leading and shape the movement.

SATURDAY 20

Local Mission Partner **Milton Keynes Bridgebuilder Trust** give thanks for the receptiveness of the schools who engage with their work and ask us to pray for the creation of their emotional well-being workshops and for secondary schools struggling with the current environment.



How God turned our church's year of pain into a year of gain

Last year, St John's Methodist Church in Bangor faced unprecedented barriers in their children's outreach work. But, through your support, God blessed this time of trials, and turned it into a time of great opportunity and new beginnings.

Sue Eckersley, volunteer children’s worker at the church, says ‘We’d already reached a bit of an impasse. Only one young person came to the church regularly, and that was my daughter! Around 20 local children came to the annual summer holiday club we ran. We knew we needed to develop year-round activities to help them progress on their spiritual journey. But with a scattered congregation, it was really hard to do.’

Then two things happened; in November 2019 the church building had to shut for major repairs and renovations. And in March 2020, lockdown happened.

Sue says, ‘I thought, “That’s it – there’s no way we can have a holiday club this year”. Then I heard that Scripture Union were doing holiday clubs online. I couldn’t imagine how, and I’m not comfortable with IT. But I decided to go to the free online training that SU were offering to find out more.’

‘That 60 minutes was so inspiring that I changed my mind! Using what we’d learned, I and the church’s enthusiastic children’s team ran an online holiday club – and were astonished when 12 children came along.’



“ That 60 minutes was so inspiring that I changed my mind ”

THE PERFECT SOLUTION

‘I also learned about SU’s new mission framework at that training – it really excited me because it seemed the perfect solution to the problems we were wrestling with. My church embraced the idea too, and commissioned me to become a Faith Guide.

‘It’s been fantastic so far! SU Mission Enabler Helen Franklin works with us, bringing new ideas and new ways of doing things. I can share with and learn from other Faith Guides in the national network. And it will help us to look beyond our own church to partner with other local churches.

‘SU’s resources have been invaluable too in these times where we need to do things differently. I never would have guessed a year ago that we’d be offering local children an interactive Christmas trail, using QR codes to share the story of Jesus with them! And activities like this don’t take much effort – they’re manageable even with only a few volunteers.

‘What started out looking like a “fallow” year God has blessed and turned into an opportunity. He’s enabled us to draw breath and take a long, hard look at doing things differently. With Scripture Union’s help, we’ve been able to embrace

new technology and learned how to do things smarter. And our outreach to children and young people will be so much more effective for it.'

FREE TRAINING ONLINE - OPEN TO ALL!

- 'I've now got a new, much-needed boost of enthusiasm!'
- 'I am seriously buzzing and cannot wait to start planning.'
- 'I was only going to do the first session but I found myself doing all of them as they were so useful!'

Thousands of people have been on our FREE online training since we started it last year - why not join them? You don't need to be a youth

or children's worker to benefit! You'll discover more about the challenges and opportunities of mission in today's new landscape, with so much now happening online. Hear first-hand what youth and children's workers are doing to share Jesus in these challenging times. And learn about SU's new mission framework, what a Faith Guide is and why we (and supporters like Sue) feel they have a vital role to play in sharing Jesus with the next generation.

.....
“SU's resources have been invaluable too in these times”
.....

Find out more and sign up at www.su.org.uk/onlinetraining



Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAR 21

SUNDAY 21

SU in Macau asks us to pray for the video screening of *Monthly Bible Talk* this year, asking for more volunteers to help in this project and more people to join the talks and be encouraged in their faith by engaging with Scripture.

MONDAY 22

Please pray for our new QR-code-based trail resource – *In Search of Easter*. Ask God to help local churches to see how they might use this resource to connect with children, young people and families in their community.

TUESDAY 23



Pray that God may lead Mission Enabler Chris Eales to the best ways of working with Faith Guides in Bodmin, Swanage and Exeter, planning,

envisoning and supporting ministry practically within current COVID-19 guidelines. Pray for more Faith Guides in and around North Devon.

