

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

06 December 2019

With less than a week to go before the big day – 12th December – there has been a tangible air of anticipation and expectation in school this week. Quiet murmurings have wafted around the corridors and classrooms as people have gone about their normal business. Which way will the result go? Who will come out on top? Will it be as unpredictable as some claim? I am, of course, referring to ... Last House Standing! This year, the theme for the House singing contest (for Years 3 to 8) is pop music but as anyone who has experienced this unique afternoon knows, the real essence is the unpredictable cocktail of surprise pupil talent acts, staff comedy sketches (which normally involve Mr Kite in some capacity) and general Christmas mayhem as everyone lets their hair down at the end of term.

Christmas has well and truly arrived here at St Faith's! From decorations adorning many areas of the school, to the sound of carols being rehearsed by our various choirs, and the occasional sighting of an angel or donkey hurrying to nativity plays, the school is buzzing with anticipation.

Advent Service

On Monday we marked the beginning of the Christmas season by holding the whole school Advent service. The Junior and Senior Choirs sang beautifully, Reverend Meharry (our School Chaplain) told a lovely Advent story, our two youngest pupils – James and Eilidh – lit the first candle on the Advent wreath, and we all joined together for some hearty congregational singing.

Eco Advent

Speaking of Advent, the School's Eco Committee (Year 7 and 8 pupils), and the Green Team (Year 5 and 6), under the guidance of Miss Gamble, have created an Eco Advent Calendar which is proudly displayed in The Hub. Each day of Advent is celebrated with a different tip on how to enjoy a more environmentally friendly Christmas with the catchy title, 'A Tip a Day to Keep Plastic Away.' Advice includes: making your own mince pies instead of buying supermarket pies which are wrapped in plastic; consider renting a real Christmas tree which can be returned to the farm and re-planted; avoid wrapping paper containing plastic and glitter (which is a micro-plastic) – decorate with brown paper or newspaper instead.

Pre Prep Nativities

Angels, shepherds, wise men and a very special baby were in the spotlight at the Foundation nativity play on Wednesday morning. Parents, grandparents and friends gathered in Ashburton

Hall as our youngest took to the stage to recreate the Christmas story. From charming songs to delightful costumes and a number of amusing off-script moments, there was barely a dry-eye in the house as the most famous story of all concluded with a rousing rendition of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.

In the afternoon it was the turn of Year 2 to delight their audience with a highly polished re-telling of the traditional Russian folk-tale, *Baboushka*. This was an atmospheric and ambitious production and our pupils certainly rose to the occasion. I was particularly struck by the confidence with which the children sang together and delivered their lines.

My sincere congratulations to all the Foundation and Year 2 pupils and of course, the ever patient and creative Pre Prep teaching teams for producing such enchanting nativities.

OH! Films have filmed both performances (free of charge). These films will be available for you to view from the VLE before the end of term - a very big thank you to OH! Films for their generosity.

[current parents can view all photos here](#)

Drama Performances

It wasn't just the Pre Prep who were showing off their dramatic talents this week. On Tuesday, parents and staff were treated to a 'workshop' performance of 'The Last Resort' by the after-school Drama club. This short and humorous play told the story of a seaside resort from an alternative angle, with the donkeys complaining about the children they had to carry around and the seagulls squabbling over scraps of food. The Year 8 Drama Enrichment Group also showed off their stage skills with a performance of 'Ernie's Incredible Illucinations'. Everything Ernie imagines – from secret agents to a boxing granny – becomes real, to the point that he and his Dad have to visit a therapist to get to the root cause. Both performances showed off the significant talents of our pupils in Years 6 to 8 and allowed our budding thespians an opportunity to try some alternate forms of stage-craft.

German Food Market

Our catering team have been in Christmas mood this week, baking an array of waist-expanding and delicious festive fayre, including Brezein (pretzels), Lebkuchen (gingerbread) and Marmorierter Mohnkuchen (marbled poppy seed cake) for today's German Christmas Market. All proceeds of the produce sold to parents at breakfast this morning will be donated to Tom's

Trust.

Sports Round-up

On Tuesday, 18 pupils represented St Faith's at the District Schools Cross-country Championships at Netherhall School. Despite the wintry conditions our runners achieved great personal times. Mateo, Stephanie and Juliette were all placed in the top 10.

Meanwhile it was wonderful to see so many of our pupils competing in the Year 5 and 6 House Swimming Gala at The Leys swimming pool on Tuesday. Congratulations to Latham who won the event - further details are in the side bar of this newsletter. We look forward to the Year 7 and 8 gala next term.

And finally...

I am now off to enjoy the festive atmosphere at the Christmas Fair, kindly run by the SFPA and this year, coordinated by Dr Susana Monforte and Dr Daniel Thompson. I am reliably told that the man in red has arrived on time, despite the Cambridge traffic, and is eagerly awaiting his visitors!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell