

**Open Academy Update 10 December 2021**  
**For parents and students – please do discuss the contents with your child.**

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

Welcome to this week's newsletter and the festive season, which has now well and truly started thanks to our wonderful Carol concert last night. I am delighted to say that everyone who came fully observed all the Covid safety rules, which we had to obey for the event to take place and it was pretty chilly in the atrium with all the windows fully open. However, people had wrapped up warm and the warmth of the greeting from Mark was enough for us to get by.

The choir sang some lovely numbers and also did an amazing version of Merry Christmas Everyone including signing as well as singing the whole song, which plenty of the audience tried to sign along with too! There were fantastic performances from individuals, duets, bands, keyboard group and choir combined to give us one of the most magical moments of the evening when the choir lit up the staircase with candles as they sang along with the keyboards playing the Carol of the Bells.

With traditional readings by staff and excellent theatre performance from the KS3 drama group and an inspirational reflection from Rev Canon Chris. By the time the event was over, everyone left with a carol on their lips and a bit of Christmas in their hearts!

If you came - thank you for coming along - it was lovely to see you. If you missed out. make sure you attend next year - we have so many talented students here and a fantastic creative program - and it really does get Christmas off to a flying start!

I must specifically thank Miss Lines for delivering such a broad and enjoyable musical experience, and Mrs Ormosi for the creativity and fun of the drama presentation. I would also like to thank all the staff who supported the event and of course all the performers. However, the Carol concert does give me an annual opportunity to thank Mark, our chaplain. As I said last night, he really is the spiritual heart of our academy, he is always there for all of us, always ready to help us see the Christian message in all we do and always encouraging us as Jesus says, to love one another. So huge thanks to Mark for all he does in the academy - day in day out - and especially for pulling together the carol concert to remind us of the true meaning of Christmas.

With such joy in my heart today it is frustrating to have to mention the pandemic, but I thought I should keep you updated. It is definitely out there as evidenced by the 23 cases we have as of today. No specific groups or bubbles, which suggest that it is just around in the community. So please, in the final week before Christmas, do all you can to keep everyone safe at this family time. Remind your child to follow all safety instructions in school, please try to ensure they have a face covering unless exempt - we are rapidly running out of spares, and please do not send them in if there is the slightest possibility that they have the virus - so basically keep doing what you are doing - and that way the vast majority of us will hopefully have a Covid free Christmas.

Then finally on our return ... we have been instructed to test all students once as we come back. As testing gets in the way for running the school effectively - dragging staff away from their duties and taking the sports hall and courts out of action, we are likely to ask KS4 and 5 students to come in briefly to get tested on Wednesday, 5 January - i.e the training day for staff. We will send out more details next week for the plan as far as we know by then, although if you remember last January, things did not go quite according to plan so we will plan for what we know now and be ready to update you as things develop. At the moment the plan will be that KS3 students will just be tested from class on the first day or so back, but as I say watch this space.

So as Christmas jumper day come to an end - thanks again for your support of this Save the Children campaign - I will stop to let you get on with the rest of the newsletter

Jon Ford  
Principal

## Contents:

1. Christmas Holiday Free School Meal Vouchers
2. Rewards
3. Spain and German Trips
4. Year 7 News
5. Year 8 News
6. Year 9 News
7. Year 10 News
8. Year 11 News
9. Year 11 and 13 reports
10. 6th Form News
11. Skills for Life
12. Music Notes
13. Careers
14. Library News
15. Attendance
16. Chaplain's Reflection

### 1. Christmas Holiday Free School Meal Vouchers

Students entitled to Free School Meals will once again be issued with vouchers for the holiday period. Norfolk County Council are using the grant from the governments DWP Household Support Fund to provide support for all families with children eligible for means tested Free School Meals. These will be issued in the usual way via Edenred vouchers. Each child will receive £55 based on the usual £15 per child per week for the 2 weeks of the holiday, plus an additional £25 per child to help families free up household finances in advance of an anticipated rise in energy costs in January.

In addition to the offer of Free School Meal vouchers for eligible families, there is support available for families who are facing hardship and need support. Please see the link [Norfolk Assistance Scheme \(NAS\) information leaflet](#).

Anyone experiencing hardship may be able to receive support through the NAS, which may be able to provide support for food, fuel, clothes and other essential household items to families experiencing hardship. Wider support from a range of partners can then also be made available with NAS working alongside the Children's Services Community and Partnerships service.