WEDNESDAY 24

Local Mission Partner **Christian Outreach to Newbury Schools** gives thanks for schools team leader Joni McAuliffe and session workers Emma, Victoria and Kate. Pray that the revised form of *Easter Eggsplored* will communicate the wonder of Easter

in a way that is authentic, understandable and applicable.

THURSDAY 25

Easter is a traditional time for churches to run holiday clubs. COVID-19 restrictions are likely to mean that face-to-face holiday clubs will not be possible. Pray that as churches adapt SU programmes and run them online children will hear the good news of Jesus in fresh ways.

FRIDAY 26

Thank God for our team of Mission Enablers, working across England and Wales to envision, train and support Faith Guides as they reach out to the 95 in their communities.



SATURDAY 27

Pray for Zoraida Ali Smith, PA to Director of Culture and Innovation, as she supports the ongoing work of developing thought leadership especially in exploring ways of utilising the gifts of younger staff and volunteers throughout the movement.

Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAR 28

SUNDAY 28

Pray that SU Kenya may acquire new partnerships to help them scale up a Trauma Healing and Mental Health programme they have initiated to address the mental health challenges compounded by COVID-19.

MONDAY 29

Please pray for the digital Easter Assembly created by Local Mission Partner Engage which will be sent to more than 30 schools in and around Woking. Pray that this will encourage many to consider the hope and joy of Christ and that it will be an encouragement to Christian students.

TUESDAY 30

A new curriculum, based on the *Guardians of Ancora* app, is being used in at least ten countries and three languages. Please pray that church leaders around the world will catch the vision for this way of sharing the good news with children; and that these mission resources will reach those who have never heard the name of Jesus.



WEDNESDAY 31

We thank God that his financial provision enables us to make

grants to other SU movements.

Pray for Sue Winning as she oversees the grant application and reporting processes.

THURSDAY 1

It's always exciting to hear of someone responding to Jesus' invitation into lifelong relationship with him. Faith Guides will be supporting children and young people who make this choice through Grow Communities. Please do pray for them.

FRIDAY 2

As we reflect today on the death of Jesus, pause to think of the 95 per cent of children and young people who have no concept of Jesus or the significance of his life, ministry and death. Pray that as we develop new ways of reaching them the Spirit will be at work in their lives.

SATURDAY 3

Pray for the leadership and staff as they enter a new financial year asking that God would continue to refresh

and renew their strategic vision as they seek to refine and implement the bold new direction set by the Revealing Jesus mission framework.



Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
APR 4

SUNDAY 4

Scripture Union Bulgaria recommenced mission trips to Montana in North Western Bulgaria in September partnering with churches in this region of great spiritual need. Pray for wisdom on how to continue this work and for God's protection.

MONDAY 5

Local Mission Partner **Fleet and Crookham Churches Together in Schools** took on two new part-time staff last September bringing the total to four. Pray for them as they hope to restart face-to-face engagement with children through Open the Book assemblies, lunch clubs in junior and primary schools and Christian Unions in secondary schools.

TUESDAY 6

Supporter Care Assistant John Cartwright asks us to pray that the team will continue to develop more efficient and forward-focused ways of working and that IT solutions will work smoothly, ensuring that we communicate effectively with all our supporters.



WEDNESDAY 7

Pray that Faith Guides would feel confident in helping introduce the Bible into their relationships with the 95, inviting them to explore, respond and grow, and trusting that God

will be preparing their hearts.

THURSDAY 8

As we prepare to move our database to a new system please pray for effective engagement across the movement, close working with our implementation partner, and that we deliver something that really helps improve the experience of our supporters and volunteers.

FRIDAY 9

Thank God for the way that Christopher Baker, Schools Worker with Local Mission Partner **Christian Initiative to Schools** in Letchworth, has been able to adapt to new working practices and for the positive response to the recorded assemblies that have been sent out. Please pray that this would continue as future assemblies are produced.



