

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.”
Numbers 6:24-26



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Music has always been an important part of my life. From the age of 7 I learnt to play the piano (a practice I am determined to get back to this year), at secondary school I picked up the flute and in my teenage years my family suddenly realised I could sing! Not only that, but my moods and emotions are always very affected by music. If I'm feeling a bit low, certain music will make me feel worse while other songs really lift my spirit (nothing like a good bit of Bon Jovi to do that!). I would also advise never going to a concert or live show with me unless I'm wearing waterproof mascara: there is something about live music that stirs my emotions and brings me to tears (yes, even at a Bon Jovi concert...!). Throughout my life, I have found that I can use music to learn; for my GCSEs, I put all my physics equations to music and sang them in my head in my exam and I can remember lyrics from songs I learned as a young child. I learned a lot of bible verses that way - I guess it's just how my brain works.



So, growing up in church surrounded by music I have had a fair few favourite songs. I love some of the old classic hymns as much as the most up-to-date lively songs. Over the past few years, one of the songs that has stayed with me is The Blessing. Based on Numbers 6:24-26, there is something very powerful in the music that builds as the song goes on. However, the lyrics remind me that it is also a powerful prayer of blessing. No matter how many times I sing it or hear it, I can sense God's presence through it; I feel it move me and bless me.

David Platt, an American evangelical Baptist pastor, writes this about these verses:

'Just think about this picture of God blessing us, keeping us, holding on to us, causing his face to shine upon us. Just get that image in your mind, for the God of the universe to cause his face to shine, to smile upon you and your life, his favor to be yours, his grace to be yours, which makes obvious sense because we don't deserve this from God. The holy God of the universe, in light of our sinfulness and rebellion against him, for his face to be shining on us, that is pure, unadulterated grace, mercy. For the Lord to lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace.'

What a beautiful image, God smiling over us, his favour and peace being ours. So, as we come to end of another year in school – for some of you a year full of joy and light, for some a much more difficult year, – for those preparing to say goodbye to their classes and for those who are preparing to say goodbye to their schools, I will be praying this over you in the coming weeks.



I pray that God will bless you not just spiritually, but physically and emotionally as well, that in the good and the not so good times, God will make his face shine upon you. May he keep you as you come to the end of term and move into a time of (hopefully) rest and may there be peace that passes all understanding over your summer break. May God smile upon your life today.

And if you, like me, prefer it in music, take a moment for yourself today and be blessed by this version of the song -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9VL7AhXBKY>

from—Lynsey Norris, **Assistant Director of Education**



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