Living as Shining Lights

Collective Worship Handbook

St John Baptist CE Primary School

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."
Matthew 5:16

Welcome

Welcome to the **St John Baptist CE Primary School Collective Worship Handbook**.

Collective worship is at the heart of our school community. It is a special time each day when we gather together to reflect, learn, celebrate and grow. Through worship, we encounter the Christian faith, explore our shared values and consider how we can make a positive difference in our school, our local community and the wider world.

Our worship is rooted in the Christian story and inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is a time to pause amidst the busyness of school life; to wonder, question and reflect; to celebrate what is good; and to be challenged to become the people God calls us to be.

As a Church of England school, we warmly welcome every member of our community. We recognise that children and adults come from a rich variety of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs. Collective worship is therefore an opportunity to come together in a spirit of respect, where everyone is invited to engage, reflect and respond in ways that are meaningful and authentic to them.

This handbook has been created to support everyone who leads collective worship at St John Baptist. It provides a shared framework while encouraging creativity, ensuring that worship remains thoughtful, engaging and relevant for every child.

Our Christian Vision

At St John Baptist CE Primary School, our vision is inspired by Jesus' words in Matthew's Gospel:

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."
Matthew 5:16

Our vision is simple but ambitious:

In our school family, every person will flourish and become a shining light through living out our faith, being a hope-bringer in times of darkness and showing God's love to all.

Everything we do as a school is rooted in this vision.

We believe that every child is uniquely created and deeply valued by God. Every member of our school community has gifts to discover, talents to develop and a unique contribution to make. Through learning, relationships and worship, we seek to nurture children who grow academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally so that they leave St John Baptist equipped to make a positive difference in God's world.

Collective worship is one of the most important ways in which this vision is brought to life. It provides regular opportunities to reflect on our values, encounter Scripture and consider how we can live as people who bring light, hope and love wherever we go.

Our Christian Values

Our worship is shaped by eleven Christian values that are explored throughout the year.

Rather than simply learning about these values, we encourage children to live them through their everyday choices, relationships and actions.

The values are:

- Love
- Thankfulness
- Peace
- Hope
- Self-control
- Honesty
- Humility
- Forgiveness
- Courage
- Empathy
- Faith

Each value is explored through:

- Bible stories and key scriptures
- inspirational people ("Shining Lights")

- hymns and worship songs
- reflection and prayer
- British Values
- Rights Respecting School articles
- opportunities for courageous action within our school and wider community.

Together, these values help us grow into people who reflect God's love and allow our light to shine.

Collective Worship at St John Baptist

Collective worship is a central part of daily life at St John Baptist.

It is distinct from Religious Education. Whilst Religious Education helps children learn **about** religion and worldviews, collective worship provides opportunities to encounter Christian worship, reflect on life's big questions and explore how faith and values influence the way we live.

Our worship seeks to be:

Inclusive

Everyone is welcomed and valued.

Children and adults from all faiths and none are invited to participate in ways that respect their own beliefs and experiences. Worship creates a shared space where every member of our community can reflect, wonder and grow.

Invitational

Participation is always an invitation.

Prayer, silence and reflection are offered in ways that allow every child to engage authentically. Children are never expected to pray or respond in ways that compromise their own beliefs.

Inspiring

Our worship encourages children to think deeply, ask questions and consider how they can make a positive difference.

Each act of worship should leave children with a practical challenge that helps them live out our Christian vision.

Leading Collective Worship

There is no single way to lead worship well. Every worship leader brings their own personality, gifts and experiences. However, the most effective worship shares several common features.

It is:

- rooted in Scripture
- connected to our Christian vision
- carefully planned
- engaging and age-appropriate
- reflective rather than rushed
- centred on one clear message
- relevant to children's lives
- hopeful and encouraging
- invitational in its use of prayer and reflection.

When planning worship, it may be helpful to ask:

- What is the one message I want children to remember?
- Which Bible story best helps us explore this value?
- How does this connect with our Christian vision?
- What opportunities will children have to reflect?
- How might this influence the way children live today?

A Simple Pattern for Worship

Although worship leaders naturally have different styles, using a familiar structure helps children feel settled and creates a rhythm for reflection.

Stage	Purpose
Gather	We come together as one school family, creating a calm and welcoming atmosphere through music, a greeting or the lighting of a candle.
Engage	We explore today's value through Scripture, stories, discussion, music or the lives of inspirational people.
Reflect	Children are given time to think, wonder, discuss or simply enjoy a moment of stillness.

Stage	Purpose
Respond	Children are invited to respond through prayer, reflection, a simple symbolic action or adding responses to the Value Box.
Go Forth	Worship ends with a challenge to live out the value during the day ahead.

Prayer

Prayer is an important part of collective worship.

It offers opportunities to give thanks, express concerns, pray for others and reflect quietly.

At St John Baptist, prayer is always invitational.

A worship leader might say:

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time simply to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

This approach enables every member of our school community to participate with integrity while respecting the diversity of beliefs represented within our school.

Music

Music enriches collective worship by creating moments of celebration, reflection and joy.

Throughout the year, children experience a rich variety of music, including:

- traditional Anglican hymns
- contemporary Christian worship
- gospel music
- reflective songs from our school worship playlist.

As children progress through the school, they gradually build a shared repertoire of hymns and worship songs that become part of the distinctive worshipping life of St John Baptist.

Living as Shining Lights

Every act of collective worship begins with God's story and ends with our response.

Our hope is that each child leaves worship asking one simple question:

How will I let my light shine today?

Whether through an act of kindness, a word of encouragement, a courageous decision or a moment of forgiveness, we believe that every child has the opportunity to reflect God's love in the world around them.

Collective worship is therefore not simply something we attend—it is something that shapes who we are becoming.

Planning the Year

Collective worship at St John Baptist follows the rhythm of our Christian values and the seasons of the Church year.

Each month, one Christian value becomes the focus for worship. This provides a shared thread running through assemblies, classroom reflection, learning conversations and daily life across the school.

Whilst each value has a dedicated month, worship should remain responsive. Significant events in the life of the school, the Church, our local community and the wider world may provide opportunities to pause, reflect and adapt our planning.

The purpose of the yearly overview is to provide consistency whilst allowing flexibility.

Annual Overview

Month	**Christian Value**	**Key Bible Verse**	**British Value**	**Rights Respecting Articles**	**Church Year**
September	**Love**	John 13:34	Mutual Respect	Articles 2, 3, 15, 29	New Beginnings
October	**Thankfulness**	Psalm 107:1	Mutual Respect	Articles 24, 27, 28, 29	Harvest
November	**Peace**	Colossians 3:15	Rule of Law	Articles 19, 28, 38, 39	Remembrance
December	**Hope**	Jeremiah 29:11	Individual Liberty	Articles 6, 24, 28, 29	Advent & Christmas
January	**Self-control**	Galatians 5:22–23	Rule of Law	Articles 19, 28, 29	Epiphany
February	**Honesty**	Ephesians 4:25	Democracy	Articles 12, 13, 17	Ordinary Time

Month	Christian Value	Key Bible Verse	British Value	Rights Respecting Articles	Church Year
March	**Humility**	Philippians 2:3–4	Mutual Respect	Articles 2, 12, 29	Lent
April	**Forgiveness**	Ephesians 4:32	Mutual Respect	Articles 19, 28, 39	Easter
May	**Courage**	Joshua 1:9	Individual Liberty	Articles 12, 13, 31	Easter / Pentecost
June	**Empathy**	Romans 12:15	Mutual Respect	Articles 2, 23, 30	Ordinary Time
July	**Faith**	Hebrews 11:1	Respect for Different Faiths and Beliefs	Articles 14, 29, 30	Endings & New Beginnings

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Planning High-Quality Collective Worship

The most memorable acts of worship are often the simplest.