SATURDAY 10

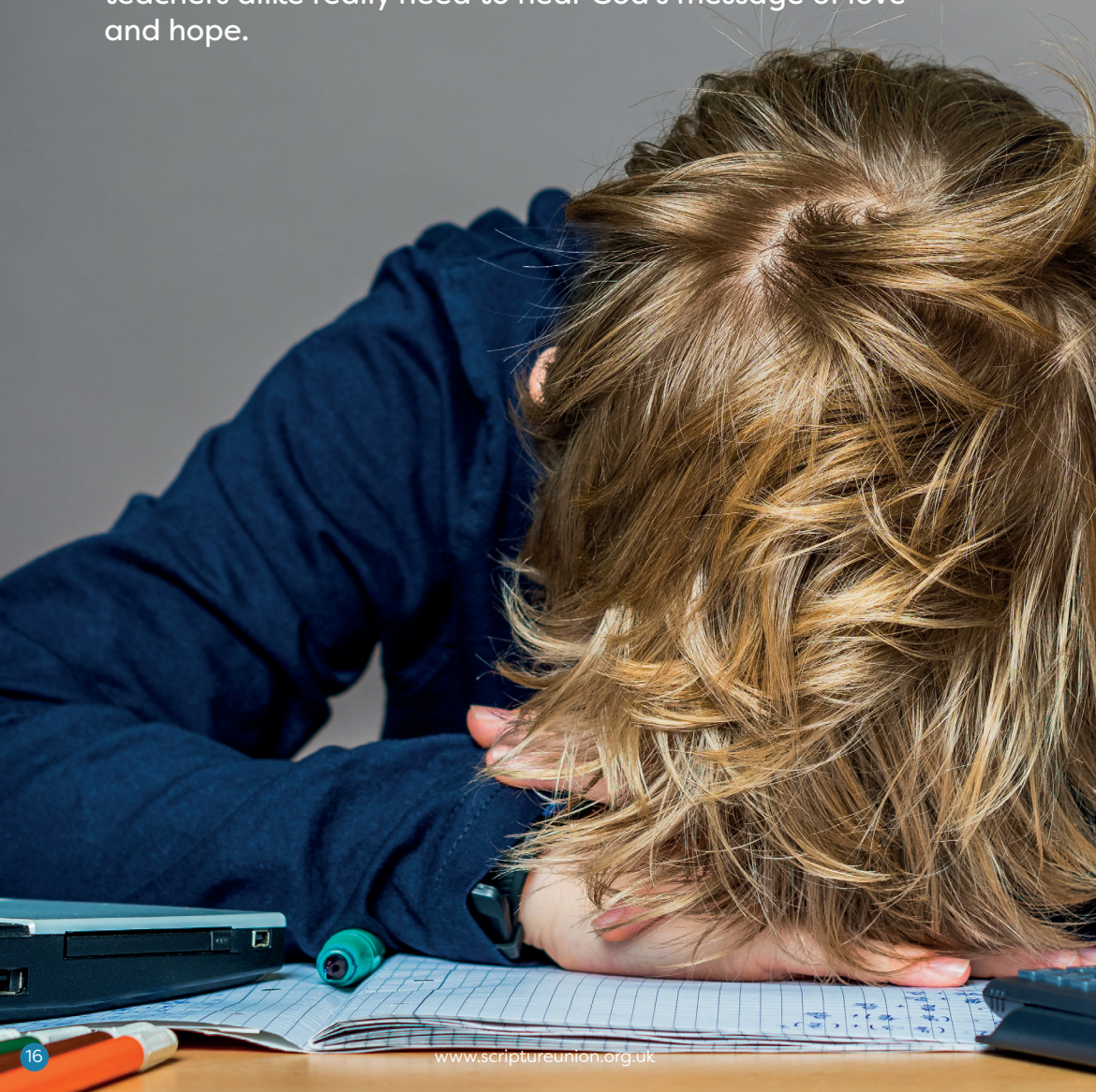
Ancora Mission Leader Maggie Barfield is looking forward to children's clubs running again, in schools, churches and communities. Pray for the release of new video



resources to inspire *Guardians of Ancora* club leaders; the videos have been waiting since April 2020 and are eager to be viewed!

