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Hey ,

When I was young, people used to say that the older you get, the faster time seems to go. As a naïve and wet-behind-the-ears youth, I found that hard to believe. Back then, time seemed to go so slowly, especially in anticipation of the next big event in the life of a teenager. A month away seemed like an eternity. There seemed to be an age between each school holiday. And let's not even talk about your birthday - a whole year until the next one?! But now, I think the older generation were right. Time is just flying by! I can't quite believe that April is now done and we entering May already.

So, what's been happening at CARE NI and in the world of NI politics throughout April? Here is our very brief update from the team at CARE NI:

An update from Stormont



In my March email, I mentioned that aside from all of the photo ops and publicity shots, **there is real work going on in the Assembly**. I also said I would fill you in on some of the discussions and debates that have been happening. Since the return of the Assembly, there have been many plenary sessions (a plenary session is where MLAs meet in the Assembly Chamber to debate proposed Bills and discuss Motions). They have covered a wide range of issues as detailed below. Please note, this is by no means an exhaustive list and is in no particular order. Rather, it is to show you, our supporters, the vital work that our politicians do every day, that you may not even be aware of. They have been discussing and debating:

- The introduction of Baby Loss Certificates for NI
- Affordable and accessible childcare for families
- Issues and concerns around getting a MOT
- Making school uniforms more affordable
- Tackling holiday hunger for children on free school meals
- Hospital parking charges
- Hospital waiting lists
- Public sector pay
- Regional rates
- Concerns about XL bully dogs
- A better financial model for funding the NI budget

- The A4 Enniskillen bypass and cross-border projects like the A5
- The untapped potential of the tourist industry in NI for the economy
- RSE and its delivery across schools in NI

This is just a summary of *some* of the discussions that are happening. If you are really interested in finding out exactly what was discussed in these and the many other issues, you can read the reports from each plenary session by clicking the button below and selecting the debate/discussion you would like to read up on:

[Alphabetical list of NI
Assembly plenary reports](#)

As always, **may I encourage you to continue to pray for our leaders and for our nation.** As you can see from that small sample list of issues and discussions, they require much wisdom and discernment as they have to make some very difficult decisions and navigate through some extremely hard issues. And by the nature of politics, not everyone will see eye-to-eye on every issue.

Church Engagement Team Day



Dream Team! Last week, we met as a Church Engagement team in Glasgow for a day of **reflecting and reviewing** on the year that has passed, and **planning and dreaming** for the year that is to come. I realise that for many of you reading this, you may never have come across the other members of the team before so just so you are aware, the CARE Church Engagement team consists of:

Stuart Weir (Head of CARE for Scotland)

Pete Killingley (Head of Church Engagement, England)

Ian Bingham (Head of CARE NI)

James Mildred (Director of Communications and Engagement)

As our supporters, you will hopefully be encouraged to hear that over the course of the last business year between all of us, we have **travelled all over the UK**, conducting around **100 speaking engagements**, across **a range of churches** from lots of **different denominations**, reaching **thousands of Christians**.

All of this is only possible because of YOU, our faithful supporters. **THANK YOU!** Without your prayerful and financial support, none of this is possible.

work, then we would be grateful for any donation you would like to make. You can do so either as a one-off donation, or, if you are in a position to do so, as a longer-term commitment. Or, if you already support us, but would like to increase your giving, then this would obviously be very gratefully received also. To make a donation, simply click on the button below:

[Donate to CARE](#)

General Election 24



As I mentioned in last month's email, the team at CARE have been working hard in preparation for the General Election 24. **We have started to release some of these resources for Christians and churches to help them consider how to vote in this election.** We want to equip you with as much information as possible, so that you can make an informed choice about who to vote for.

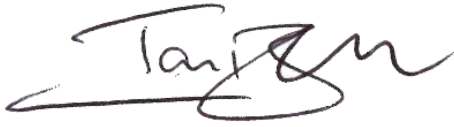
how Christians should approach voting in the upcoming General Election. It is well worth a watch and it should hopefully give you something to think about as you start to consider how you will vote in this election. We will be releasing more podcasts and more resources in the weeks to come, so stay tuned and keep a close eye on our social media channels for when they are released.



I think that will do for this email. I'll leave you with the words of the Psalmist which would be a great way to pray for our leaders and government:

*"Now then, you kings, act wisely!
Be warned, you rulers of the earth!
Serve the Lord with reverent fear,
and rejoice with trembling."
(Psalm 2 v 10 - 11)*

Every blessing,



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