Rather than trying to include too many activities or ideas, effective worship focuses on one clear message and gives children time to think deeply.

When planning worship, consider the following questions.

Reflection Questions for Worship Leaders

How does this worship connect with our Christian vision?

Which Bible story best illustrates today's value?

What do I want children to remember by the end of worship?

What opportunities will children have to reflect or respond?

How does this value connect with children's everyday experiences?

What practical action might children take after worship?

Making Connections

Collective worship is not separate from the rest of school life.

The values explored in worship are strengthened through the wider curriculum, relationships, behaviour, enrichment opportunities and everyday interactions across the school.

Children should encounter the same values in many different contexts.

For example:

- in the classroom through quality texts and discussion
- through inspirational people studied across the curriculum
- in relationships with friends and adults
- during playtimes and lunchtimes
- through opportunities to serve others
- in acts of courageous advocacy
- through prayer and reflection
- in celebrating achievements and learning from mistakes

When children experience these values consistently, they become habits that shape character rather than simply themes for assembly.

Church Seasons

The Church calendar provides a natural rhythm for worship throughout the year. Wherever possible, our monthly values are explored alongside these seasons, helping children understand how the Christian story unfolds across the year.

Season	Opportunities for Worship
Harvest	Thankfulness, generosity, caring for creation and supporting others.
Advent	Waiting, hope and God's promises.
Christmas/Epiphany	God's gift of love through Jesus.
Lent	Reflection, humility, forgiveness and preparation.
Easter	New life, hope and reconciliation.
Pentecost/Trinity and beyond	Courage, faith and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Church year enriches our understanding of the Christian faith and provides opportunities to revisit our values from different perspectives.

A Year of Becoming Shining Lights

Our aim is not simply that children learn about eleven Christian values.

Our hope is that, through worship, reflection and everyday experience, these values gradually become part of who they are.

As children move through St John Baptist, they will repeatedly encounter these values through Scripture, stories, music, prayer and the lives of remarkable people. Over time, we hope they will develop the confidence, wisdom and compassion to become shining lights in their own homes, communities and the wider world.

LOVE

Living as a Shining Light

Love is at the heart of the Christian faith.

The Bible tells us that **God is love** (1 John 4:8), and throughout his life Jesus showed us what love looks like. He welcomed those who felt excluded, cared for those who were suffering, forgave those who had made mistakes and challenged people to love without limits.

Christian love is much more than a feeling. It is an active choice. It is seen in the way we speak, the way we listen, the way we forgive and the way we serve others. It is shown when we stand up for someone who is being treated unfairly, when we notice someone who is lonely, or when we choose kindness instead of anger.

At St John Baptist, we believe every person is created in the image of God and is deeply loved by Him. Our school vision calls us to become **shining lights**, reflecting God's love in our classrooms, playgrounds, homes and communities. As we grow in love, we help others to flourish and make God's love visible in the world around us.

Big Question

How can I show God's love through my words and actions?

Memory Verse

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

John 13:34

Encourage children to learn this verse throughout the month and reflect on what it means to love as Jesus loved.

Supporting Scripture

- **Matthew 22:37–39** – Love God and love your neighbour.
- **1 Corinthians 13:4–8** – Love is patient, kind and never fails.
- **1 John 4:7–12** – We love because God first loved us.
- **Romans 12:9–18** – Love must be sincere.
- **Colossians 3:12–14** – Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness and love.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
The Good Samaritan	Luke 10:25–37	Love crosses boundaries and responds to the needs of others.	Who is my neighbour today?
Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet	John 13:1–17	True leadership is shown through humble service.	How can serving others show love?
Ruth and Naomi	Ruth 1:16–18	Love is faithful, loyal and committed.	What does it mean to stand by someone?
The Prodigal Son	Luke 15:11–32	God's love always welcomes us home.	What can we learn from the father's response?
The Feeding of the Five Thousand	John 6:1–14	Love notices people's needs and shares generously.	What gifts do I have that I can share?
Peter's dream	Acts 10	All peoples are holy	How does my faith affect my national identity?
The Good Shepherd	Ps 23	God's love and care for us	If God loves us so much, how then should we love others?

British Value

Mutual Respect

Love helps us recognise that every person is valuable and deserves to be treated with dignity.

Showing respect means listening carefully, celebrating our differences, including others and speaking with kindness. When we value one another, our whole community flourishes.

Children might reflect on:

- How do we make everyone feel welcome?
- What does respectful disagreement look like?
- How can kindness change someone's day?

Rights Respecting School

Love reminds us that every child is valued, protected and deserves to flourish.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 2	Every child has these rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. No child should be treated unfairly.
Article 3	Adults should always do what is best for the child. When making decisions, they should think about how those decisions will affect children.
Article 15	Every child has the right to meet with other children, make friends and join groups, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.

Reflection Question

"How does showing love help everyone enjoy their rights?"

Shining Lights

These people have used their lives to demonstrate love in action.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate love?
Dr Barnardo	Dedicated his life to caring for vulnerable children and ensuring they had safe homes, education and hope for the future.
Mary Seacole	Risked her own safety to care for wounded soldiers with compassion and dignity during the Crimean War.
Wangari Maathai	Showed love for both people and creation through the Green Belt Movement, planting millions of trees and empowering communities.
Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah	Challenged attitudes towards disability through courage, determination and a belief that every person deserves equal opportunities.
Charles Ignatius Sancho	Used his writing and influence to promote dignity, education and justice for others.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Love Divine, All Loves Excelling**
- **Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You**
- **God is love, His the care**
- **Give me joy in my heart ("Give me love in my heart, keep me serving")**
- **Lord for the years**
- **Wide, wide as the ocean**
- **The King Of Love My Shepherd Is**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Love Theory** – Kirk Franklin
- **Count on Me** – Bruno Mars
- **Lean on Me** – Bill Withers
- **God Is Love** – London Community Gospel Choir

Prayer for Love

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- welcome everyone with kindness and warmth
- include those who may feel lonely or left out
- celebrate the gifts and achievements of others
- speak kindly, even when we disagree
- serve our school community with joyful hearts

How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose one act of love that makes someone else's day a little brighter.

"Let all that you do be done in love."
1 Corinthians 16:14



THANKFULNESS

Living as a Shining Light

Thankfulness begins with noticing.

In a busy world it is easy to focus on what we wish we had, what has gone wrong or what we hope will happen next. The Bible encourages us to pause, to notice God's goodness and to recognise the many gifts that surround us each day.

Gratitude changes the way we see the world. It helps us appreciate our families, our friends, our school, God's creation and the opportunities we are given. It also reminds us that our gifts are not simply for ourselves—they are to be shared generously with others.

