

# St John's VA C of E Primary School

## NEWSLETTER

Finding the light in ourselves and each other (John 8:12)



06/12/24

### Welcome message from the Headteacher

#### Christmas is here!

Dear all,

It has been a very busy and cold few weeks, but the children are beaming at St John's VA C of E Primary School. Nativity practices and show run throughs have been a key element this time of the year. It has been an incredibly busy period at the school preparing for Christmas, getting the school decorated and taking part in more sports events.

The school continues to grow and develop from our SIAMs. Our value this half term is based on hope. We have been working hard on thinking about what changes we would like and what hopes and potential outcomes we would get.

I am very excited to see our children flourish after an incredibly busy term. I have seen some incredible work in classes, teaching in Year 6 and going around the school during Art week. It is incredible how our children grow together during house group activities – something I really want to continue to develop.

We have been very busy these past few weeks looking at risk assessments and how we can fine tweak our systems in school. This in return ensures that our children are growing in a safe and calm environment – something that our visitors to the school always comment on. Our children are incredible!

I am excited to see how the forest area is going to turn out – we are having it cleared today and preparing it to a whole school investment. My vision is for the whole school to do Forest School's and this is something we will develop over the next few months. Perhaps we could make Friday's Forest Friday's! Coming to the end of this term, it is going to be very busy, please continue to look at the calendars here and on the website.

Thank you to everyone supporting the school as volunteers and with donations. We really appreciate it!  
Best wishes Mr Worton-Geer

**Pupil quote of the week:** Precious (Year 6) – *It is a very caring school and they support me when I am struggling. It is like a good community, if I am struggling, I can talk to others and get help.*

**Quote from the bible:** (Isaiah 9:6-7:) *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end."*



### Improvements to the school:

We have improved our Risk Assessment systems in the school and are looking at improving our internet speed and server. Devices are being updated in the school to windows 11 over the Christmas break.

Our forest area is getting cleared and we will be developing the use of the forest to bring outside learning as a part of our curriculum.

We have had our first batch of policies approved by the governors and will be up on the website shortly!

**Merit award:** This year, I have introduced termly merits from class teachers and a special headteacher award. This is for one pupil per class who has shone. Parents will be invited to this special collective worship. We would like to keep this a surprise for these children. Please look out if your child is chosen!



# Academic Highlights

Here is some useful information that is happening in the school.

## Value:

This half term our value is on Hope. We have shared our value of Hope through collective worships but also wanted to take this throughout our learning and what we are doing day in and day out.

Children have spent time on spirituality and considering what they would like to hope for. Some of the hopes are coming true this month. I am hoping for an incredible first Christmas in our school, the school is getting ready for an incredible time.



## PE:

### **Tag rugby:**

Year 5 and 6 took part in the Tag rugby event last week. The Boys played well but had some tough competition while the girls managed to get through to the final. Unfortunately, they came second however they played well and against some big teams. Well done everyone!

### **Indoor Athletics:**

Year 5 and 4 took on the challenge of the Year 5 indoor athletics. 20 children took part in a very competitive indoor athletics challenge. 8 schools competed and St John's came third only 6 points behind second! Well done everyone who took part.

### **Football:**

The football teams continue to thrive with many matches. We won our fourth match in our league counting towards points. We are continuing to shine as our two teams played this week. Whilst they were both difficult games and we came second, the potential that we have is growing. Keep working hard guys!

## **PSHE focus:**

### Celebrating Differences

Across the school we have been challenged in our thinking about what makes us similar or different and how we should all value how we are each unique. This theme tied in well with our special weeks - Kindness Challenge week and Anti-bullying week which took place at the start of the half term. Mrs Backman led a whole school assembly on this theme last Friday.

## **Staff changes:**

**Miss Brett in Year 1 will sadly be leaving us at the end of term to travel the world. We wish her the very best of luck and hope she enjoys her travels. Thank you, Miss Brett, for everything you have done for the school, from breakfast clubs to after school clubs, supporting the pupils in our school to taking children to sports events. We wouldn't be able to do it without you!**

**Mrs Tate and Mrs Deen have extended their working days allowing Year 1 and 2 to be covered where Miss Brett would have worked.**

## Child Prayer:

Dear God,

*Thank you for all the people who help us in our lives and continue to support those who are less fortunate. Let us pray for us to continue to have a good school year and that we will preserve throughout our learning. As our last year in the school, please pray for year 6 in preparation for secondary school – we only have 7 months left!*

Seth (Year 6)

# Volunteer/ donation work:

## Trees:

A huge thank you for the soil that has been donated and the pots for our trees that have come. With this hard work we have achieved the Gold Green Tree award for the school. We want to continue to develop the school to be conscious of the environment and the support from volunteers and donations is a true gift. Thankyou!

