

News from St Peter's - Sarah Marshall

A Happy New Year to everyone from St Peter's School! Last term seems a long time ago but as always in schools, it was a particularly exciting time for children. We celebrated our Christmas Carol service in the church together with parents. For many families this would be their only visit to church over Christmas so it was wonderful to see the church completely full. This coincided nicely with the incredible Christmas tree displays. We were also fortunate to have both the organ and the school band to accompany the carols – so all in all a very special occasion.

Earlier in December we had our visit from Signposts who delivered workshops to all children, presenting the Christmas story in innovative and exciting ways. Children moved around through different stations imagining that they were the characters present at Christ's birth. It was a wonderful start to the Christmas season and reinforced the learning that takes place in RE and Worship.

The big event at the end of the term was our caretaker's retirement. You may have seen the article in the Farnham Herald recently. Mick Sturgess will be known to many parishioners as he is a Wrecclesham resident. Mick had been at St Peter's for 25 years and there is nothing that Mick didn't know about the history or the workings of the school. The staff celebrated with Mick and his family by holding a 60s themed party. This was great fun with people dressed up as Mary Quant, Emma Peel and Elvis among others. We also made a rather silly but amusing video: See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5T6FZMS-GG8> (if you want a giggle – St Peter's staff at their best).

On the last day of term we held a very special leaving assembly for Mick which was attended by children, staff, family and former colleagues. And what wasn't included? The school band had rehearsed a cha-cha-cha number and performed brilliantly while the staff managed to sing a very passable version of: The Rhythm of Life. We also had a whole school song based on: Think of a World without any Colours (Think of a School without Mr Sturgess). Mick was presented with a cheque and a set of aerial photographs of the school through time. The morning was followed by a tea party which included a stunning cake fashioned to show Mick standing on the field outside his little wooden shed! We all wish Mick the very best for the future and we look forward to him visiting soon. Meanwhile we have appointed a new caretaker; Mr Terry Wells who has been shadowing Mick for several weeks.

During Christmas week we had some rather sad news; the head teacher at our link charity school in Ghana died suddenly in his sleep at only 41 years of age. Billa Mahmoud was a shining example of someone who gave his whole life to supporting others. He founded the charity school 17 years ago for the children of Accra's poorest communities. He also ran several other projects in the community such as a micro-finance scheme to help people start small businesses, a girls' football team and sewing and baking projects to give those with no education a means of making a living. Billa will be sorely missed in his community but we hope and pray that his legacy will live on and that many more children go on to receive the education they need to help them have some choice in their lives. We shall continue to support the school and communicate regularly.

This week our worship has focused on Epiphany and Christ's Baptism. We shall follow the liturgical year through our term.