Jesus lived a life of thankfulness. Before feeding the five thousand, he gave thanks. At the Last Supper, even knowing what lay ahead, he thanked God. His example reminds us that gratitude is not dependent upon perfect circumstances but is a way of seeing life through the eyes of faith.

At St John Baptist, we encourage children to develop thankful hearts that notice goodness, celebrate blessings and inspire generosity.

Big Question

How can being thankful change the way I live today?

Memory Verse

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

Psalm 107:1

Encourage children to learn this verse throughout the month and reflect on how gratitude changes our hearts.

Supporting Scripture

- **Psalm 100:1–5** – Enter his gates with thanksgiving.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** – Give thanks in all circumstances.
- **James 1:17** – Every good and perfect gift comes from God.
- **Colossians 3:15–17** – Let thankfulness fill your hearts.

- **Philippians 4:6–7** – Present your requests with thanksgiving.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Jesus Heals the Ten Lepers	Luke 17:11–19	Gratitude means recognising the kindness we receive.	Why did only one leper return?
The Feeding of the Five Thousand	John 6:1–14	Jesus begins by giving thanks for what is already there.	How can gratitude help us become more generous?
Hannah's Prayer	1 Samuel 1–2	Hannah responds to God's faithfulness with praise.	What are we thankful for today?
Noah's Offering	Genesis 8:20–22	Noah's first response after the flood is worship and thanksgiving.	Why is remembering important?
The Last Supper	Luke 22:14–20	Jesus gives thanks, even in difficult circumstances.	Can we still be thankful when life is hard?
Our duty to thank God	Psalm 118	We give thanks because it recognises and values God's blessings	How do we find time to give thanks?
Funerals	John 14.1-7	How different faiths give thanks for people's lives	How does my faith help me deal with death?

British Value

Mutual Respect

When we notice and appreciate the kindness, efforts and gifts of others, we build a community where everyone feels valued.

Being thankful helps us celebrate one another and recognise that everyone has something important to contribute.

Children might reflect on:

- How do we show appreciation to others?
- Why is saying thank you important?

- How can gratitude strengthen friendships?

Rights Respecting School

Thankfulness helps us recognise that many things we enjoy are rights that every child should experience.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 24	Every child has the right to the best possible health, healthcare, clean water, healthy food and a safe environment.
Article 27	Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social needs.
Article 28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free, and children should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they can.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.

Reflection Question

"How can our gratitude inspire us to help children whose rights are not yet fully realised?"

Shining Lights

These people remind us that gratitude often leads to generosity and service.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate thankfulness?
The RNLI Volunteers	Freely give their time and skills to help people in danger at sea.
Sarah Outen	Speaks with gratitude for creation, adventure and the people who supported her journey.
Isatou Ceesay	Transformed her community by recognising the value of resources others threw away, bringing hope and opportunity.
Ellen MacArthur	Inspires care for our planet through gratitude for Earth's limited resources and a commitment to sustainability.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Now Thank We All Our God**
- **For the Beauty of the Earth**
- **Thank you Lord for this new day**
- **We plough the fields and scatter**
- **You shall go out with joy**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Gratitude** – Brandon Lake
- **Goodness of God** – Bethel Music
- **I'm Blessed** – Mississippi Children's Choir

Prayer for Thankfulness

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- notice the kindness of others and say thank you
- care for our school environment and resources
- celebrate each other's gifts and achievements
- share generously with those in need
- look for reasons to be grateful every day

How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose one person to thank sincerely and one gift you can use to bless someone else.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."
Psalm 107:1



PEACE

Living as a Shining Light

Peace is much more than the absence of conflict.

In the Bible, the word **shalom** describes life as God intends it to be—a world where people live in harmony with God, with one another and with creation. It is a picture of wholeness, justice, wellbeing and hope.

Jesus is called the **Prince of Peace**. Throughout his life, he brought calm where there was fear, healing where there was suffering and forgiveness where relationships had broken down. He showed that real peace is not about avoiding difficult situations but about responding with love, wisdom and courage.

Every day we have opportunities to be peacemakers. We can choose kind words instead of angry ones, listen carefully before we speak, forgive when relationships become strained and stand alongside those who need support.

At St John Baptist, we believe that every child can become a peacemaker. As we learn to bring peace into our friendships, classrooms and homes, we become shining lights who help others flourish.

Big Question

How can I bring God's peace to someone today?

Memory Verse

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace."

Colossians 3:15

Encourage children to learn this verse throughout the month and think about what it means to become a peacemaker.

Supporting Scripture

- **Matthew 5:9** – Blessed are the peacemakers.
- **John 14:27** – My peace I leave with you.
- **Romans 12:18** – Live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on you.
- **Philippians 4:6–7** – God's peace guards our hearts and minds.

- **Isaiah 9:6** – Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Jesus Calms the Storm	Mark 4:35–41	Jesus brings peace in the middle of fear and uncertainty.	What helps us stay calm when life feels stormy?
Abigail Prevents a Battle	1 Samuel 25	Wisdom and courage can stop conflict before it begins.	How can one person change a difficult situation?
Jacob and Esau Reconcile	Genesis 33	Forgiveness can restore broken relationships.	What helps people make peace with one another?
Jesus Appears to the Disciples	John 20:19–23	The risen Jesus' first gift is peace.	Why do you think Jesus greeted them with "Peace be with you"?
Joseph Forgives His Brothers	Genesis 45	Peace often begins with forgiveness and compassion.	How does forgiveness help people move forward?
The peace of God which passes understanding	Philippians 4.7	What is the peace that comes from our relationship with God	How can I find peace in the midst of life’s troubles?
Remembrance Day	John 14.27	Why Remembrance is important for striving for peace	How do I work for peace?
Christ The King	Mark 11	Jesus is the King of peace	How do reflect our King of peace?

British Value

Rule of Law

Rules exist to protect people, promote fairness and help communities flourish.

Choosing peace means understanding that rules are not simply restrictions; they help us care for one another and create environments where everyone feels safe, respected and able to learn.

Children might reflect on:

- Why do we have rules in school?
- How do rules help everyone flourish?
- What makes someone a peacemaker?
- How can we solve disagreements fairly?

Rights Respecting School

Peace enables everyone to enjoy their rights in safety and dignity.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 19	Every child has the right to be protected from violence, abuse, neglect and harm.
Article 28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free, and children should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they can.
Article 38	Governments must do everything they can to protect children and care for them during war and armed conflict.
Article 39	Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture, conflict or other trauma have the right to help and support so they can recover and rebuild their lives.

Reflection Question

"How can we help make our school a place where everyone feels safe, welcome and at peace?"

Shining Lights

These people have shown that peace is something we build through courage, compassion and perseverance.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate peace?
Mahatma Gandhi	Led a movement for justice through peaceful protest and non-violence.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate peace?
Martin Luther King Jr.	Campaigned peacefully for equality, believing that love is stronger than hatred.
Bob Marley	Used music to encourage peace, unity and hope across the world.
Yusra Mardini	Turned her experiences as a refugee into a message of hope, peace and compassion.
Olive Morris	Worked peacefully but courageously to challenge injustice and create a fairer society.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Make Me a Channel of Your Peace**
- **Be Still, for the Presence of the Lord**
- **Peace perfect peace is the gift of Christ our Lord**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **It Is Well -** With My Soul
- **Three Little Birds** – Bob Marley
- **I Can See Clearly Now** – Jonny Nash

Prayer for Peace

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- solve disagreements respectfully
- use calm and thoughtful words
- include others and help everyone feel welcome
- forgive when relationships become difficult

- create peaceful classrooms where everyone can learn and flourish

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How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose one action that brings peace to your classroom, your friendships or your family.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."
Matthew 5:9



HOPE

Living as a Shining Light

Hope is believing that light is stronger than darkness.

Life is full of moments when things do not go as we planned. We all experience disappointment, sadness, uncertainty and loss. The Christian faith does not pretend that life is always easy. Instead, it reminds us that God is with us through every season of life and that even in our darkest moments, hope remains.

The Bible tells one great story of hope. Again and again, God brings new beginnings where people expect only endings, joy where there has been sadness and life where there has been despair. The birth, death and resurrection of Jesus are the greatest signs that God's love and hope will always have the final word.

Christian hope is different from simply wishing that things might get better. It is a confident trust that God is faithful and continues to work for good, even when we cannot yet see the whole picture.

At St John Baptist, we want every child to become a **hope-bringer**—someone who encourages others, keeps going when life is difficult and believes that tomorrow can be better than today.

Big Question

How can I bring hope to someone today?

Memory Verse

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to give you hope and a future.'"

Jeremiah 29:11

Encourage children to learn this verse throughout the month and reflect on how God's promises give us hope.

Supporting Scripture

- **Romans 15:13** – May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace.
- **Hebrews 6:19** – Hope is an anchor for the soul.

- **Isaiah 40:31** – Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
- **Psalm 46:1** – God is our refuge and strength.
- **Revelation 21:1–5** – God is making all things new.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Noah and the Rainbow	Genesis 6–9	God's promises bring hope after difficult times.	What promises help us keep going?
The Valley of Dry Bones	Ezekiel 37	God brings new life where people see only despair.	Can hope grow in difficult places?
The Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:1–20	Jesus is God's gift of hope to the world.	Why did the angels call this "good news"?
The Road to Emmaus	Luke 24:13–35	Jesus brings hope when people think everything is lost.	How does Jesus help the disciples see differently?
Paul's Shipwreck	Acts 27	Faith and hope help people remain calm during uncertainty.	What gives people courage in difficult times?
Christ's coming foretold	Gen 22.18	The promise of Jesus is hope for all	What is God's plan for me?
1- Patriarchs & Matriarchs	Various	What did the prophets say about Jesus?	How does Jesus bring me hope?
2- Prophets & John the Baptist		Why was Mary chosen?	How might God use me to bring hope to others?
3- The promise to Mary	Luke 1		

British Value

Individual Liberty

Hope encourages us to believe that our choices matter.

Each of us has unique gifts and opportunities to make a positive difference in the world. Individual liberty reminds us that we are free to make choices, and with that freedom comes responsibility.

When we choose kindness, perseverance and courage, we become people who bring hope to others.

Children might reflect on:

- What hopes do I have for my future?
- How can my choices make life better for others?
- What can I do when things feel difficult?

Rights Respecting School

Hope reminds us that every child has the right to grow, learn and flourish.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 6	Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure children survive and develop to their full potential.
Article 24	Every child has the right to the best possible health, healthcare, clean water, healthy food and a safe environment.
Article 28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free, and children should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they can.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.

Reflection Question

"How can we become hope-bringers for children whose rights are not yet fully realised?"

Shining Lights

These people inspire others by showing resilience, perseverance and hope.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate hope?
Malala Yousafzai	Continues to campaign for girls' education, believing every child deserves the opportunity to learn.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate hope?
Kelvin Doe	Used creativity and determination to improve life in his community, showing that age is no barrier to making a difference.
Katherine Johnson	Overcame prejudice with perseverance, inspiring future generations to dream big.
Sarah Outen	Faced extraordinary physical and emotional challenges with resilience, courage and hope.
Ellie Goldstein	Challenges stereotypes and inspires others to see ability, dignity and possibility in every person.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Great Is Thy Faithfulness**
- **Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer**
- **Long ago, prophets knew**
- **Lord of all hopefulness**
- **Longing for light**

Daniel Greenway <danielgreenway0101@gmail.com>

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Way Maker** - SINACH
- **Rise Up** – Andra Day
- **Never Give Up** - Sia
- **Smile** – Kirk Franklin

Prayer Invitation

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- encourage someone who is finding life difficult
- keep trying when learning is challenging
- notice signs of hope and goodness around us
- believe that mistakes help us grow
- remind others that every new day brings new opportunities

How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose one way to encourage another person and remind them that tomorrow is full of new possibilities.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him."
Romans 15:13

SELF-CONTROL

Living as a Shining Light

Self-control is the ability to choose what is right, even when it is difficult.

Every day we make hundreds of choices. Some are small, like whether to listen carefully or interrupt. Others are much bigger, such as whether to tell the truth, forgive someone or stand up for what is right.

The Bible teaches that self-control is one of the **Fruits of the Spirit**. This means it is something God helps us to grow, just as fruit grows slowly on a healthy tree. It is not about being perfect or never making mistakes. It is about learning to pause, think wisely and make choices that reflect God's love.

Jesus showed remarkable self-control throughout his life. He remained calm when others were angry, resisted temptation in the wilderness and chose forgiveness rather than revenge. His example reminds us that real strength is often quiet, thoughtful and full of compassion.

At St John Baptist, we want children to develop self-control so that they become thoughtful, resilient and responsible members of our school community, able to make wise choices that help everyone flourish.

Big Question

How can I choose wisely when my emotions are strong?

Memory Verse

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Galatians 5:22–23

Encourage children to learn the Fruits of the Spirit and reflect on how they grow over time.

Supporting Scripture

- **Proverbs 16:32** – Better a patient person than a warrior; one with self-control than one who takes a city.
- **James 1:19** – Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.
- **2 Timothy 1:7** – God gives us a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

- **Proverbs 25:28** – Without self-control we are like a city without walls.
- **Titus 2:11–12** – God's grace teaches us to live self-controlled lives.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness	Matthew 4:1–11	Jesus chooses God's way instead of giving in to temptation.	What helps us make good choices?
Daniel Chooses God's Way	Daniel 1:8–16	Daniel remains faithful despite pressure from those around him.	Is it always easy to stand by our values?
Joseph Resists Temptation	Genesis 39	Integrity means doing the right thing even when no one is watching.	Why does character matter?
Esau Sells His Birthright	Genesis 25:29–34	Impulsive decisions can have lasting consequences.	Why is it important to stop and think?
Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem's Walls	Nehemiah 6	Nehemiah remains focused despite distractions and opposition.	How can perseverance help us reach our goals?
The Wise Men	Matthew 2		
The conversion of St Paul	Acts 9	Let God be in control Recognising God has a plan	How can I be patient? How can I put myself in God’s hands?
Greed- Easy for a camel…	Matthew 19.24	How greed distances us from God	How might I be less greedy?

British Value

Rule of Law

Rules help communities flourish because they protect everyone's rights, promote fairness and enable us to live well together.

Self-control helps us choose to follow rules not because we have to, but because we understand that they help everyone feel safe, respected and able to learn.

Children might reflect on:

- Why do rules matter?
- What helps us make wise choices?
- How can we respond calmly when things don't go our way?
- How do our choices affect other people?

