

Happy New Year!

I pray this finds you well as you reflect on the good news of the first Christmas. We read in Luke 2:19 that Mary, after hearing of the angels' visitation to the shepherds, "treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." When we think of the wonderful things the Lord has done through our Saviour, Jesus, we have a lot to treasure, and ponder on, too. And so, we can journey into this new year encouraged, and with joy, because of Jesus, our Immanuel.

We know that we don't step into 2026 on our own. We have all the strength and joy we need: our Lord is with us; we have the certainty of the love and forgiveness of our precious Saviour, Jesus, and the comfort and help of the Holy Spirit. We are indeed blessed! May the children and staff in our local schools know these blessings as well.

Our new assembly theme is 'Strength.' Finding strength to face challenges in a new year can seem daunting. As people of faith, we know God provides all the strength, power, and protection we need. Our new whole-school interactive assemblies will explore the life of Moses. Moses needed a lot of strength to lead God's people. He got his strength from God, from listening to Him and spending time in His presence. Sometimes Moses needed supernatural strength and power. This is where it gets really exciting! By faith, Moses led the people, and when our all-powerful, all-knowing God stepped in to help, the people saw the great awesome power of the Lord. The BSYW team are looking to the same, awesome God, here in 2026. We can prayerfully say, "the joy of the Lord is my strength", Nehemiah 8:10. We seek to share His joy and strength in our schools.

Year 3 children will also be learning about Jesus and baptism through our workshops this half-term. We are visiting classrooms and also extending an invitation for the children and teachers to visit Blackpool Tabernacle where they can see the beautiful stained-glass window of the baptism of Jesus, look at the baptismal pool, and learn about Christian baptism from the Holy Bible. For some children this will be their first-ever visit to a church, and we thank God for this wonderful opportunity.

Our 'Walk Through the Bible' team will be busy again this half-term. We have, praise God, another 180 children booked in for these sessions. As a reminder, they have 5 lessons to explore the Holy Bible with us. How wonderful!

Please remember BSYW and the school children in your prayers. Together, "we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." Psalm 78:4

May our powerful and loving God strengthen and encourage you in this new year,

Helen