## Forest clearing:

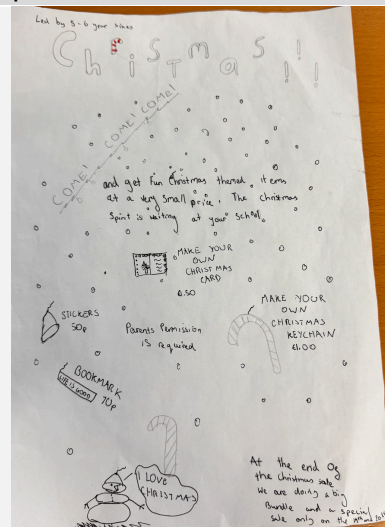
I want to say a huge thank you to the National Highways – Carly Robson and Ian Burnett for the huge support with our forest area clearing. It was a very busy day with the school having it tidied and cleared to allow us to develop the school further. Thank you everyone who took part in this. We truly are blessed to have such a great community.

## Christmas:

Christmas in a school without a real tree and some lights isn't a very bright Christmas however thank you for the donations of the tree by John and Claire at Hatfield House Xmas Trees and a Grandparents company- Groundforce SOS landscaping- who bought and delivered the tree. Additionally, the Parish have also been very generous donating some money for the school to be able to buy some Christmas lights. Finally, we have been very lucky to receive a generous donation from a parent which has allowed us to purchase a lovely new wooden nativity set for Christmas as well as purchasing supplies and equipment for the forest area. This money would allow the whole school to take part in forest schools and development in the forest area.

## Year 6 charity event:

A group of girls from year 6 (Eva and Eva, Cara, Emily, Lili) would like to raise some money for a charity ( to be chosen) and would like to create some Christmas activities for children to take part in. This week, they have began to prepare the resources they need. They are planning to do this at lunch times next two weeks Monday to Thursday. Please see posters for prices. The children have come up with their own business idea and would like to raise money for charity. It would be great to see them thrive.



## Art week activities:

We had a great time with art week this week in our house groups on Monday and Tuesday afternoon. The children had a great time making Christmas decorations and getting into the Christmas festivities. Thank you everyone who supported and gave resources. In particular the stone donation from Evan's family – in year 1. Each pupil has decorated a stone for our sensory garden.



## AGMS Foundation Donation:

We are also working closely with AGM Foundations for some donations to our school to improve outside of Year 1 area. We are looking forward to working in partnership with AGMS Foundation who – a few years ago- donated us our buddy benches that are outside by the chess board.





## Autumn Term 2<sup>nd</sup> Half:

Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Chess competition-selected children Year 5 and 6
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	KS1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Reception and Nursery Nativity – At Christ the Kind Church – 8:50am
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	New Parent tour – 9am
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	KS1 Nativity – at St John's Church – 6:00pm
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Rocksteady Concert – 9am – invite only
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Christmas Disco evening
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2024	Last Day - Carol service – St John's Church – 8:50am
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2024– Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Christmas break

## Spring Term 1<sup>st</sup> Half:

Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	INSET Day
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	First day back
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	SATs (Year 6) Workshop: 8:50am and 2:45pm
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2025	Phonics (Year 1 and 2) Workshop 8:50am and 2:45pm
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	MTC (Year 4) Workshop 8:50am and 2:45pm
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2025	Half- term

## Christmas!

### Christmas meal, Christmas jumper and Disco information:

We have several Christmas events that are happening including Christmas meal and jumper day on the Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

We also have the Christmas Disco run by the PTA on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December – information to follow.



## Parish News

### Confirmation in the Spring

It is of course possible for pupils in Year 6 who are already or approaching 11 years of age and who have already been baptised to be presented to the Bishop for Confirmation into the Church of England.

It was a great joy for one of our Year 6 pupils to be confirmed earlier this Autumn.

The parish is currently looking to present further candidates (adults and children) at a service in early 2025 and any pupil wishing to be confirmed should let the parish clergy know as soon as possible via [info@digswellparish.org.uk](mailto:info@digswellparish.org.uk)

Obviously, in order to be confirmed children need to understand what is involved in taking Communion and the wider life of the church, so they would need to attend church reasonably often to grasp the significance of this great event in their lives.

If you just want to chat about it do send an email without any obligation.

