



From *Paul Thompson*, Diocesan Director of Education –

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. [...] 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. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.”



Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Yesterday was the first Sunday of the Advent season.

Advent is a time of waiting, a time of countdown, waiting for something important to happen.

Waiting is not always easy, whether it’s for our online shopping to be delivered, or for the next career opportunity to present itself, or for the whole world to be vaccinated against Covid; it’s easy to be impatient.

We know what our advent calendars will count down to, we know how long it is going to be until that all-important 25th December. The people of Israel were not so lucky – they were

waiting many, many years, not knowing when their promised Messiah would arrive, what he would be like, nor how he would arrive.

Sometimes waiting seems impossible, but when we look at it more closely we can see positives to it. Waiting does not need to be passive, we can actively wait.

Rather than seeing Advent as a season of waiting, let us see the season as a time for preparation – a time for preparing for the coming of the Messiah and the celebration of Christmas with the birth of Jesus Christ. In the lead up to Christmas celebrations, you will no doubt have lots to prepare, such as family gatherings, carol services and buying gifts for loved ones.

It is the same throughout the school year: we often actively wait and prepare for things. For example, teachers prepare to deliver inspiring opportunities for pupils to learn as they plan their lessons and gather their resources. Leaders and governors prepare for future developments of the school as they evaluate their monitoring activities. I don't know of a single school leader who just sits around in school and waits passively for something to happen.

However, active waiting does not mean that you always have to be busy running around *doing* something. We can actively use our time to reflect on what we are waiting for. We must use some time to think!

Advent gives us an opportunity, yes to prepare for the season, but also to reflect on what we are building up to - the birth of Jesus and all that means for mankind: the arrival of light into the world after people have been 'walking in darkness'.

Whatever we are waiting for at the moment, it is good to know we are not alone. We do not need to wait any longer for Jesus to be revealed. God is with us at all times.

Reflection questions:

- What are you currently waiting for? Are you waiting actively or passively? Do you know you are not alone in your waiting?
- Can you spend this advent season reflecting on what this season means to you personally?



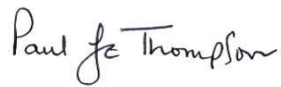
Prayer

Dear Father, thank you for this advent season, a time of preparation and reflection on your coming to earth. I pray that you will help me in my waiting, and to know I am not alone.

Amen

Please remember that you are not alone – the Diocesan Education Team and the church school family are also with you – always.

Best wishes



Paul Thompson

Your News

Welton St Mary's CofE Primary Academy – Globe Guardian Challenge

'The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.' Genesis 2:15

The earth is a gift, a home that we share with the rest of creation. But with this gift comes responsibility. We are all stewards on the earth and here to look after it; to care for, manage, oversee and protect all that God owns. What an honour and privilege! So what can we do to help look after this precious planet?

At Welton St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy, pupils (with the help of their families) and staff have been invited to complete the Globe Guardian Bronze challenge. This is a challenge that aims to raise awareness for the need to care for the planet and to promote some of the changes we can all make and the actions we can take. It is helping us to lead the way and be 'agents of positive change' in our world. The challenge is split into 4 categories with children being asked to complete 20 tasks, 5 of which are 'wild' cards where the children are encouraged to be creative in how they can help look after God's world.

Climate



Natural world



Resources



Research



Each Friday, we recognise and celebrate the achievements of the children (a growing number – it has been infectious!) who are taking part. The children send in photographs of their

achievements which have included recycling soft plastics at the Coop, making soap and giving it to family members rather than using soap in a dispenser, recycling glass jars, composting, litter-picking, donating clothes to charity shops rather than throwing them away, shopping locally, and turning thermostats down at home. Children have been carrying out their own research as well as watching programmes about climate change. Some families have visited The Plastic Ocean at The Collection. All the children have measured their carbon footprint and worked to reduce it.

Having completed all 20 tasks, the children are awarded a certificate and badge. There is also a certificate once a month for the most creative wild card.

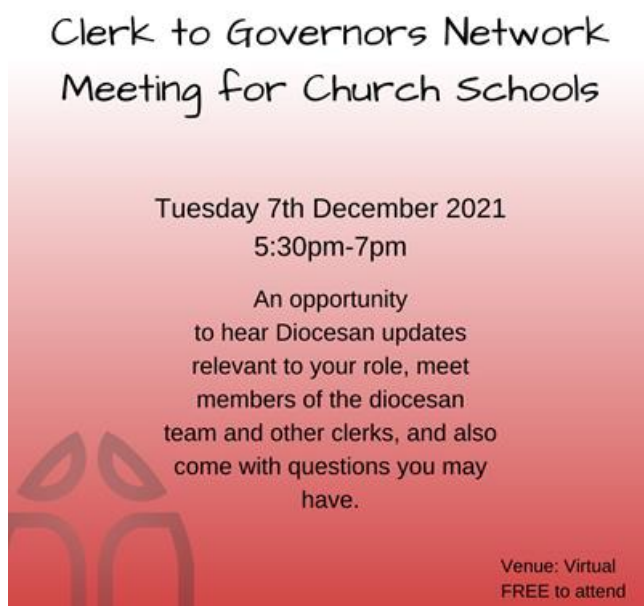
We are amazed by how our school community has embraced this challenge and how the project continues to grow. The School Council are holding a Christmas Fayre where they are re-using glass jars and making gifts. They have also asked families to donate any Christmas jumpers that children have outgrown and may be lurking in the backs of wardrobes. Children then have the opportunity to swap, or for a small donation, buy a Christmas jumper. Not only is this minimising cost at an expensive time of year, it is helping to reduce landfill waste and recycle.

We are hoping that by encouraging these positive changes, that the children will grow up with good habits and be great ambassadors for taking care of our planet.

‘Together we are encouraged to be agents of positive change in this world.’

Important Updates and Messages

Courses and Conferences



Clerk to Governors Network
Meeting for Church Schools

Tuesday 7th December 2021
5:30pm-7pm

An opportunity
to hear Diocesan updates
relevant to your role, meet
members of the diocesan
team and other clerks, and also
come with questions you may
have.

Venue: Virtual
FREE to attend

This FREE meeting will be an opportunity to hear Diocesan updates relevant to your role, meet members of the diocesan team and other clerks, and also come with questions you may have. We'd love to support you in the role you do and this will give us an opportunity to find out how we can do this.

To book your place, please click on the link below:

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/calendar/?calid=1,2,3,4,5,6,7&pid=9&viewid=1&event=184>

Save the Date!

30th March 2022 – Conference for head teachers, chairs of governors, senior leader, clergy.
In person event at Bishop Grosseteste University.

More details to follow.

Schools! – If you have any articles you would like included in the weekly DBE bulletin, to share good practice in our schools then please email ellen.cross@lincoln.anglican.org