

# The week ahead @ Saint James

“Be strong and courageous and do it!” 1 Chronicles 28:20

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Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Issue 130

Mon 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar
First day back after Christmas break	Last day of half term for children	INSET day	First day back after Half term break	Parent book look

## A message from the Senior Leadership team

As we come to the end of another busy year, we reflect on how we are blessed with the kindness and generosity of our parents. Something for which we feel incredibly grateful. However, next year we ask for a different approach. We ask you to pay it forward.

Paying it forward is an old idea with a growing uptake in recent years. It acknowledges that the love and support you receive in your life. When you pay it forward, you do something generous for someone else. Paying it forward keeps the generosity flowing. The magic of paying it forward is that it can be contagious. Your smile can result in someone else's smile. Your kindness in offering a hand to someone in need may result in them offering to help someone else. The more you pay it forward and practice kindness and generosity, the greater your positivity impacts on the lives of others.

For this reason, we ask you to consider paying it forward to all the staff in our school. Now more than ever, we need your love, kindness, smiles and cheer just to help us through another year. Have a wonderful, happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year!

## Who knew, it's certainly true, the visitors to the stable can be identified by their shoe!

Anyone who walked into either St James church on Thursday morning, or the hall at Saint James Primary school, may have been mistaken for what was happening. Like teachers at the end of term trying to clear out the class lost property box, either Reverend Vicky or the children could be seen walking up and down the aisle clutching a hitherto unidentified shoe. Why? Well, we'll come back to that!

There's something very special about attending a service at St James church, particularly at Christmas time. For what is inherently a cold, stone building the warmth seems to emanate. We'd already enjoyed the, ever popular, Christmas tree festival and were looking forward to the Year 5 and 6 performance the following Tuesday, when our Year 3 and 4 children attended the Christmas service last Thursday. Although not benefitting from the special atmosphere created by the setting, Reverend Linda ably managed to replicate the calm, peace and joy in a duplicate service, held for the rest of Saint James, in our school hall.

Each service began with the lighting of the Advent wreath, establishing a flame on the candles for Hope and Peace before delivering the first reading of the angel's visit to Mary. With carefully selected readings and carols leading us chronologically through the Christmas story, the children enjoyed two equally delightful Christmas services. This was only enhanced by the confident and clear reading from the children delivering the readings and the beautiful singing.

So, what was all that about the identification of a selection of single shoes? Were they taken from a display outside a shoe shop or perhaps the footwear collection of an unfortunate pirate? Maybe, like Cinderella from the palace ball, people had tried to leave the church (and school) in a hurry and in their haste had lost a shoe? Thankfully not. The real reason was entirely relevant to the Christmas story. The shoes had been left by the visitors to the stable, but who had visited the baby Jesus? A welly boot artistically decorated in sheep poo – that must be the shepherds and a dress shoe so shiny you could see your face in it – I guess the wise men must have visited. How about the battered leather footwear with wood shavings intertwined with the laces? They must have been the shoes of a carpenter, so Joseph, and the flipflops must have been Mary. But what about the metal 'u' shaped item? The donkey of course! What an engaging way to look at the Christmas story!

We would like to extend a big 'thank you' to both Reverend Vicky and Reverend Linda for leading us in two very special acts of worship, along with all the children who helped lead the services alongside them.

Please do remember there are a number of special services and activities being held at St James church over the Christmas period; you are welcome to come along and join in with the celebrations. We have included a list of these elsewhere in the newsletter.

## Collective Worship



This week's theme:  
**Christmas**

This week's bible story:  
**The Christmas Story**  
**Matthew 1:23**



## A fitting conclusion to two weeks of impressive Christmas performances

If you've been lucky enough to attend one of the many nativities or concerts taking place in our school hall over the past couple of weeks, you will have been treated to talented acting, beautiful singing and assured reading. The only exception to this was Tuesday's performance by Year 5 and 6 which, whilst sharing all of the aforementioned attributes, swapped location to St James church, for a truly special final performance of the festive season.

Those bargain hunters among you may be expecting to be queuing outside shops before they open on Boxing Day, to grab items at heavily reduced prices. Often these queues can start to build hours before the store has opened. However, it is rare to see queues building an hour before the start of a primary school Christmas concert. Until Tuesday! With parents braving the cold evening to get a prime seating position in the church, the queue was soon stretching across the church yard. Perhaps this is an indication of the calibre of the performance.