Families may get in touch with NAS via their dedicated website which includes an online application form at [Norfolk Assistance Scheme - Norfolk County Council](#) or if they cannot access the internet, they can call 0344 800 8020.

Mrs Appleby  
Business Manager

### 2. Rewards

WOW! What an amazing half term for rewards. This is the first set of rewards for this academic term and sees students being rewarded for attendance, homework and LEARNT achievement points. Pastoral teams have also had the opportunity to nominate students who they feel have made significant improvements towards a personal target.

The following tutor groups have the best attendance as a whole tutor group:

Year 7CSM – You have been invited to breakfast in the lecture theatre on Thursday, 16 December.  
Year 8NWA – This tutor group have had access to free fish and chips today, Friday, 10 December.

Year 9LGA – You lucky lot get a hot chocolate with Mr Ford in the lecture theatre on Wednesday, 15 December – there may even be some marshmallows!!

Year 10SMC - You have been invited to breakfast in the lecture theatre on Thursday, 16 December

Year 11KST - This tutor group have had access to free fish and chips today, Friday, 10 December.

Year 11KST - You were also the top tutor group for the whole Academy!!!!!! AMAZING!!!!!! A box of chocolates for your tutor group as an extra bonus!

Congratulations to all of the Students in the above tutor groups.

The individual rewards for homework, LEARNT and significant improvement will be announced at the start of next week. It will be the top 5 students for total rubrics score for homework and the top 5 students for LEARNT achievement points for each year group. Students who are selected will be receiving a free breakfast with their Assistant Heads of Year, Heads of Year and the Principal on Friday, 17 December.

Congratulations to all students.

Keep up the hard work. It could be you next time!

Ms Whitwood  
Head of Whole School Rewards

### **3. Spain and German Trips**

Years 8 & 9 – Trip to Germany

If your child has signed up to take part in the MFL trip to Germany, please make sure they are double vaccinated as soon as it becomes possible. All tourists over the age of over 12 required double vaccination for entry into Germany.

Although we have a lot of students interested in the German trip, which we are thrilled about, we don't have many places left. We are therefore asking that anyone still wanting to come on the trip must get the form and deposit in by next week and places will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Due to high numbers of students interested in the trip to Germany, we will confirm our plans by next Friday?

Year 10 – Madrid Trip

If your child has signed up to take part in the MFL trip to Spain, please make sure they are double vaccinated as soon as it becomes possible. All tourists over the age of over 12 required double vaccination for entry into Spain

We are delighted to let you know that response to the trip to Madrid was very positive, and that all places were filled earlier this week. We have a reserve list of four, and all students who returned their reply slips and deposits (whether £10 or £100) will be told whether they have a confirmed or a reserved place before we break up for Christmas. Deposits will be returned to those who are not on the 'confirmed' list. The trip takes place in September 2022 (Covid restrictions permitting).

Ms Stickland and Mrs McEvoy  
MFL Teachers

### **4. Year 7 News**

As some students have found out this week, Mrs Middleton is not in school at the moment after having a small operation. Therefore, Mr Hawkins will be helping out in the Year 7 office supporting Mrs Pearsall while Mrs Middleton is absent. His email address is [Ricky.Hawkins@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:Ricky.Hawkins@open-academy.org.uk) if you need to contact him.

We have noticed that there is an increasing number of students going to the toilet during lesson time and this is resulting in a few incidents happening. Please encourage students to use the toilets at break/lunchtime as some are still not doing so.

Next week we have some GL Assessments taking place. They are nothing to worry about, and the students do not need to revise. It is just there to help us gauge where the students are, and what support may be needed to plug any gaps.

Please can parents/carers help students get into a routine of doing homework at home. It is set and expected to be completed to help students learn the key skills needed for independent learning ready for their later years at GCSE levels.

The penultimate week of the autumn term has been another successful one for Year 7 with a massive 301 achievement points this week – well done!

Some shout outs this week to:

Dylain Banham, Jayce Brighton and Elise Whitley for great progress and motivation in maths.

Erica Johnson-Jacob for great progress and attitude overall for both science and maths.

Paige Wright for creating the most effective parachute in two Year 7 science classes and for always staying on task and trying her hardest in all lessons.