Taking God's love back into schools

For 12 months, Covid-19 has disrupted Christian work in schools. Nevertheless, your donations mean we're continuing to help mission practitioners make the most of every opportunity. After all, this is a time when students and teachers alike really need to hear God's message of love and hope.





GEOFF BROWN

‘I think teachers have been amazingly resourceful in adapting to the constant changes in education,’ says SU Mission

Enabler Geoff Brown. ‘Sometimes they’ve been teaching face to face, sometimes online. Sometimes they’ve had to do both – a long day in the classroom followed by an evening preparing online lessons for pupils having to study at home.

‘The minority of mission practitioners that have been able to keep working with schools have had to be very flexible too. So has SU – we’ve digitised our existing

face-to-face schools resources so they can be used online as well as face to face.

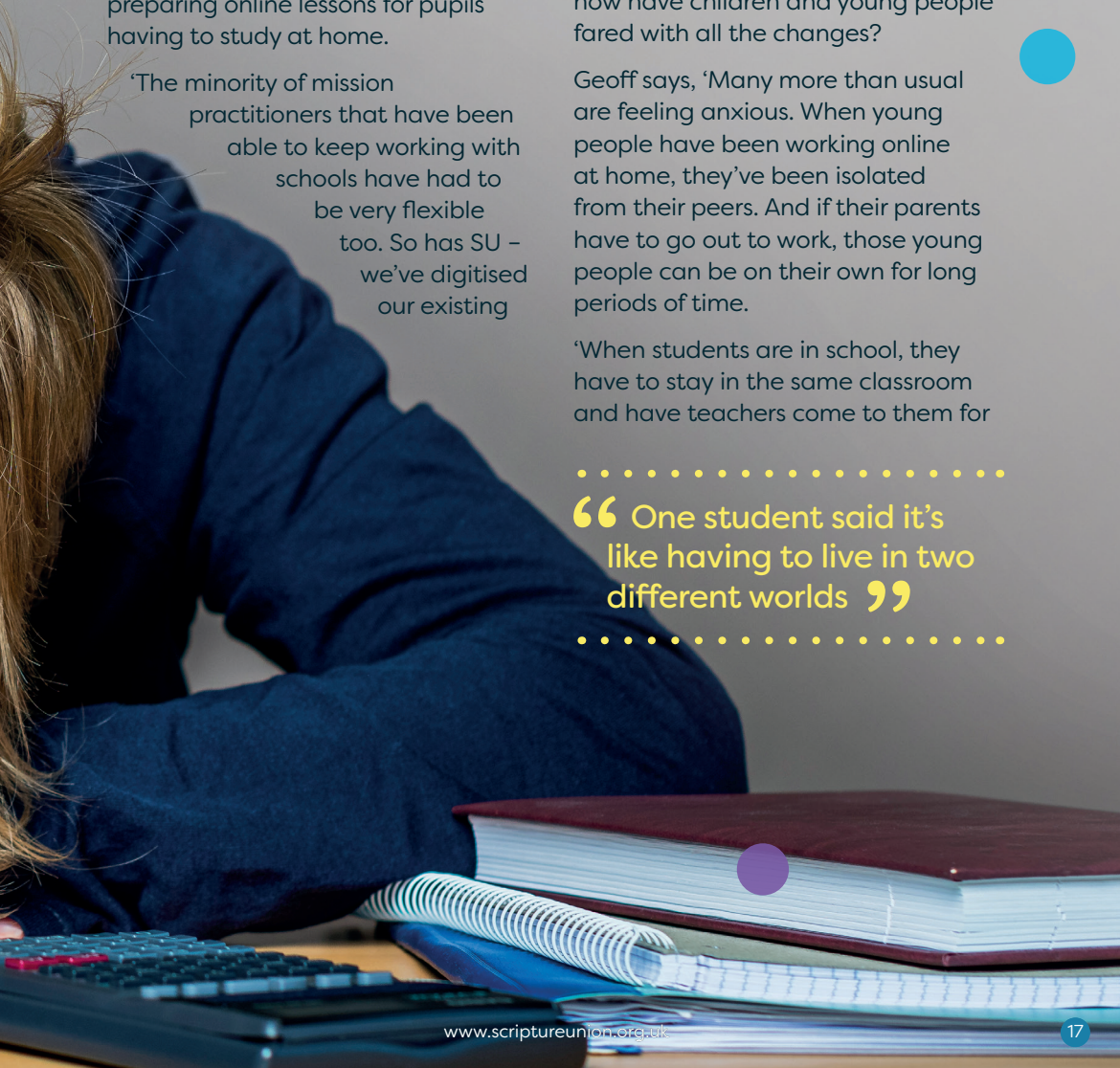
‘The good news is, as opportunities for churches and mission partners to work in schools increase in the coming months, we’re ready! We’ve got resources that can be used whatever the education setting, and the experience to help mission practitioners use them.’