For those who waited patiently for this significant amount of time, we're sure the concert didn't disappoint. Whereas when children practise their singing in a classroom the volume easily fills the room, this can sometimes be inadequate when it comes to filling the capacious void of the church's high, vaulted ceiling. However, this wasn't the case on Tuesday! The delightful and rousing rendition of 'Joy' set the bar high for the rest of the concert with children clearly modelling the song's title in their performance.

As the concert's songs and readings guided us through the narrative of the Christmas story, the Year 5 and 6 children shared the responsibility of storytelling through their singing. With regimental precision the year groups swapped places between songs to allow each cohort to lead from the front.

Christmas brings many pleasures, both tangible and impalpable, but we would argue that few rival the pleasure of seeing children's happy faces singing joyfully in the church on a cold Christmas evening. The setting of St James church really does help make an already accomplished performance all the more special. We would like to extend an enormous 'thank you' to Reverend Vicky for opening the church to us again this Christmas time and to all the parents, grandparents, family and friends who braved a particularly chilly evening to come and watch this truly special performance.

After totalling the amount raised at each of our Christmas performances, we are thrilled to announce that a total of £680 was achieved! This will be divided between supporting Prince and Ineza, in Rwanda, and purchasing skipping ropes and balls to enrich playtimes and lunchtimes in school. Thank you so much for your kind donations.



## Christmas at St James

### Special Lives Service

Sunday 15th December at 4pm

*A Christmas service to remember loved ones who have died.  
Write their name on a star and place it on our  
Special Lives Christmas Tree.*

### Candlelight Carol Service

Sunday 22nd December at 6.30pm

*A joyful service of readings and carols celebrating the Christmas story.  
Representatives from local community organisations and groups  
will read the lessons.*

### Children's Christmas Activity Morning

Saturday 21st December 9.30am to 11.30am

*Children's fun and activities celebrating the Christmas story*

*To book a place contact Jan on 023 8047 6777 or  
stjameswe.childrenswork@gmail.com*

### Christingle Nativity Services

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 5pm

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm and 6pm

*Children are invited to come dressed up as a nativity character.  
Please book for this service from 1<sup>st</sup> December on Ticket Tailor.  
See the church website for the link.*

### Midnight Mass

Tuesday 24th December at 11.30pm

### Christmas Day Communion

Wednesday 25th December at 10.30am

Everyone is very welcome!  
Please see our website for more details  
[www.stjameswestend.org.uk](http://www.stjameswestend.org.uk)



## Community Candlelight Carol Service

Sunday 22nd December at 6.30pm

All welcome!

A beautiful service of readings and carols  
celebrating Christmas with our church choir,  
followed by mulled wine, mince pies and  
hot drinks.

St James' Church, West End, SO30 3AT

## Coldplay may have been the headline act at Glastonbury but the Saint James Christmas tree headlines at the only festival that counts, this Christmas time!

Glastonbury, The Isle of Wight Festival, Camp Bestival; all immensely popular festivals that happen during the Summer months. However, if you try searching for festivals happening in December, you'll have a very sparse selection to choose from. That is, unless you live in West End! Last weekend, we know many of you visited St James church to enjoy the Christmas tree festival; a celebration of beautiful trees decorated by community groups.

The trees, all linked by the theme 'Peace on Earth', were the main attraction along with refreshments, music and craft. Saint James Primary School's contribution to the festival, the 'Peace Prayer Tree', looked beautiful, adorned with decorations made by our children from sustainable materials. Although the many wonderful decorations were created by the children, the tree still needed to be dressed in situ. For that task, children from year groups across the school were selected to walk to the church to complete the job. Phoebe, Molly, Roya, Jake, Oliver and Caleb were a credit to our school in their attitude and behaviour and were richly rewarded, with juice and cookies, for their efforts!

'Thank you' to Reverend Linda, Mrs Griffiths and Mrs Callard for escorting the children to the church and helping them to make our entrant in the festival stand out.