Rights Respecting School

Self-control helps us respect both our own rights and the rights of others.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 19	Every child has the right to be protected from violence, abuse, neglect and harm.
Article 28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free, and children should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they can.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.

Reflection Question

"How can making wise choices help everyone in our school flourish?"

Shining Lights

These people demonstrate the discipline, perseverance and wisdom that self-control requires.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate self-control?
Nicola Adams	Achieved sporting excellence through years of discipline, perseverance and determination.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate self-control?
Carlos Acosta	Reached the highest levels of ballet through commitment, self-discipline and resilience.
Ellie Simmonds	Demonstrated remarkable determination and focus throughout her swimming career.
Sky Brown	Shows resilience by persevering after setbacks and continually striving to improve.
Sheku Kanneh-Mason	Achieved musical excellence through years of dedicated practice while remaining humble and generous.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Trust and Obey**
- **Take My Life and Let It Be**
- **Make me a channel of your peace**
- **We Three Kings**
- **The wise may bring their learning**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Intentional**
- **Better** -
- **Focus Is Power** – Self Esteem

Prayer for Self Control

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- pause and think before we act

- use kind words, even when we feel frustrated
- persevere when learning becomes challenging
- look after our school environment and shared resources
- make choices that help everyone feel safe, respected and valued

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How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose one moment each day to **pause, think and choose the loving response**.

"Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city." Proverbs 16:32



HONESTY

Living as a Shining Light

Honesty is about being trustworthy.

When people know they can trust us, friendships grow stronger, communities become safer and relationships flourish. Honesty means telling the truth, but it also means much more than that. It is about being the same person wherever we are—whether anyone is watching or not.

The Bible calls this **integrity**. People of integrity are truthful, dependable and willing to admit when they have made mistakes. They do not pretend to be someone they are not or hide the truth when things go wrong.

Jesus described himself as **"the way, the truth and the life."** He always spoke truth with love. Sometimes his words challenged people, but they were always spoken to bring healing, hope and new life.

At St John Baptist, we want children to become people whose words can be trusted, whose actions reflect their values and who have the courage to admit mistakes, learn from them and make things right.

Big Question

Why is honesty the foundation of trust?

Memory Verse

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbour, for we are all members of one body."

Ephesians 4:25

Encourage children to learn this verse and consider how honesty helps communities flourish.

Supporting Scripture

- **Proverbs 12:22** – The Lord delights in those who are trustworthy.
- **Psalm 15:1–2** – Speak the truth from your heart.
- **Colossians 3:9–10** – Do not lie to one another.

- **Proverbs 10:9** – Whoever walks with integrity walks securely.
- **John 8:31–32** – The truth will set you free.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Nathan Confronts King David	2 Samuel 12:1–13	Honest conversations can help people change and grow.	Why is it sometimes difficult to tell someone the truth?
Jacob Deceives Isaac	Genesis 27	Dishonesty can damage relationships and trust.	How long can the effects of dishonesty last?
Samuel Speaks God's Message	1 Samuel 3	Honesty sometimes requires courage.	Is telling the truth always easy?
Zacchaeus Makes Things Right	Luke 19:1–10	True honesty includes taking responsibility for our actions.	What does it mean to put things right?
Ananias and Sapphira	Acts 5:1–11	God values integrity as much as generosity.	Why does integrity matter even when no one else knows the whole story?
Honesty towards God	Proverbs 14.25	The Biblical imperative to be honest	How might show honesty in a world where lying is often encouraged?
Honesty towards oneself	James 1.22-25	Why it is important not to pretend to yourself	How I might be honest with myself?
Ash Wednesday	Genesis 2	How do my sins separate me from God?	What do I need to change about my behaviour?
Confession	1John 1.9	Why it is important to confess our sins to God	What do I need to be sorry about?

British Value

Democracy

Democracy depends upon honesty, openness and trust.

When people tell the truth, listen respectfully and share ideas honestly, communities are able to make fair decisions together. Honesty gives everyone confidence that their voice matters and that decisions are based on truth rather than deception.

Children might reflect on:

- Why is honesty important when making decisions together?
- How does trust help a community flourish?
- What happens when people cannot rely on one another?

Rights Respecting School

Honesty helps ensure that everyone's voice is heard fairly and respectfully.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 12	Every child has the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and for those views to be taken seriously.
Article 13	Every child has the right to seek, receive and share information and ideas, as long as it does not harm other people.
Article 17	Every child has the right to access reliable, accurate information from a variety of sources. Governments should encourage the media to provide information children can understand and that supports their wellbeing.

Reflection Question

"How does honesty help everyone feel respected, listened to and safe?"

Shining Lights

These people have shown integrity by speaking truthfully, standing up for what is right and using their voices to make a positive difference.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate honesty?
David Attenborough	Communicates scientific evidence truthfully and inspires others to care for God's creation.
Nikki Lilly	Speaks openly about living with a visible difference, helping others understand disability with honesty and courage.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate honesty?
Bernardine Evaristo	Uses storytelling to explore identity, truth and belonging with honesty and compassion.
Shamsia Hassani	Uses public art to tell honest stories about hope, identity and life in Afghanistan.
Claudia Jones	Spoke courageously against injustice and worked to build stronger, fairer communities.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Tell Out, My Soul**
- **Lord, Speak to Me**
- **This little light of mine**
- **Wide, wide as the ocean**
- **Zaccheus was a very little man**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **This Is Me**
- **True Colours**
- **I Know Who I Am**

Prayer for Honesty

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- tell the truth, even when it feels difficult
- admit our mistakes and learn from them
- keep our promises whenever we can

- use our words to build trust and encouragement
- act with integrity, whether others are watching or not

How will you let your light shine this week?

Choose honesty, even when it is difficult, and be someone whose words and actions others can trust.

"Whoever walks in integrity walks securely."
Proverbs 10:9



HUMILITY

Living as a Shining Light

Humility is choosing to put others before ourselves.

The world often tells us that success is about being the best, having the most or making sure everyone notices us. Jesus showed a very different way to live. Although he was God's Son, he chose to serve others with love, kindness and compassion. He welcomed those who were overlooked, listened to those who had no voice and used his power to help rather than to impress.

Being humble does **not** mean pretending we are not good at something. It means recognising that our talents are gifts from God and using them to help others flourish. Humility allows us to celebrate other people's successes, admit when we are wrong and remain willing to learn throughout our lives.

Jesus taught that true greatness is found not in being served, but in serving others.

At St John Baptist, we want every child to grow into a confident and compassionate person who uses their gifts wisely, values the contributions of others and leads with kindness.

Big Question

How can I use my gifts to help other people flourish?

Memory Verse

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."

Philippians 2:3–4

Encourage children to learn this verse throughout the month and reflect on what it means to put others first.

Supporting Scripture

- **Micah 6:8** – Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.
- **Matthew 23:11–12** – The greatest among you will be your servant.
- **James 4:10** – Humble yourselves before the Lord.