What kind of challenges might those mission practitioners be faced with – how have children and young people fared with all the changes?

Geoff says, ‘Many more than usual are feeling anxious. When young people have been working online at home, they’ve been isolated from their peers. And if their parents have to go out to work, those young people can be on their own for long periods of time.

‘When students are in school, they have to stay in the same classroom and have teachers come to them for

“ One student said it’s like having to live in two different worlds ”



different lessons. They miss the days when they were the ones changing rooms – they miss the mental downtime it gave them. And pupils may also be frustrated because they can spend all day with friends in school but not see them outside of school. One student said it's like having to live in two different worlds.'

So what advice would Geoff give to those churches and local mission partners that want to reboot their schools programmes? 'Focus on rebuilding relationships because

they're even more precious now! Recognise that teachers may welcome pastoral care as much as the pupils. And above all, share God's love and care – it's incredibly powerful in these times.'

.....
“ we've digitised our existing face-to-face schools resources so they can be used online as well as face to face ”
.....

CHECK OUT THESE GREAT SCRIPTURE UNION SCHOOL RESOURCES!

They could be just what you need for face-to-face or online schools-based activities this summer term.

In secondary schools: *Shine* is a programme developed by SU and a range of partners. It enables Christian secondary school pupils to share Jesus with their friends and helps them to explore the difference that faith makes to everyday life. Find out more at www.su.org.uk/shine – why not signpost the young Christians you know to the website so they can join in the programme with others across the country? And look out in the autumn for brand-new *Shine* resources on the theme of 'Influencers'.



In primary schools: *It's Your Move* offers reassurance and tips to young people moving from primary to secondary school. Eleven-year-old Sam did an *It's Your Move* workshop last year. He says it was great to share his worries and concerns with others who felt the same, to think through solutions together, and to learn how God can help.

Explore the whole range of resources and order what you need at su.org.uk/IYM

Young people and mental health: While it's not a school-specific resource, you may find our *Mental Health Suite* useful to help those young people you know who might be facing anxiety and loneliness, so widespread during the pandemic. Find out more and order at su.org.uk/mentalhealth



WEEK
BEGINNING
APRIL 11

Prayers

Please pray for schools at the start of a new term

SUNDAY 11

Praise God for teachers and school support staff, for their extraordinary dedication, flexibility and patience since the start of the pandemic restrictions around this time last year.

MONDAY 12

At the start of this new summer term, please ask God to bless all the pupils and help them to settle and to find some routine, regardless of the education setting they find themselves in.

TUESDAY 13

Give thanks to God for all the Faith Guides, churches and local mission partners that are working with schools. Pray that this new term will bring them new opportunities to share his love.

WEDNESDAY 14

Please pray that God will help teachers and pupils to grasp that

he can be the strong and sure foundation for their lives in a time of great change.

THURSDAY 15

Please pray that many Christian secondary school students will be able to share Jesus with their friends through *Shine*.

FRIDAY 16

Praise God that last summer, *It's Your Move* proved so helpful to Year 6 pupils like Sam as they moved schools during the pandemic. Please pray that even more schools will see its value and want to use it this summer.

