

## ST. MARY OF NAZARETH /ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI – WEST WICKHAM

**28<sup>th</sup> May 2023: Pentecost**

### **Hazel writes:**

You may have noticed how I have been including notes in the pew sheets of where I have seen fruits of the Spirit coming from activities in our churches. This is the subject of my reflection this week, so do read that for this week's update.

Both Richard and I are away during the coming week. If you want to talk to a member of clergy or have a visit for someone urgently, please call Carol Coslett on 020 7939 9456 or you can contact her by email at [carol.coslett@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:carol.coslett@southwark.anglican.org). Other urgent queries should go to one of the Church Wardens. Richard and I will both be back from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

This week we have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

There is a special **Pentecost Celebration for Churches Together in West Wickham** at West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church tonight at 6pm. This will be followed by a short annual meeting for this organisation. All are welcome. Do come and join together with fellow Christians for the birthday of the Church.

Next **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Mary's Church, and a joint service at 10am in St Francis' Church.

On **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June**, we will have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Francis' Church and non-eucharistic services at 9.15am in St Mary's Church, and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

**Morning Prayer** will **NOT** be held this coming week in either church. It will restart next week in St Francis' Church on Wednesday morning (7<sup>th</sup> June) at 9.30am and in St Mary's Church on Thursday morning (8<sup>th</sup> June) at 9am.

On **BOTH** Wednesday mornings St Francis' Church will be **open for private prayer** from 10.30-11.30am.

**Messy Church** is on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 3.45pm in St Mary's. Please do tell friends and neighbours with young families about this monthly activity after school on a Friday.

**Resources and updates for the week ahead** – Each week our service is livestreamed on YouTube at 10am or before. All other files for this week have been combined and

included in this pew sheet which will be sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line.

We will be holding our monthly **Action Aid coffee morning** on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June between 10.30am and 11.30am at St Francis' Church.

Our **Warm Space at St Francis'** will be open on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June from 10.30am-1pm.

**The Matchbox** is back and will be presenting *Amy's View* by David Hare on June 8th, 9th & 10th. *Amy's View* takes the audience on a tense and emotional journey between a strong mother and her loving daughter who finds herself caught between a mother she adores, but who also represents the past, and Dominic, the problematic love of her life and questionable symbol of the future. Throughout the play there is a running argument about the value of the arts which becomes inextricably bound up with marital relations, love, fidelity, and integrity. We recommend you use Ticket Source to book your tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/the-matchbox-theatre>, although you can also telephone the box office (0845 6804568).

Hazel will be holding a **prayer event** on **Sat 10th June** from 10am to 12noon at St Mary's. This will be a time to explore different types of prayer as well as to get feedback on her sabbatical last November.

**St. Mary's Garden Party and Barbecue** is on **Saturday 17th June** from **11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.** Donations of cakes, plants, etc. would be much appreciated and also offers of help on the day.

**Pat Allegacone's funeral service** will be on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 3pm in St Francis' Church following a private committal service and with refreshments following the service in the North Aisle of the church.

**St. Mary's** are needing someone to take over **hall bookings** from Jackie Greatorex as she wishes to retire from the post after 13 years. If you think you might be able to help with this, please get in touch with Jackie on [jackiegreatorex@googlemail.com](mailto:jackiegreatorex@googlemail.com) as soon as possible to find out more what is required. Jackie is still prepared to do any purchasing for the hall but needs to hand over the administration of all hall bookings. This is 95% of the time a home-based position working with the computer. There is a team of volunteers to do locking and unlocking of the hall. Please give this serious thought as this is a very important position for our church as the hall provides much needed finances.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require squash/cordial, cooking sauce, cold meat tins, canned tomatoes, UHT fruit juice and washing up liquid. They have plenty of tea, cereal and biscuits. Please do not bring any fresh or frozen food, or baby milk as the foodbank cannot pass this on. You can also donate financially here: <https://bromleyborough.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money>. Thank you for your continuing support.

If anyone would like a pedestal at either church in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special anniversary etc., please contact Merri Womack (8777 8772) for St Mary's (or there is a list to sign in the vestibule at St. Mary's) or Nicky Nightingale ([nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk) or 8916 9855) for St Francis'.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl [berylbolton@hotmail.com](mailto:berylbolton@hotmail.com) and items for the websites to [brian.griff19@btinternet.com](mailto:brian.griff19@btinternet.com) or Gifty [office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk).

**Collect**

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, ignite in us your holy fire; strengthen your children with the gift of faith, revive your Church with the breath of love, and renew the face of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**First Reading:****Acts 2: 1-21**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

<sup>5</sup> Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

<sup>7</sup> Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, <sup>11</sup> Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's

deeds of power.' <sup>12</sup> All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' <sup>13</sup> But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men

shall see visions, and  
your old men shall  
dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even upon my slaves,  
both men and women,  
in those days I will pour  
out my Spirit; and they  
shall prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> And I will show  
portents in the heaven  
above  
and signs on the earth  
below, blood, and fire,  
and smoky mist.

<sup>20</sup> The sun shall be  
turned to darkness and  
the moon to  
blood, before the  
coming of the Lord's  
great and glorious day.

<sup>21</sup> Then everyone who  
calls on the name of the  
Lord shall be saved."

**Gospel Reading:**

**John 7: 37-39**

<sup>37</sup> On the last day of the  
festival, the great day,  
while Jesus was standing  
there, he cried out, 'Let  
anyone who is thirsty  
come to me, <sup>38</sup> and let  
the one who believes in  
me drink. As the  
scripture has said, "Out  
of the believer's  
heart shall flow rivers of  
living water.'" <sup>39</sup> Now he  
said this about the  
Spirit, which believers in  
him were to receive; for  
as yet there was no  
Spirit, because Jesus  
was not yet glorified.

**Post Communion Prayer**

Faithful God, who  
fulfilled the promises of  
Easter  
by sending us your Holy  
Spirit and opening to  
every race and nation  
the way of life eternal:  
open our lips by your  
Spirit,  
that every tongue may  
tell of your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our  
Lord.

**Collect**

Holy God, faithful and unchanging: enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth, and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love, that we may truly worship you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**First Reading:**

**2 Corinthians 13: 11-13**

<sup>11</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

<sup>12</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

<sup>13</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

**Gospel Reading:**

**Matthew 28: 16-20**

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

**Post Communion Prayer**

Almighty and eternal God,  
you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:  
hold us firm in this faith,  
that we may know you in all your ways and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory, who are three Persons yet one God,  
now and for ever.

## REFLECTION – Hazel O’Sullivan

The Holy Spirit was promised to his disciples a number of times by Jesus, but I don’t think they really understood what this would mean until it actually came. For example, in today’s gospel reading we hear Jesus say that those who believe in him can drink from him and then they will find rivers of living water flowing out from their hearts. I don’t think this made it very clear what Jesus was talking about and anyway, it wasn’t possible for this to happen when he said it, as it was too early on in his ministry – it was some time before his crucifixion and resurrection.

Today Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection has happened, and he has been glorified, but maybe you still struggle to understand what receiving the Holy Spirit actually means. When the disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they started speaking in different languages and they helped others to be saved by telling them about Jesus. They were very clear that something special had happened. I know it’s unlikely that you’ll all be speaking in different languages, except after years of study, and you might also be a bit wary of evangelism and telling others of Jesus – you’d rather leave that to those who’ve had some theological training. However, you can still experience the Holy Spirit just as powerfully as those disciples did on Pentecost Sunday. As Jesus said in the gospel reading, everyone who believes in him can experience the outflow of living waters from their heart. The living water that Jesus was talking about is love. It’s love that gives all human beings life and is necessary for survival. And it’s through love that the Holy Spirit works and this can be shown in a huge variety of ways.

You may have noticed that in the pew sheets recently I’ve started telling you about things that have happened which indicate that our vision for the United Benefice of St Francis’ and St Mary’s is bearing fruit. Let me firstly remind you of that vision – to be connected to Jesus and have an abundant life full of authentic compassionate friendships, with our churches being a blessing to others and an integral part of the West Wickham community. This vision was condensed into four headings: congregation, compassion, commerce and community.

I want to tell you about four things that happened this week indicating that each of these headings were met through the love that one or more believers in our community had flowing out of their hearts.

The first event to tell you about was the piano recital at St Francis’ last Saturday afternoon. My friend, Nicholas, was the pianist and at the end of his performance he said to me that he thought it was the best that he’d ever played. He wasn’t boasting at all, but was stating how everything seemed to enable him to play in that way – the

acoustics, the welcome he'd had, the members of the audience who were there – everything combined to bring him a blessing. And what a blessing it was for us too – both in hearing some great music and in making some money for the church.