- **Philippians 2:5–11** – Jesus' example of humility.
- **Proverbs 22:4** – Humility brings honour.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet	John 13:1–17	The greatest leader is the one who serves others.	Why did Jesus choose to wash his disciples' feet?
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector	Luke 18:9–14	God values humble hearts more than proud words.	What does it mean to be honest with God?
David is Chosen as King	1 Samuel 16:1–13	God looks at what is in our hearts, not our appearance.	What qualities matter most in a leader?
Moses the Humble Leader	Numbers 12:3	True leaders listen to God and care for others.	What makes someone worth following?
The Widow's Offering	Mark 12:41–44	God values generosity and humility more than recognition.	Why did Jesus notice the widow's gift?
Holy Week	Mark 14-15	How does Jesus show humility?	How might I reflect Jesus' humility?
James and John	Matthew 20	We should not be striving for places of honour	How can I place others before me
The Annunciation	Luke 1	Mary's humility as the God-bearer	How can I be more like Mary?
The wedding banquet	Luke 14.8	Why taking the place of honour is wrong	How do see my place in the world?
Fasting	Matthew 6.16-18	Fasting in different religious traditions- why it can be helpful	What might I give up to grow closer to God?
St Paul's imprisonment	Ephesians 4	Even we feel low and humbled, God is with us	How might I cope with adversity better?

British Value

Mutual Respect

Humility helps us recognise that every person has value and deserves to be treated with dignity.

When we listen carefully, celebrate the achievements of others and recognise that everyone has something to contribute, we create a community where everyone belongs and can flourish.

Children might reflect on:

- Why is listening an important part of humility?
- How can we celebrate someone else's success?
- What gifts has God given me that I can use to serve others?

Rights Respecting School

Humility reminds us that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 2	Every child has these rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. No child should be treated unfairly.
Article 12	Every child has the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and for those views to be taken seriously.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.

Reflection Question

"How can humility help everyone in our school feel valued?"

Shining Lights

These people have used their gifts to serve others with humility, kindness and generosity.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate humility?
Marcus Rashford	Uses his success to campaign for children experiencing poverty, putting others before himself.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate humility?
Sheku Kanneh-Mason	Shares his musical gifts with generosity while speaking warmly about the people who have helped him succeed.
Mother Teresa	Dedicated her life to serving some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world.
Olive Morris	Worked tirelessly for justice and equality without seeking recognition or personal reward.
Sarah Outen	Speaks honestly about relying on others, learning through challenge and appreciating the support she received throughout her expeditions.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **The Servant King (From Heaven You Came)**
- **Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service**
- **O Lord My God, when I in awesome wonder**
- **Lord of the dance**
- **God forgave my sin**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **This Little Light of Mine**
- **Lovely Day**
- **My Worship**

Prayer for Humility

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- celebrate the achievements of others
- listen carefully before sharing our own ideas
- use our gifts to help our school community
- serve without expecting praise or reward
- remember that everyone has something valuable to contribute

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How will you let your light shine this week?

Use one of your gifts to help someone else, expecting nothing in return.

"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant."
Matthew 20:26



FORGIVENESS

Living as a Shining Light

Everyone makes mistakes.

Sometimes we hurt others through the things we say or do. Sometimes people hurt us. Friendships break down, feelings get hurt and relationships become strained.

The Christian story is one of forgiveness.

Again and again, the Bible shows us a God who welcomes people back, offers second chances and makes new beginnings possible. Jesus taught that forgiveness is not about pretending something didn't happen or saying that hurt doesn't matter. Instead, forgiveness is choosing not to let anger or resentment have the final word.

Forgiveness can be difficult. It often takes courage, patience and time. Sometimes trust has to be rebuilt slowly. Sometimes saying sorry is hard. Sometimes accepting an apology is even harder.

Yet forgiveness brings freedom. It allows healing to begin, relationships to be restored and hope to grow.

At St John Baptist, we want our children to understand that everyone makes mistakes, everyone can learn and everyone deserves the opportunity to begin again.

Big Question

Why is forgiveness one of the bravest choices we can make?

Memory Verse

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 4:32

Encourage children to learn this verse and reflect on how forgiveness helps communities flourish.

Supporting Scripture

- **Matthew 6:14–15** – Forgive others as God forgives us.
- **Colossians 3:13** – Bear with one another and forgive each other.

- **Luke 23:34** – "Father, forgive them."
- **Psalm 103:8–12** – God's forgiveness is complete.
- **Micah 7:18–19** – God delights in showing mercy.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Joseph Forgives His Brothers	Genesis 45:1–15	Forgiveness can heal even deep hurt.	What gave Joseph the strength to forgive?
The Lost Son	Luke 15:11–32	God's love always welcomes us home.	Why does the father run to meet his son?
Jesus Forgives from the Cross	Luke 23:33–34	Forgiveness is stronger than hatred.	Why were Jesus' words so extraordinary?
Peter is Restored	John 21:15–19	Jesus offers forgiveness and a fresh start after failure.	Why did Jesus ask Peter three times, "Do you love me?"
The Unforgiving Servant	Matthew 18:21–35	Those who receive forgiveness are called to forgive others.	Why is it sometimes difficult to forgive?
The Prodigal Son	Luke 15	Why we should never begrudge others forgiveness	How might I embrace those who have been forgiven as God does?
Repentance	Matthew 4.17	Why we need to repent before we can be forgiven	How can I show repentance to God and to others?

British Value

Mutual Respect

Forgiveness helps communities remain strong.

When we listen, apologise sincerely, forgive generously and work to repair relationships, we create a school where everyone feels valued, respected and safe enough to learn from their mistakes.

Children might reflect on:

- Why is saying sorry important?

- What makes a genuine apology?
- How can forgiveness help friendships become stronger?
- What is the difference between forgiving and forgetting?

Rights Respecting School

Forgiveness helps create a community where every child feels safe, supported and able to learn from mistakes.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 19	Every child has the right to be protected from violence, abuse, neglect and harm.
Article 28	Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free, and children should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they can.
Article 39	Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture, conflict or other trauma have the right to help and support so they can recover and rebuild their lives.

Reflection Question

"How can forgiveness help people flourish after they have been hurt?"

Shining Lights

These people have shown that forgiveness has the power to transform lives and communities.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate forgiveness?
Nelson Mandela	Chose reconciliation rather than revenge, helping to unite a deeply divided nation.
Corrie ten Boom	Forgave a former concentration camp guard, demonstrating extraordinary Christian grace.
Desmond Tutu	Led South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, believing forgiveness could help a nation heal.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate forgiveness?
Immaculée Ilibagiza	Survived the Rwandan genocide and chose forgiveness instead of hatred, inspiring millions through her story.
The Forgiveness Project	Shares real stories of forgiveness and reconciliation, showing how people can rebuild lives after conflict and harm.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Amazing Grace**
- **There Is a Redeemer**
- **Go tell it on the mountain**
- **Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Blinded By Your Grace**
- **Hello Sunshine**
- **Firework**

Prayer for Forgiveness

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- say sorry when we have made a mistake
- forgive others, even when it is difficult
- repair friendships through honest conversation
- choose kindness instead of revenge

- remember that everyone deserves the opportunity for a fresh start

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How will you let your light shine this week?

Offer someone the gift of a fresh start, just as God offers one to each of us.

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."
Luke 6:36



COURAGE

Living as a Shining Light

Courage is choosing to do what is right, even when it feels difficult.

Everyone feels afraid sometimes. We might worry about trying something new, speaking in front of others, standing up for a friend or admitting when we have made a mistake. Feeling afraid is part of being human.