SATURDAY 17

Give thanks to God for inspiring SU to develop the suite of mental health resources even before the pandemic began. Pray that many Christians working in schools will use them to support the well-being of students.

Prayers

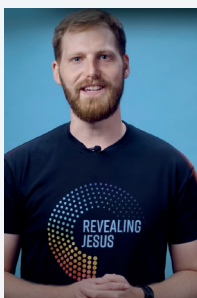
WEEK
BEGINNING
APR 18

SUNDAY 18

Please pray for the schools team of Scripture Union Northern Ireland as they seek to produce online RE lessons designed to help children with their mental health. Pray that these will be well-received and well-used in the months ahead.

MONDAY 19

Pray for Mission Enabler Sam Fowler as he supports Faith Guides in Essex and Hertfordshire, particularly as they continue journeying with children and young people after Easter projects. Pray for new opportunities to share the good news of Jesus in the summer months.



TUESDAY 20

Please pray for Jill Warren, Content Assistant, and Tanya Pencheva, Development Hub Assistant, as they work to support the content creation



work of the Development Hub. Thank God for their gifts and skills in organisation and creativity.

WEDNESDAY 21

Pray for Local Mission Partner **Scripture Union Ministries Trust** on the Isle of Man as they seek to recruit

new team members and gap-year students to meet the many needs of the schools on the island against a background of tighter border controls. Pray that the right people will be found and will fit in well.

THURSDAY 22

Pray that despite the uncertainties, volunteers will be keen to serve on the holidays and missions this summer and will apply in good time so that we can make sure everyone is cleared and ready to go.

FRIDAY 23

Pray for new Grow Communities as they are forming, for strong relationships, safe space for open discussions, and good engagement with the Bible as children and young people from the 95 discover more of who God is.



SATURDAY 24

Kathy Brooks, Appeals and Legacies Manager, has a very varied role within the fundraising team, and often wears lots of hats. Please pray for God's guidance and wisdom as she project manages the fundraising appeals, supports the Mission Enablers with their fundraising and manages all the legacy administration.

Prayers



WEEK
BEGINNING
APR 25

SUNDAY 25

In South Sudan SU praises God that, despite COVID-19, ministry continues in the country and in the refugee camps in Tanzania and Ethiopia. Pray that the Lord will continue to give renewed zeal and passion to the teams doing the work.

MONDAY 26

It's now six months since we launched the Revealing Jesus mission framework! Thank God for the many churches and individuals who have already joined in and pray that more would catch the vision to share God's love with the 95.



TUESDAY 27

Local Mission Partner **Blackpool Schools and Youth Work** would normally reach around 50,000 children every year through assemblies, lessons, clubs and workshops. Pray for them as they look for new ways to make contact.

WEDNESDAY 28

The pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the development of language versions of *Guardians of Ancora*, with team members directly

affected and global lockdowns halting progress. Please pray for the teams in South Africa and South America who are working in challenging and volatile social, political and medical situations.



THURSDAY 29

Children and young people face many challenges: gang culture, violent crime and drugs, grooming and peer pressure. Heidi Beckham, Mission Events Coordinator, asks us to pray for their protection and that many will find help, support and encouragement through summer activities.

FRIDAY 30

Pray for those who came on our Easter online events that they will continue to grow in their faith and keep persevering even when things are challenging.

SATURDAY 1

Jane Webber from Local Mission Partner **Schools Christian Worker Project** in Oswestry area spent much of 2020 preparing online material for assemblies, lessons and prayer spaces for 20 primary and secondary schools in the area. Praise God that many have said how much they value this material and pray that this will create new opportunities for face-to-face work.

BE STRONG
AND
COURAGEOUS

DEUTERONOMY
31:6

My favourite Bible verse

Brandon, 19, didn't grow up in church. He became a Christian six years ago, and now he's a Faith Guide, passionate to share the good news of Jesus with other young people. He reveals his favourite Bible verse and why it's special to him.

“ BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS. DO NOT BE AFRAID OR TERRIFIED BECAUSE OF THEM, FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD GOES WITH YOU; HE WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU. ”

DEUTERONOMY 31:6

‘When I was younger I was bullied – it knocked my confidence and I’d shut myself away to avoid confrontation. Then a mate from school invited me to go to a club with him. There was a “God slot” and the leader spoke so powerfully I was intrigued. Who was this Jesus? I needed to find out more!

‘Later, a group of us from the club went on SU’s Soul Survivor holiday and I decided to follow Jesus. During that break, God did so much to heal me of fear. That’s when I discovered Deuteronomy 31 verse 6. It was so inspiring to know that God’s always with me and that I don’t need to be afraid anymore.

‘I started reading the Bible using a Bible app – you choose a topic and it shows you relevant verses. At first I didn’t understand much, but I stuck with it and things began to make sense.

‘I began going to the church youth group. Now I help lead it, and even write some sessions. It took courage to take that step – I can feel way behind those young people with Christian backgrounds. But I



remember my favourite Bible verse, take a deep breath and push on!

‘It was another big step, deciding to become a Faith Guide. But I’m excited because it will give me the foundation and support I need to share God’s love with other young people that don’t know him.’

Discover God’s Word for yourself with our Bible Reading Guides! All proceeds help more children and young people like Brandon to discover Jesus for themselves. Visit su.org.uk/bibleguides to find out more.

Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAY 2

SUNDAY 2

Praise God that SU Hong Kong has been able to develop an SU Children's Channel this year. It's an online series of short videos, including puppet drama, children's quiet times, and learning Bible verses through physical exercises. Please pray for strength and creativity as they produce more videos.

MONDAY 3

Please pray for Gemma Willis in her Head of Development Hub role. Ask God to give her clarity and wisdom as she decides which content opportunities to pursue and which ones to leave behind.



TUESDAY 4

Debbie Edge, Supporter Care Assistant, asks us to pray that God will help the mobilisation team to come up with new and innovative ways to reach our supporters and for preparations for the Mission Event Conference which is due to take place on 16 May.

WEDNESDAY 5

Pray for Chris, Sarah, Sophie and Nancy, workers with Local Mission Partner **Christians in Calderdale Schools** as they support staff and students, offering a listening ear

through mentoring, and producing material to help from a distance. Pray for them as they look to expand to support other schools in the borough.

THURSDAY 6

The Board meets today. Give thanks for the willingness of the Trustees to serve God and SU in this way. Pray for them as they take responsibility for the good governance of SU, ensuring that the charity is run in a way that is legal, responsible and effective for the gospel.

FRIDAY 7

Pray that the Mission Enablers would find good contacts with churches and individuals, providing more opportunities to share the vision of Revealing Jesus and to invite people to become Faith Guides.

SATURDAY 8

Pray for Gifts Administrator Tracey Bell facing a heavy workload following the departure of a colleague.

Pray she will soon become familiar with the new customer relations system to help her record our supporters' gifts.



Prayers



WEEK
BEGINNING
MAY 9

SUNDAY 9

Scripture Union Spain ask us to pray for the new training courses for Sunday school teachers that they have recently started delivering.

MONDAY 10

Local Mission Partner **C4E**, with the help of local worker Joseph George, is planning a Christianity Awareness Week in two colleges in North Wales this week. Please pray for each conversation to be an exciting move forward in the faith journey of every young person contacted.

TUESDAY 11



Stephen Vis, Director of Finance and Services, would welcome prayer for guidance as the team complete the year-end accounts. Pray

too for an effective use of resources across the movement to maximise the reach and impact to children and young people, especially those who do not yet know Jesus.

WEDNESDAY 12

Grow Communities enable the faith of the 95 to flourish. Thank God for churches who are hosting them and pray for them as they nurture new Christians in their early discipleship.

THURSDAY 13

Please pray for Maggie Barfield, Ancora Mission Leader, and her work as part of the Development Hub team. Pray for Maggie as she considers how best to resource and equip those who use the Guardians of Ancora app.



