



From Jackie Waters-Dewhurst, Diocesan Director of Education

It'll be over by Christmas – well by December 2nd.....

We were expecting to be planning our shopping trips, one step closer to normality. Instead we are facing tier 3 and a continuation of lockdown. In reality this was probably always going to be the way it was going to be but that doesn't stop the sense of dashed hope and the yawning chasm that the lack of a release date brings.

It is easy to feel hopeless and helpless. This Monday has brought a flood of new school closures – either in full or in part and we do not underestimate how difficult these decisions are for school leadership. We do not take lightly the work involved in continuing to teach those children whose bubbles remain in school. We do not fail to appreciate the difficulties of staffing and timetabling and just keeping going. We are in awe at the capacity of you all to continue to do the very best for your pupils – thank you!

So where do we look for hope? This morning my mind was drawn to World War I – not an event usually synonymous with hope! They too thought that, against all the odds, it would be over by Christmas. It wasn't. Countless numbers, far more than we are facing now, lost their lives or the lives of their loved ones. Many came back from the war without jobs or homes. Yet there was hope. There was hope in the [Christmas day truce](#). There was hope in the efforts at home to knit socks and send parcels out to the front. There was hope in the little acts of humanity. And there still is.

If you want to change the world you do it in small bites -

We can change the world one thought at a time, one child at a time, one family at a time, one community at a time, one city, one state and one country at a time.

Bryant McGill

And there is, of course hope in our continued ability to withstand, to flourish in adversity – in the way we've learnt new things which we'll be able to utilise in the new normal whenever it does come. In the growing closer links with our families and communities as we pull together, in the never-ending joy of all that education brings even when we're nearly too tired to appreciate it!

Romans 5:3-5

The Message

3-5 ... We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling short changed. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!

I don't believe that God sends the bad things to 'make us better people'. I do believe that very often the stuff we learn while we go through the bad stuff is stuff that will benefit us and those around us. And I do believe that God is there, walking beside whilst we are dealing with the stuff.

So, remember to look for the hope – Christmas is a hopeful time. Maybe our virtual carol service will help you (more about that soon!). And remember that whatever your 'stuff' is you are not carrying it alone.

You remain in our prayers – please let us know how best we can support you.

God bless,
Jackie

Resources and Information

Called, Connected, Committed

Click [here](#) to view the latest from the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership.

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**FOUNDATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

Prayer & Reflection – Videos

Our prayer videos continue this week, with Revd Simon Dean. Please click [here](#).



Reflection

Our EDO Lynsey Norris continues her series of reflections – these can be found [here](#), and attached to this email.

Advent Resources

We have added lots of helpful advent resources on our website for you to use –

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/page/?title=Advent+and+Christmas&pid=90>

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/page/?title=Advent+and+Christmas&pid=89>

Diocesan Advent Calendar

The Curates, IME coordinator and Bishop Nicholas have put together a virtual advent calendar. Starting tomorrow you will be able to open each day for a message:

<https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/News/the-diocesan-advent-calendar-the-link-to-the-actual-calendar>