It was great to see so many students in the festive jumpers today in the academy and enjoying the lovely atmosphere around the building. Please remember to keep testing regularly to keep our Covid infections as low as possible in the run up to the Christmas holidays.

Mrs Pearsall – Head of Year 7

Mr Hawkins – Cover Supervisor

## **5. Year 8 News**

Here we are, with just a week to go! It has been wonderful to see students complete their first full term of this academic year. We know that for some students it has been hard at times for them to find their feet in Year 8, but as a year team we are super proud of you all and what you have achieved so far. With the recent assessment period it has been great going through the results and seeing how students are doing. There are so many of you who are already exceeding your target grades, which is amazing and a testament to your hard-work and your teachers. We would like to remind students to always ask for help when they don't understand something, whether that be in class or their homework. We understand that for some, asking questions can seem daunting, but it really is the best way to get the help you need.

There will be more information next week about students who are required to attend HUB sessions after the Christmas Holidays. There will however be no HUB sessions next week.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr Walters' tutor group who achieved the highest overall Tutor attendance. They all got to have fish and chips at lunchtime today as their reward.

Next Friday will see our Big Celebration Breakfast for all students across the academy. Students who will be involved with this will be informed on Monday.

Mrs McEvoy - Shout out to Kian Wright, Dorian Grzelak and Rebecca Shapcott for their effort in German.

Miss Luter - Shout out to Layla Moody for amazing cooking in food tech, a future chef in the making.

Top achievers this week: Tyler Paul, Georgia Brown, Latifa Cassama, Warren Middleton and Kian Wright – Top achievers for the term will be announced next week, it has changed since last week so keep up the fantastic effort.

Just a couple of reminders:

- No hoodies to be worn around the Academy. If students are choosing to wear these to school, they need to make sure they are removed when they enter the academy and remain off for the school day.
- Mobile phones are only to be used during social time and if students are sat down at a table.

That's all from us! We hope that everyone has a great last week of the term. Keep going – remember that perseverance is one of our core values. Please don't hesitate to contact a member of the year team if you have any queries.

Ms Whitwood and Mr Crawford - Heads of Year 8  
Mrs Lamb - Assistant Head of Year 8

## **6. Year 9 News**

With the final week just around the corner for the first term at school the students are still putting in the effort with their learning. The Christmas Carol service on Thursday evening was a great success with lots of Christmas cheer being shown. It is now just 15 days till the big one and I hope you are all looking forward to this winter break.

Achievement points still pour in for Year 9, which is great to see. This is testimony to the dedication, hard work and wonderful ability of our year group. The current tally for this week is:

AED – 61  
LGA – 92  
RPH – 63  
NST – 79

Unfortunately, late detentions on a Friday have increased this week, hopefully this will just be a blip and we will be lower again in the final week of term. There has been 1160 minutes of lost learning time in the last week due to students getting to lessons more than 4 minutes late. Thank you for having supportive conversations at home, they definitely make a difference to our learners. We will now be informing parents/carers if their child is staying for an after-school detention on Friday, hopefully this improved communication will see further reductions in lost learning next week.

Hubs for the final week of term have been cancelled. This should give students some more time to get home to rest, relax and de-stress from their busy day of learning.

It is starting to feel cold in the academy due to the necessity to ventilate classrooms. We want to concentrate on students learning and enjoying school and do not want to remind them to wear the correct uniform. Please encourage students to wear an extra layer under their school shirts. Hoodies are not allowed in school. Please wear a school jumper under their blazer and a coat. You can purchase school jumpers from school from Mrs Rose in the school office at a cost of £14 and £17 each (sleeveless are £11 and £13), which they can wear throughout the day – Please contact us if there are any problems with this.

Finally, the last day of school this term is Friday, 17 December and will be a half day. So, students will end at 12:30. Their first day back will be Thursday, 6 January.

Thank you for your support at home and I hope we can continue to make progress as a Year group as we head towards the winter break.

Mr Pickup – Head of Year 9  
Mrs Smith – Assistant Head of Year 9



## 7. Year 10 News

It's starting to feel festive in school.

Last night was the Christmas Carol service, which was enjoyed by all and it was heart-warming to have a socially-distanced, mask-wearing sing-song.

Christmas jumper day today with a donation to charity. Nice to keep warm as well.

Please bring in any donations for the Christmas hampers on Monday please.

Christmas lunch is next Wednesday, 15 December.