FRIDAY 14

Pray that Local Mission Partner **Gobaith Môn** working in Anglesey will be able to grow the work to reach as many young people as possible with the hope of Jesus, and that they will be able to use their football cage to minister into schools during the summer term.

SATURDAY 15

Thank God for the faithfulness of our supporters, for their sacrificial giving over many years – particularly over the last year with the impact of the pandemic – and pray for God’s protection and blessing on them asking that their needs will be met in every way possible.

Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAY 16

SUNDAY 16

Praise God for the publication by SU Timor Leste of *Following Jesus*, a study guide on the Sermon on the Mount. Pray that it will be instrumental in helping young people grow as Jesus' disciples.

MONDAY 17

Mission Events Coordinator Dai Bryant requests prayer for the event programme in the summer. Easter events took place online; please pray that by the summer we will be able to run events face to face, creating a better experience for children, young people and team.



TUESDAY 18

The year-end audit is about to start involving the whole of the finance team and others. Pray for effective relationships with MacIntyre Hudson, our auditors, and clear communication, and for all the detailed work across the staff team to complete the text for our Annual Report and Accounts.

WEDNESDAY 19

Pray for churches who are commissioning Faith Guides that the congregations will be supportive of the mission, praying for them and the 95.

THURSDAY 20

Local Mission Partner **Living Stones Educational Trust**, Manchester, ask us to pray for guidance, ideas and ways forward to expand connections with and support for families in the area, both the ones they already work with and the ones in great need, especially for the co-ordinator, Hannah, as she contacts families and young people through various IT platforms.

FRIDAY 21

This would normally be prime time for planning and preparation for Lifepath Brinkburn to run in late June. Pray that God will give wisdom to Mission Enabler Geoff Brown and the team as they determine what to run and how to run it.



SATURDAY 22

Please pray for Rooted Junior – our upcoming new range of resources bringing the Rooted approach to those who work with 8- to 11-year-olds. Pray that children will come to know the good news of Jesus for themselves through their Rooted Junior group.

Prayers

WEEK
BEGINNING
MAY 23

SUNDAY 23

SU Malaysia Sabah praises God for the first Zoom camp they held for trainee teachers. Pray for those working hard to produce a new series of Bible reading notes *Renungan Keluarga* (Family Devotion) in Bahasa Malaysia.

MONDAY 24

Thank God for all he has provided and pray for growth and provision so that more children and young people can be reached. Pray for the fundraising team asking that God will guide their every step and that the work they do will be full of his wisdom.

TUESDAY 25

Please pray for Esther Calvert-Jordan and Leanne Sheppard in their roles as Content Innovators. Ask God to help them discover new and innovative ideas for sharing the good news of Jesus with the 95.

WEDNESDAY 26

Pray for holiday and mission leaders as they plan for the summer, still with uncertainty about how things will look this year. Pray for wisdom in how to pick up the links again after a year of only online activity.

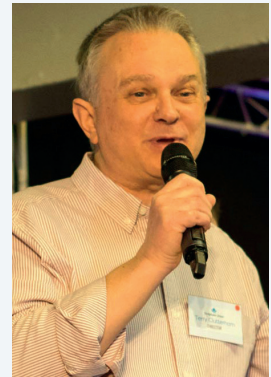


THURSDAY 27

Local Mission Partner **The Wave** works with children and young people in Swanage through clubs and school activities. For most of the last year much of the activity has been online or through the distribution of gift packs. Pray that good contacts will have been maintained and that children will have grown in faith.

FRIDAY 28

We always want to be thinking carefully, prayerfully and biblically about all aspects of faith and mission, as we reach out to the 95 with Jesus' love. Pray for wisdom and boldness for Director of Culture and Innovation Terry Clutterham as he heads up the thought leadership work.



SATURDAY 29

Please pray for the future of the SU Creative Collective. Events for this group were paused during lockdown in 2020 and are yet to resume. Pray for continued creativity and for the opportunities for members to contribute digitally until face-to-face contact is restored.



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