The Bible reminds us that courage is not the absence of fear—it is choosing to trust God despite our fears.

Again and again, God called ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Moses spoke to Pharaoh. Esther risked her own safety to protect her people. David faced Goliath. Mary said "yes" to God's unexpected plan. The disciples continued sharing the good news of Jesus, even when it was dangerous.

None of these people were fearless. Their courage came from knowing that God was with them.

At St John Baptist, we want our children to become people of courage—people who speak up for others, persevere through challenges and choose kindness, honesty and justice, even when it would be easier not to.

Big Question

What helps people do the right thing when it feels difficult?

Memory Verse

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9

Encourage children to learn this verse and remember that God is always with us, whatever challenges we face.

Supporting Scripture

- **Deuteronomy 31:6** – Be strong and courageous.
- **Isaiah 41:10** – Do not fear, for I am with you.

- **Psalm 27:1** – The Lord is my light and my salvation.
- **2 Timothy 1:7** – God has given us a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.
- **Hebrews 13:6** – The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
David and Goliath	1 Samuel 17	Courage comes from trusting God rather than our own strength.	What are the "giants" we face today?
Esther Speaks to the King	Esther 4–7	Courage often means speaking up for others.	When is it difficult to use our voice?
Peter Walks on the Water	Matthew 14:22–33	Courage begins with taking the first step in faith.	What helps us keep going when we feel afraid?
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego	Daniel 3	Courage means standing firm for what is right.	What values are worth standing up for?
Mary Accepts God's Calling	Luke 1:26–38	Courage sometimes means trusting God's plans, even when we don't understand them.	What might Mary have been feeling when the angel appeared?
God's plan of salvation for us	The New Testament!	We can draw courage from the fact that God has a plan of salvation and hope for us all	How might I trust God's plan for me?
Pentecost	Acts 2	How we can draw courage from the Spirit's presence with us	How might I better trust in the Spirit?
Jeremiah's calling	Jeremiah 1.14	We all can be supported by God to do amazing things, regardless of age	What is god's plan for me?

British Value

Individual Liberty

Individual liberty reminds us that we are free to make choices and express our beliefs responsibly.

Courage helps us use that freedom well. It enables us to stand up for what is right, challenge unkindness, make wise decisions and use our voice to protect others.

True courage is never about putting ourselves above others—it is about using our freedom to help everyone flourish.

Children might reflect on:

- What does it mean to make a brave choice?
- When is it difficult to stand up for someone else?
- How can courage help us become leaders who serve others?

Rights Respecting School

Courage helps us speak up for our own rights and the rights of others.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 12	Every child has the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, and for those views to be taken seriously.
Article 13	Every child has the right to seek, receive and share information and ideas, as long as it does not harm other people.
Article 31	Every child has the right to relax, play, take part in cultural and creative activities, and join in a wide range of recreational activities.

Reflection Question

"How can we use our voices to make life better for someone else?"

Shining Lights

These people have shown courage by standing up for others, overcoming challenges and refusing to give up.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate courage?
Malala Yousafzai	Continued to campaign for girls' education despite facing great danger.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate courage?
Yusra Mardini	Risked her own life to save others before becoming an Olympic athlete and refugee advocate.
Siya Kolisi	Inspires unity, resilience and hope through courageous leadership on and off the rugby field.
Ibtihaj Muhammad	Broke barriers in international sport while remaining true to her faith and identity.
Nicola Adams	Overcame barriers through determination, resilience and belief in herself, inspiring others to pursue their dreams.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Be Thou My Vision**
- **Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer**
- **Rejoice the Lord is King**
- **Spirit of God, as strong as the wind**
- **The Spirit lives to set us free**
- **One more step along the world I go**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Brave**
- **Roar**
- **(Something Inside) So Strong**

Prayer for Courage

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- stand up for someone who is being treated unfairly
- try something new without fear of failure
- persevere when learning becomes challenging
- speak honestly and kindly, even when it is difficult
- choose what is right, even when nobody else does

How will you let your light shine this week?

Take one courageous step that helps someone else or brings hope to a difficult situation.

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love."
1 Corinthians 16:13–14



EMPATHY

Living as a Shining Light

Empathy is choosing to understand how someone else might be feeling.

It is more than feeling sorry for someone. Empathy invites us to step into another person's shoes, to listen carefully, to notice when someone may be struggling and to respond with kindness and compassion.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus noticed people whom others overlooked. He welcomed those who felt excluded, comforted those who were grieving, listened to those whose voices were ignored and showed compassion to people who were lonely, frightened or unwell.

His example teaches us that empathy is not simply about understanding—it is about allowing that understanding to change the way we treat others.

At St John Baptist, we believe every person is created in the image of God and deserves to feel valued, respected and loved. As we grow in empathy, we become people who notice others, celebrate our differences and help everyone flourish.

Big Question

How can I see the world through someone else's eyes?

Memory Verse

"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."

Romans 12:15

Encourage children to learn this verse and think about how sharing both joy and sadness helps build strong communities.

Supporting Scripture

- **Galatians 6:2** – Carry each other's burdens.
- **Luke 6:31** – Do to others as you would have them do to you.
- **Colossians 3:12** – Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility and gentleness.

- **1 Peter 3:8** – Be like-minded, sympathetic and compassionate.
- **Matthew 7:12** – The Golden Rule.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
The Good Samaritan	Luke 10:25–37	Compassion means noticing someone in need and taking action.	What stopped others from helping?
Jesus Weeps at Lazarus' Tomb	John 11:1–44	Jesus shares in the sadness of others.	Why did Jesus choose to weep with his friends?
Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus	Mark 10:46–52	Jesus notices someone others ignore.	Who might we overlook today?
The Widow of Nain	Luke 7:11–17	Jesus is moved by another person's grief and responds with compassion.	How can we comfort someone who is sad?
Philip and the Ethiopian Official	Acts 8:26–40	Philip listens carefully and helps someone understand.	Why is listening such an important part of empathy?
The Trinity	2Cor 13.14	God shows empathy to us, by reaching out to us in Christ and His Spirit	What does God showing empathy to all mean to my relations to others?
Jairus' daughter	Mark 5	How Jesus shows empathy to others	How might I follow Jesus' example?

British Value

Mutual Respect

Empathy helps us value every member of our community.

When we listen carefully, seek to understand different experiences and respond with kindness, we create a school where everyone feels respected, included and able to flourish.

Respect grows when we take time to understand one another.

Children might reflect on:

- How can I tell if someone needs help?

- Why is listening one of the kindest things we can do?
- How can understanding someone's feelings change the way we respond?

Rights Respecting School

Empathy helps us recognise and protect the rights of every child.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 2	Every child has these rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. No child should be treated unfairly.
Article 23	Children with disabilities have the right to live full and active lives and to receive the support they need to participate as fully as possible in their community.
Article 30	Every child has the right to enjoy their own culture, practise their own religion and use their own language, even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.

Reflection Question

"How can empathy help everyone feel that they belong?"