Next Thursday after school the best Christmas decorated tutor room will be judged. If you have any spare decorations then please bring them in.

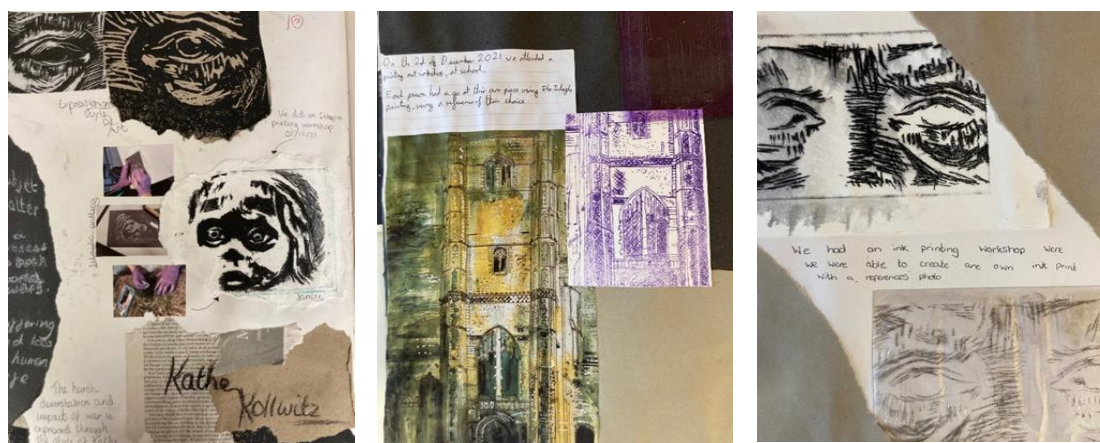
Triple science Hubs are on after school next week, but homework Hubs are not on next week.

Well done to Mrs McEvoy's tutor group who have achieved the best attendance this term despite Covid. They will receive a celebration breakfast next Thursday morning in school.

Well done to the following for achieving the most achievement points this week:

Jude Abramson, Joshua Carter-Strike, James Hoyer, Harry Robinson, Gerrard Sandell, Finley Davey, Oscar Franklin, Owen Middleton, Dalia Rosca and Josh Wilsea.

On Thursday, 2 December the Year 10 art class enjoyed an Intaglio Printing Workshop. Please see below some of their impressive print work:



Mr Lambert – Head of Year 10  
Mrs Roe – Assistant Head of Year 10

## 8. Year 11 News

No update.

Mrs Clayton – Head of Year 11  
Mrs Roberts – Assistant Head of Year 11

## 9. Year 11 and Year 13 Reports

Year 11 and 13 reports are available and can be viewed via the SIMS app.

Mr Ward  
Vice Principal

## 10. 6th Form News

Happy penultimate week before the Christmas Holidays! It's been a super cold one, and I know the classrooms are chilly, so please wrap up warm (no crop tops!) and feel free to bring in a hot water bottle. I certainly will be!

On Monday we will be having an assembly from 9–10am from Fatal 4 about road traffic accidents. If you feel uncomfortable attending this, please let me know ASAP. You will be continuing with your final NCS project day after this assembly, so please ensure you are at the academy by 8:40am.

On Wednesday, 15 December, the canteen will be serving Christmas lunch. This costs £2.35 and the 6th Formers are able to go down and enjoy this at 12:30pm. It is absolutely optional of course, but it would be lovely if you would all like to go and eat and be merry together!

There are an increasing number of students not sticking to our sickness/absence procedures. As I have mentioned a number of times before, **you must email myself, Ms Davies, and your teachers for that day by 8:30am at the latest**. It is then your responsibility to catch up on any work that you have missed.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs Molloy  
Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form

## 11. Skills for Life

Think You Know/CEOP (child exploitation and online protection) provide advice for parents and carers on keeping children safe online. I have attached some links for your information.

What is the IOT? (internet of everything, how to make your connected home safer):  
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-is-the-internet-of-things-iot/>

A parent's guide to privacy settings:  
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/a-parents-guide-to-privacy-settings/>

Gaming: what parents and carers need to know:  
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>

Mrs Wicks  
Teacher

## 12. Music Notes

A heartfelt thank you to all the musicians and actors who performed in last night's Christmas concert. They worked professionally and diligently to produce one of the most varied, technically difficult and delightful Christmas concerts I've been involved with. Myself, Mark, Mrs Ormosi and all other staff involved were very proud to have them represent our academy so thank you, and have yourselves a very merry Christmas!