Thank you  
Selina & Fr Rob



## The Church of England Parish of Digswell Welwyn Garden City December 2024

Compline/weekly worship available on Soundcloud Channel

Morning Prayer is via Zoom

Please ask us for details 251124

<b>Sunday 1</b>	<b>ADVENT SUNDAY</b> Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am <b>ADVENT CAROLS WITH EUCHARIST</b> at St John's Church
<b>Monday 2</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 8:00pm <b>Standing Committee</b> <i>via Zoom</i>
<b>Tuesday 3</b>	8:50am <b>School Assembly at St John's School</b> 10:00am <b>Eucharist at Christ the King Hub</b> 11:00am <b>Yr 3 RE Lesson at St John's School [Fr Rob]</b> 4:00pm <b>Trustees at Knightsfield School</b> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> – <i>a link is sent</i>
<b>Weds 4</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 8:50am <b>Collective Worship at St John's School [Fr Rob]</b> 12 Noon <b>Advent Soup Lunch at Rectory</b> 6:30pm <b>Community Carols organised by Monks Walk</b>
<b>Thursday 5</b>	9:00am <b>Tea Toast and Toddlers at Christ the King Hub</b> 11:30am <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b> 2.15pm <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b> 7:30pm <b>PCC</b> <i>via Zoom</i> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> <i>a link is sent</i>
<b>Friday 6</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:00am <b>Coffee Pot at St John's Church</b> 10:30am <b>Book Club at Coffee Pot at St John's Church</b>
<b>Saturday 7</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:30am <b>Hub Café at Christ the King Hub</b>
<b>Sunday 8</b>	<b>ADVENT 2</b> Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am <b>Parish Eucharist at St John's Church</b> 11:00am <b>Anglican-led Service at Digswell Village Church</b> 12 Noon <b>Join the Mayor Carol Singing Hour at Waitrose</b> 4:00pm <b>Christingle at Christ the King Hub</b>
<b>Monday 9</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:00am <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b>
<b>Tuesday 10</b>	8:50am <b>School Assembly at St John's School</b> 10:00am <b>Eucharist at Christ the King Hub</b> 10:00am <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b> 11:30am <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> – <i>a link is sent</i>

<b>Weds 11</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:00am <b>St John's School Nativity at Christ the King Hub</b> 11:00am <b>Parish Safeguarding Update</b> <i>via Zoom</i> 12 Noon <b>Advent Soup Lunch at Rectory</b> 2:00pm <b>Waterside Christingle at Christ the King Hub</b>
<b>Thursday 12</b>	5:30pm <b>St John's School Nativity at St John's Church</b> 7:00pm <b>Knightsfield Awards</b> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> <i>a link is sent</i>
<b>Friday 13</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:00am <b>Coffee Pot at St John's Church</b> 1:15pm <b>Symbols of Christmas School Sessions at St John's</b>
<b>Saturday 14</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:30am <b>Hub Café at Christ the King Hub</b> 7:30pm <b>Welwyn Garden City Music Society Concert at St Johns</b>
<b>Sunday 15</b>	<b>ADVENT 3</b> Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 8:00am <b>Parish Eucharist at Christ the King Hub</b> 11:00am <b>Annual Carol Service at St John's in the presence of the Mayor with a Quartet from Six on Sax</b> 2:30pm <b>Hertfordshire Concert Band at St John's Church.</b> 2:30pm <b>Holy Baptism at Christ the King Hub</b>
<b>Monday 16</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 10:30am <b>Harwood Hill Christingle at St John's Church</b> 1:00pm <b>Homerswood Christingle at St John's Church</b>
<b>Tuesday 17</b>	10:00am <b>Eucharist at Christ the King Hub</b> 6:30pm <b>Parish Christmas Dinner at St John's Church</b> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> – <i>a link is sent</i>
<b>Weds 18</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b>
<b>Thursday 19</b>	9:15am <b>Homerswood Carol Service at St John's</b> 11:00am <b>Knightsfield Carol Service at St John's</b> 8:30pm <b>Compline</b> – <i>a link is sent</i>
<b>Friday 20</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 8:50am <b>St John's Carol Service at St John's with Coffee Pot</b> 10:45am <b>Harwood Hill Carol Service at St John's with Coffee Pot</b>
<b>Saturday 21</b>	8:30am <b>Morning Prayer</b> 9:30am <b>Hub Café at Christ the King Hub</b>
<b>Sunday 22</b>	<b>ADVENT 4</b> Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am <b>Parish Eucharist at St John's</b> 11:00am <b>Anglican led service at DVC</b> 1:00pm <b>Holy Baptism at St John's Church</b>





Monday 23	10:00am	Morning Prayer
Tuesday 24	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	
	10:00am	Eucharist at Christ the King Hub
	4:00pm	Blessing of the Crib service at St John's
	8:30pm	Compline – a link is sent
	11:30pm	Midnight Mass of the Nativity at St John's Church
Weds 25	<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	
	10:00am	Parish Christmas Eucharist at St John's Church
Thursday 26	<b>FEAST OF ST STEPHEN</b>	
	10:00am	Eucharist at Christ the King
	8:30pm	Compline – a link is sent
Friday 27	8:30am	Morning Prayer
Saturday 28	<b>HOLY INNOCENTS</b>	
	10:00am	EUCCHARIST at St John's
Sunday 29	<b>CHRISTMAS ONE</b>	
	Audio Service for This Week – a link is sent	
	11:00am	Joint Service at DVC
Monday 30	8:30am	Morning Prayer
Tuesday 31	10:00am	Final Eucharist of 2024 at Christ the King Hub
Wednesday 1	10:00am	New Year's Day Eucharist at St John's Church Followed by fizz

### Carol service:

You are warmly invited to our  
**9 Lessons and Carols Service**  
 at St John's Church,  
 Monks Rise, Digswell  
 on  
 Sunday 15 December at 11am  
 in the presence of the  
**Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield**

Guest Musicians  
**Six on Sax**

Director of Music  
**Steve Povey**  
 Followed by refreshments