**Commerce** in a Christian setting brings many blessings, not just monetary.

Then on Sunday we had our normal morning services and Jane Smith, who many of you will know, watched the livestream at home. Brian's sermon on how our roots enable us to stretch our wings helped her to reflect on being strengthened by the Spirit and it reminded her of a short poem she wrote a few years ago – I've included it at the end of this reflection. By spending time with each other in the presence of God (even if we're not physically together), and then sharing the connections made enables us all to be more unified as a **congregation**, bonded in love.

Our community in West Wickham is made up of so many different people: those from not-for-profit organisations, commercial businesses, schools, surgeries, as well as all the residents who live here. Many of these aspects of our community were remembered in the funeral of Nina Tilling on Wednesday. She'd lived in Braemar Gardens since 1960, she'd worked in a shop in Station Road and her children had all been to Oak Lodge School. Many of the neighbours were able to come to the service at St Francis' and stay afterwards for refreshments, building up their community feeling and introducing some of them to a church building which they'd never been into before. This is an example of how we can be seen as an integral part of our **community**.

And finally, during the week I had a meeting with someone who has been struggling with making the money that they get each month stretch to meet all their expenses. They don't live in WW, but I'd suggested that they come over and I'd share some lunch with them. We met in a coffee shop on the High Street, and they explained all that they're doing to remain positive and able to repay their debts as well as cover their living costs. When they left, I wasn't sure that I'd really been able to help very much, but the following day I received an email saying 'Thank you for listening. I've never managed to eat and chat like that due to anxiety but today I managed it'. My connection with this person is very weak and I was introduced to them by someone else who'd found a compassionate community in our churches. It doesn't take much to listen to someone, but it's our openness to being able to help others that made that connection possible. That's what **compassion** is all about.

This is how the Holy Spirit works: through people like you and me being open to seeing where love is shown and joining in with God in letting this love flow out of our hearts to



touch others. So, I wonder where the Spirit will be working this week. Do tell me, or others in our congregation about what you experience – that's the outflow of living waters from your heart which Jesus spoke of, and it will be hugely encouraging to others. And you never know what kind of fruit of the Spirit might be produced as a result.

Amen

### **WILD AND FREE**

Be carried on the wind  
Be wild and free.  
No need to flap your wings  
When you rely on Me.  
You can soar like an eagle  
Your strength renewed.  
Be royal and regal  
And enjoy the view.

### **Prayer Pointers**

Pray that the Holy Spirit may fall upon St Francis' and St Mary's just as at that first Pentecost, when your Mighty outpouring of power transformed lives and ignited the life of the church. Pray for a reigniting of your fire in all of us who follow and worship Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

In the Southwark Diocesan Prayer Cycle, pray for neighbouring parish of All Saints, Spring Park, for their Vicar Yvonne Clarke and for the Chaplain of Bethlem Royal Hospital, Mary Geoghegan. (*\*Churches in the Diocese will be praying for St Francis' and St Mary's on Monday this week\**)

Pray that the Holy Spirit may breathe new life into our communities today. Pray for the young people who hang about the streets, easy targets for those who seek to groom, manipulate and entice our youngsters into drink, drugs, and crime. Pray that the Spirit may make our streets safe places to walk.

We pray for wisdom, unity and truth in our government. We pray that the voices of all Christians in parliament will be heard. And that they will be effective witnesses in the corridors of power. Pray that the Spirit may transform our nation.

Continue to pray for God's hand on the situation in Ukraine. Pray for all those unable to flee and living amid bombing - dreading the sirens and wondering where the next strike will hit. Pray that the Spirit may blanket the world with peace.

Pray that the Holy Spirit may move in the lives of those we know personally to be in need. Pray for those who are ill, in sadness or in confusion. In our congregations pray for these by name – Vicky Pearce, Jane Smith, Joan Burford, Graham Stone, Rowena Griffiths, Daphne Dack, John Dack, Barbara Goodchild, Joan Mountain, James Pitt-Payne and Sue Jones – and those known to God alone.

Hold before God all those who have died. Pray especially for Peter Tilling, Nina Tilling, Robbie Georgel, Pam Faull, George Verwer, Mike East, Martin Rees and Pat Allegecone and their families. Hold before God those for whom it is a time of anniversary and those for whom the pain never seems to get any better.