Miss Lines  
Music Teacher

## 13. Careers

All Year 10 students should now have received their 'self placement' form for summer work experience. The relevant sections must be completed by the student, parent and most importantly the employer where the work experience has been arranged. Completed forms should be returned to Careers Facilitator Caroline Davies who will work with the Year 10 team to coordinate administration and arrange all Health and Safety checks with Norfolk County Council. Students who are unsure can speak to their PHSE teachers or me in S12. If you have any questions, please contact me at [caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:caroline.davies@open-academy.org.uk)

Our Sector of the Month for December and the festive season is Hospitality. The sector covers hotels, bars, restaurants, nightclubs and conference centres to name but a few of the locations where careers can be found. More information about all the different kinds of roles can be found at:

<https://www.icanbea.org.uk/app/explore/industries/hospitality-103/>

This may particularly interest students who enjoy Food Technology or Business Studies. Many of our Sixth Form students have part time jobs in the sector and this is great practice to improve 'soft skills' which are vital in many other employment sectors – time management, organisation skills, personal presentation, communication skills, the ability to stay calm and attention to detail.

This week I sent round a PowerPoint to students of the '12 Jobs of Christmas' which was created by our Careers partners in the County. This highlights lots of different sectors which require extra staff over the Christmas period and may be just the confidence boost some of our Year 11 and 12 students need, particularly as they missed out on Summer work experience in 2020 and 2021.

UCAS have released a new Careers Quiz to help young people choose what careers might best suit their interests and abilities. Once matched, students can explore job descriptions, courses that will help them on their journey and lots more. See it in action at:

[www.ucas.com/careers-quiz](http://www.ucas.com/careers-quiz)

Dr Davies  
Careers Facilitator and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

## 14. Library News

### December Reading Challenges!

Keep on reading in December with our reading challenges! Firstly, we have our December Reading Raffle which will reward students who are aiming high with their Accelerated Reader quizzes. All students who achieve 100% on a quiz for a book in their reading level will be entered into a prize draw to win a selection pack on the last day of term.



Next week, we'll also be launching our Winter Reading Challenge. Inspired by the Icelandic tradition of *Jólabókaflóð* (the exchange of bookish gifts on Christmas Eve) we are encouraging students to select a wrapped book from the library to read over the winter break; there will no judging a book by its cover here, students have just the opening paragraph of the book to go by. A bookmark and review card are wrapped with the book for students to fill out and return in the new year. We hope this will be a great opportunity for students to branch out and pick a book they might have missed otherwise!



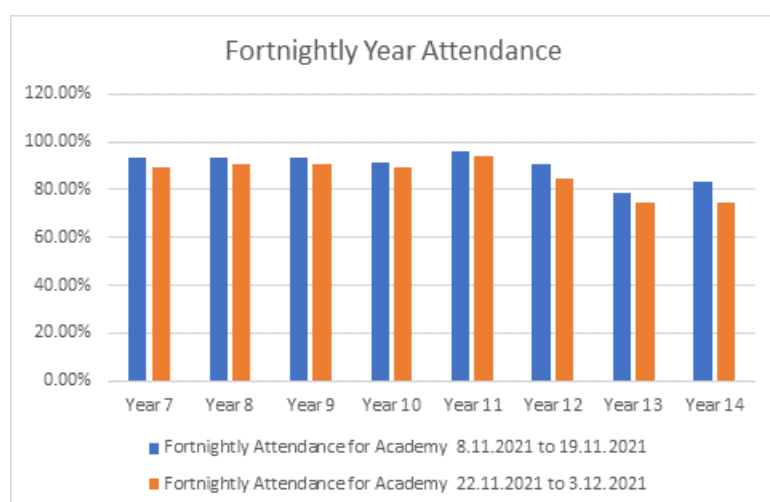
Icelanders have a wonderful tradition of gifting books to each other on Christmas Eve and spending the rest of the night reading.

## CHRISTMAS READING CHALLENGE

1. Take a wrapped book from Jólabókaflóð display and don't open it until Christmas Eve.
2. Read it.
3. Write a review.
4. Return the book to the library in the new year!