Shining Lights

These people have shown compassion by recognising the dignity, worth and potential of every person.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate empathy?
Mary Seacole	Cared for wounded soldiers with compassion, treating everyone with dignity regardless of who they were.
Dr Barnardo	Dedicated his life to improving the lives of vulnerable children, believing every child deserved love, care and opportunity.
Gabby Frierson	Uses art to celebrate diversity, identity and belonging, helping others feel seen and valued.
Ellie Goldstein	Challenges stereotypes about disability, encouraging greater understanding, inclusion and acceptance.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate empathy?
RNLI Volunteers	Put compassion into action by rescuing people in danger, often risking their own safety to help others.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You**
- **Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service**
- **When I needed a neighbour**
- **God is love, his the care**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Count on Me** – Bruno Mars
- **A Million Dreams** – *The Greatest Showman*
- **Don't Judge Me**

Prayer for Empathy

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- listen carefully before making assumptions
- include someone who may be feeling left out
- show kindness to someone having a difficult day
- celebrate the different gifts, cultures and experiences within our school
- notice when someone needs encouragement and offer our support

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How will you let your light shine this week?

Notice someone who may need encouragement and show them that they are seen, valued and loved.

"Be kind and compassionate to one another."
Ephesians 4:32

FAITH

Living as a Shining Light

Faith is about trust.

Every day we place our trust in people. We trust that our families love us, our teachers will help us learn and our friends will stand beside us. Christians believe that faith is choosing to trust God—even when we cannot see the whole picture.

Throughout the Bible, ordinary people placed their trust in God during extraordinary circumstances. Abraham left his home without knowing where he was going. Moses led God's people out of Egypt. Mary trusted God's unexpected plan for her life. The disciples left everything to follow Jesus. Their stories remind us that faith is not about having all the answers; it is about taking the next step with courage and hope.

Faith does not mean never asking questions. In fact, the Bible is full of people who doubted, wondered and wrestled with difficult questions. God welcomed their questions and remained faithful to them.

At St John Baptist, we encourage every child to explore life's big questions with curiosity, respect and openness. As a Church of England school, our worship is rooted in the Christian faith, while recognising and valuing the rich diversity of beliefs within our community. We believe that learning from one another helps us grow in wisdom, understanding and respect.

Our hope is that every child will leave St John Baptist with confidence to live by the values we have explored throughout this handbook—becoming a shining light who reflects God's love, brings hope in times of darkness and helps others to flourish.

Big Question

What gives people the courage to trust, even when they cannot see the whole journey?

Memory Verse

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Hebrews 11:1

Encourage children to learn this verse and reflect on how faith grows through trust, experience and hope.

Supporting Scripture

- **Proverbs 3:5–6** – Trust in the Lord with all your heart.
- **Psalm 46:1** – God is our refuge and strength.
- **Matthew 17:20** – Faith as small as a mustard seed.
- **Romans 8:28** – God works for the good of those who love him.
- **2 Corinthians 5:7** – We live by faith, not by sight.

Bible Stories

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
Abraham Follows God's Call	Genesis 12:1–9	Faith means trusting God, even when we cannot see the destination.	What helps us trust someone?
Peter Walks on the Water	Matthew 14:22–33	Faith often begins with taking the first step.	What helped Peter? What distracted him?
The Friends Who Lowered the Man Through the Roof	Mark 2:1–12	Faith inspires us to help others and never give up.	What would you have done if you were one of the friends?
The Mustard Seed	Matthew 13:31–32	Even the smallest faith can grow into something wonderful.	How can small acts make a big difference?
Thomas Meets the Risen Jesus	John 20:24–29	Questions and doubts can become part of a growing faith.	Is it okay to ask questions about God? Why?
Christ our Good shepherd	Ps23 Luke 24.13	How our faith in Jesus our good shepherd supports us	How can I place my trust in Jesus?
The Road To Emmaus		How our faith grows over time	How can I work on growing my faith in Jesus?
Faith and science	Genesis 1	How faith and science are not opposites, but compliment one another	How do I let my faith and knowledge of the world guide me?
God has a plan for us	Ps 139		

Bible Story	Reference	Key Message	Questions to Wonder About
		How God had formed us all with a plan for us	How can I better trust in God's plan for me?

British Value

Mutual Respect and Tolerance

Our school community is enriched by people from many different cultures, traditions and beliefs.

Faith encourages us to listen with curiosity, speak with kindness and learn from one another. We may not all believe the same things, but we can always treat one another with dignity and respect.

When we learn about different beliefs, we grow in understanding and discover the things that unite us as well as those that make each of us unique.

Children might reflect on:

- What can I learn from someone whose beliefs are different from mine?
- Why is respect important, even when people disagree?
- How can we talk about faith with kindness and curiosity?

Rights Respecting School

Faith reminds us that every child has the right to develop their own beliefs while respecting the beliefs of others.

UNCRC Article	What the Article Says
Article 14	Every child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Parents and carers should help children learn how to use this right as they grow up.
Article 29	Education should help every child develop their talents and abilities, respect other people, understand their own and others' rights, and care for the environment.
Article 30	Every child has the right to enjoy their own culture, practise their own religion and use their own language, even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.

Reflection Question

"How can learning about different beliefs help us become a stronger community?"

Shining Lights

These people have allowed their faith, values and convictions to inspire lives of hope, service and compassion.

Shining Light	How do they demonstrate faith?
Desmond Tutu	His Christian faith inspired him to work for justice, reconciliation and peace throughout his life.
The Kingdom Choir	Share the joy and hope of the Christian faith through music that brings people together.
Carlos Acosta	Speaks about the importance of perseverance, gratitude and believing in possibilities beyond what others expected.
Shamsia Hassani	Uses art to bring hope and dignity to communities affected by conflict, believing creativity can overcome fear.
Malala Yousafzai	Her faith and belief in the dignity of every child continue to inspire her campaign for education and justice.

Traditional Anglican Hymns

- **Great Is Thy Faithfulness**
- **Be Thou My Vision**
- **The Lord's my shepherd**
- **One more step along the world I go**
- **As we go**
- **I the Lord of sea and sky**

Songs from Our Worship Playlist

- **Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)**
- **Every Praise**

- **Praise**

Prayer for Faith

"If you would like to make this prayer your own, you are welcome to join in with 'Amen'. If you would rather use this time to reflect quietly, that is equally welcome."

Faith Group to write

Living this Value at St John Baptist

This month we will strive to:

- trust God as we face new challenges
- ask thoughtful questions and listen respectfully to others
- celebrate the diversity of beliefs within our school community
- live out our Christian values through everyday actions
- encourage others with hope, kindness and compassion

How will you let your light shine this week?

Take one step of faith—however small—and use your gifts to bring hope, love and encouragement to someone else.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."
Matthew 5:16

GO AND SHINE

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:16

Becoming Shining Lights

Throughout this handbook we have explored eleven Christian values that help us grow as followers of Jesus and members of our school community.

These values are not simply ideas to learn about during collective worship. They are invitations to live differently each day.

When we choose love, we reflect God's heart.

When we practise thankfulness, we recognise the many gifts God has given us.

When we become peacemakers, we help our communities flourish.

When we bring hope to others, we remind people that darkness never has the final word.

When we exercise self-control, we make wise choices that help everyone flourish.

When we live with honesty, we become people who can be trusted.

When we show humility, we use our gifts in the service of others.

When we forgive, we make new beginnings possible.

When we act with courage, we stand up for what is right.

When we show empathy, we help others know that they are seen, heard and valued.

When we live by faith, we trust that God walks beside us wherever life may lead.

Together, these values help us become the people God calls us to be.