## Forget downloads and even CD singles, the Christmas Number one is sung at Saint James

The Beatles in 1963, 64 and 65, the Spice Girls in 1996, 1997 and 1998 and Ladbaby in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 all share the enviable status of having Christmas number one in three or more consecutive years. However, topping the charts in 1984, 1989 and 2004, 'Do they know it's Christmas' by Band Aid is the only song to have reached the Christmas number one spot on three separate occasions.

Those records may be emulated or surpassed at Saint James Primary School over the next few years after the introduction of our own race for Christmas Number One. Whereas Paul McCartney, Bob Geldof, Midge Ure and the other writers of the aforementioned tracks may be well known to many of us (although admittedly, probably not our children!) the writers Joseph Mohr, William J. Kirkpatrick and Isaac Watts are arguably not. However, each of these lyricists has a song in the Saint James chart!

So, what is this chart that we're referring to? The Saint James Top Ten Christmas Carols, of course! After Reverend Linda collected the ballot sheets on which children voted for their favourite carol, the winning carol has been a closely guarded secret.

Wednesday morning's 'Songs of Praise' saw the countdown taking place, with the children singing the finalists from Number 6 in the chart down to the eventual Number One. To keep the suspense even longer, Reverend Linda even revealed the carols by means of a cryptic clue. Quiet at the end of the day? Silent Night, obviously!

So, which carol proudly achieved Number One status this year, eclipsing all other contenders? The overwhelming winner for 2024 was 'Away in a Manger', receiving significantly more votes than the second placed carol, 'Silent Night'. Whereas William J Kirkpatrick will never be aware of the success of his composition (he died in 1921) we're sure he would be proud that his carol achieved the top spot in Saint James' inaugural competition.

The top six carols for Saint James Primary School in 2024 were:

6. Oh, come all ye faithful
5. Joy to the world!
4. Calypso Carol
3. The Gift
2. Silent Night
1. Away in a Manger





## Selfless siblings pick up litter around West End

At Saint James, so many of our children model our values of Love, Respect and Courage in their behaviour every day. However, when they are considered to have gone 'above and beyond' showing these values both in and out of school, we recognise these as 'Jubilee moments'. Installed at the front of our hall is an old ship's bell, that is only rung when these exceptional moments have occurred. This week we celebrated one of these moments.

Alfie, in Year 5, and Harrison, in Year 3, were the proud and worthy bell ringers on this occasion. Rather than spending their free time plugged into a games console, in front of a television screen or playing on a phone, the two brothers decided to be more community focussed and have been litter picking around West End. Although we all share a responsibility to show stewardship to our planet and keep our local area tidy, regrettably not everyone is as good at this as Alfie and Harrison.

Whilst this action is highly commendable in its own right, their consequent choices are even more selfless. A kind passerby, impressed by the boys' diligence, gifted them five pounds for their efforts. Suggesting that they use it to buy sweets and chocolate as a treat, the boys had more altruistic plans for it. After thinking on a local level with their litter picking endeavours the boys extended their impact to a global level. Considering our two sponsored Rwandan children, Prince and Ineza, the boys donated their money as a contribution towards their welfare. What a selfless act of love for others, this Christmas time!



## Proposal for new housing

The main content of our newsletter will always be related to school-based activities, events and initiatives, along with the impressive feats and achievements of our wonderful children. However, there are sometimes local issues and events which we will try to signpost you towards. In the case of this article, many of us were unaware the proposal to build 4,600 new houses in West End. Whilst we are in no way seeking to influence your thoughts and opinions, we feel it is important that you are kept informed about proposals that will impact on your community. As the date for submitting comment on this proposed development is in January, you may want to take this opportunity to make your voice heard. The proposal, from Eastleigh Borough Council, is outlined below;

Do you want another 4,600 houses to be built in North West End? The Local Plan is currently being reviewed and the proposal is to build an additional 4,600 houses in West End, 4,600 in Fair Oak, 2,800 in Bishopstoke and 1,300 in Hedge End.

There is currently a consultation running to gather views about this. Attending the consultation does not count as submitting an objection or support for this development.

In order to have your views considered, you need to submit your comments:

- Via the online consultation page to complete the full survey or a short survey– this is the preferred method
- By email to [local.plan@eastleigh.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@eastleigh.gov.uk)
- Or post them to Planning Policy, Upper Market Street, Eastleigh, SO50 9YN

All responses must be received by 5pm on 29 January 2025.