Miss Ling  
Librarian

### 15. Attendance



12/13 CAN	86.69%
12 JTH	83.39%
13 LWK	74.39%
C7 KLI	86.10%
D7 MKN	92.59%
R7 CSM	91.06%
SRB 7 EOK	83.33%
I7 CHA	86.64%
C8 ABR	95.49%
D8 NWA	93.20%
I8 KMJ	87.91%
R8 SNA	89.16%
SRB 8 EOK	86.76%
C9 AED	85.74%
D9 LGA	92.78%
I9 RPH	89.16%
R9 NST	95.13%
SRB 9 EOK	85.71%
C10 TTH	91.31%
D10 ATH	89.41%
I10 SMC	89.42%
R10 BLU	87.85%
SRB 10 EOK	92.00%
C11 KST	95.24%
D11 SMU	93.75%
I11 ERO	92.77%
R11 SRI	94.30%

Year 7	89.67%
Year 8	90.74%
Year 9	90.88%
Year 10	89.58%
Year 11	94.05%
Year 12	84.96%
Year 13	74.61%
Year 14	74.47%

Please see the abovementioned attendance data for the last two weeks for period 22 November 2021 to 3 December 2021 inclusive. Well done to the winning tutor group/s from each year group and SRB, who will be awarded the attendance trophy.

We had an amazing 226 students (including 6<sup>th</sup> Form) who have improved their attendance between the months of October and November 2021. Well done! These students have been given achievements points.

Also, we had 204 students (all school) who had achieved 100% for the months of November only. A massive Well Done go to these students and achievement points have been given to them.

Please continue to use our absence email address of [student.absence@open-academy.org.uk](mailto:student.absence@open-academy.org.uk) to notify ourselves of any absences, appointments etc. for your son/daughter.

Mrs Ganson  
Attendance Officer

## 16. Chaplain's News and Reflection

This year we are giving out Christmas Hampers as random acts of kindness to our community again. Students are aware of this in school, but we would appreciate your support in this too. Below is an item list of goods that can be donated for the hampers so please feel free to send items into the academy with your child. Please note, it is very important that we stick to the hamper list. Perishable good vouchers can be given as well as donations.

**The last day for donations will be Tuesday, 14 December so in the days leading up to this date, let's really push forward and be generous in our giving.** Thank you so much in advance for your generosity.

# Christmas Hampers

## List 2021

- Perishable Food Vouchers
- Stuffing
- Shloer/Red or White
- Custard
- Savoury Snacks
- Tin Of Chocolates
- Biscuit/Shortbread Tin/  
Packets
- Christmas Crackers
- Christmas Cake
- Christmas Pudding
- Mince Pies
- Cranberry Sauce
- Gravy Granules
- Crisps
- Tinned fruit/Peas/Potatoes



## Carol Concert

I just want to say a big thank you to those who attended the carol concert last night. I'm sure that you will agree that it was full of festive cheer, encouragement and a wonderful message from the Rev Chris Copsey. The students were amazing in their performances and we all had a great time. I would especially like to thank Miss Lines and Mrs Ormosi for working so hard with our students and Mrs Reed and Mrs Edwards for being wonderful hosts and also Mr Diver and his team for the setting up. Also, a big thank you goes to Jess for the amazing biscuits and to all other staff that were involved too.

## Thought for the Week

In looking more at the Christmas story this week, one of the words used to describe Jesus was IMMANUEL which means "God with us". This is such an encouragement to me, because there is something special in

having someone near you or with you. I'm talking about companionship and being close to others and there is so much strength in that.

We hear the words many times in our lives "I'm with you, I'm there for you". They are powerful words, and they can make us persevere on in life if we know someone is there cheering us on or rooting for us. As we approach this time and, bearing in mind that we have received this promise from God that he will always be with us, let's follow the example and be companions and friends to the lonely or discouraged around us. It might take sacrifice and time, but nothing can compare to the joy it brings.

In closing and bearing the above in mind, Jesus in the Bible is described as the good shepherd and he would always leave the 99 sheep to go after the one sheep that was wandering, discouraged, lost and injured and bring them back into the fold.

Life can be a struggle for many now in our community, they can seem lost, injured and confused, but let's get beside them or be with them, let's be determined this Christmastime to bring them back into our great community fold.

Remember that the presence of Jesus is with you all this Christmas.

Have a great Friday and a wonderful weekend, you are all in my thoughts and prayers.

God bless you

Mark Pimlott  
Chaplain