The issues and options consultation enables everyone to have their say before a decision is made. The consultation will run from 4 December to 29 January. There will be a series of 'drop-in sessions' around the Borough where people can talk to the team but please remember you still need to complete the survey, email or write in to formally share your views.

The documents and how to respond was published on 4 December at:

[www.eastleigh.gov.uk/localplanreview](http://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/localplanreview)

Please take this one opportunity you have and make your views known.



## A fond farewell to three much loved members of our Saint James team

Regrettably, the end of a term can signify the end of a chapter in some staff's working life at Saint James. On this occasion, with a heavy heart, we are bidding a fond farewell to three individuals. All have contributed to the success of Saint James over the past few years by fulfilling three different, yet important, roles; a teacher and senior leader, a higher level teaching assistant and a governor.

### Ms Lenney

When they come to the end of their time at one place of employment, we imagine many people look back on their time and consider the lasting impact they have made. In most cases, this is easier if they have worked there for a significant period of time. There will have been more time to implement and action change. However, Sarah Lenney would appear to be an exception to this rule.

Having only been a member of Saint James Primary School since September 2023, Ms Lenney has crammed a lot into her regrettably short time with us; not least, one successful OFSTED inspection and an equally impressive SIAMS inspection. Joining Saint James Primary School as a member of the Senior Leadership Team and taking on the responsibility for curriculum development, Sarah quickly made a positive impact considering curriculum coverage and coaching subject leaders. This paid particular dividends during OFSTED when we were subject to a number of 'deep dives' into different curriculum areas. The work teachers had completed with Sarah, enabled them to showcase the great things they had done, as well as giving the confidence to talk about it with authority. If that's not a lasting and impressive legacy, we're not sure what is?

Due to family commitments and a change of circumstance, Ms Lenney will be relocating to London. Although she has commented that, if she had the option she would move Saint James Primary School with her! We imagine that, although we know she will be missed, many of you would find dropping your children off in central London a bit of a challenge each day, so we've had to decline her suggestion!



### Mrs Watts

Although it is always sad when members of staff leave the school, it is usually for exciting new opportunities or relocating. We've been assured that the weather at this time of year hasn't impacted on Sophie Watts' decision to leave but, considering her next destination, we're not sure she's being completely honest! In many ways, the warm climate and sandy beaches of Australia certainly seem a preferable option to dreary, wet winter days in West End!

Whilst Mrs Watts' move to Australia will initially be temporary, if she's already overcome the fear of travelling to a country that is as famous for being the home to some of the world's deadliest animals as it is its colourful reefs and iconic opera house, we're not sure she'll ever return!

Like the rest of the world, little did Mrs Watts know, when she joined Saint James Primary School in in 2018, that less than two years later the country would be thrown into uncharted waters with the impact of Covid 19. A stalwart throughout the period of lockdown, regularly teaching groups of key worker children and covering for staff who had tested positive, Sophie showed impressive versatility and adaptability.

Being an HLTA (Higher Level Teaching Assistant), Mrs Watts has regularly covered classes ranging from Year R to Year 6. This means that, in the six years she has worked at Saint James Primary School, she has impacted on the lives of so many of our children. We're sure that they, like us, will have many positive memories of that time.



### Mrs Clover

Surely, after working for the NHS for over 40 years, most people are entitled to a peaceful and relaxing retirement. With the pressures and stresses of a job in that national institution, no one would surely begrudge it!

However, the easy life was not a calling for Ann Clover! With a keen interest in education and active involvement in St James church, Ann was elected as a Foundation Governor in early 2023. Like Ms Lenney, although Mrs Clover may have only been with us for a relatively short period in Saint James history, she has certainly made a positive and lasting impression. Instrumental in ensuring all new members of staff are inducted with a bag of goodies that warmly welcome them into our Saint James family, Ann has always shown immense care and compassion for the welfare of all our children and staff. She was also fully involved in the build-up to, and duration of, the OFSTED and SIAMS inspections at the end of the last academic year.

So, is it a peaceful and relaxing retirement for Ann now, after giving us two years of her unwavering support? Somehow we doubt it, as we imagine caring for her 6-year-old granddaughter will keep her from getting bored!

