

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

9th April 2023: Easter Sunday

Hazel writes:

Many thanks to all those who have been involved in our services during Holy Week and at Easter, as well as with the Easter Egg Hunt on Holy Saturday. We have now started to distribute communion using the common cup as well as by intinction: please ensure that you approach the altar rail on the correct side, according to how you wish to receive.

This week we have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Francis' Church and Family Communion services, with an Easter Egg Hunt at 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

Next **Sunday 16th April**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

On **Sunday 23rd April**, we will have Holy Communion services celebrating St George at 8am in St Francis' Church, at 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

Morning Prayer is held each week in St Francis' Church on Wednesday morning at 9.30am, followed by the church being **open for private prayer** from 10.30-11.30am. It is also held in St Mary's Church on Thursday morning at 9am.

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.

In 2023, the **Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call** is raising money for projects that work to improve mental health and well-being. Our offertory on Easter Sunday will go towards the appeal, but if you would like to donate in the meantime, you can do so via the Diocese of Southwark website at www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall. There is also more information on the projects in both of the churches if you do not have access to the internet. **If you haven't already donated to the appeal, please give today via the offertory.**

From Easter Sunday we are asked to **pray for the Coronation of King Charles III** and there are booklets available to use for this in both churches. These include daily

prayers, as well as background information about the coronation and would make a great gift for others. Donations for these resources will be gratefully received when you take a copy of the booklet. If you would like a large print copy, but these have disappeared, please let Hazel know.

Coronation Celebration Get-together Sunday 7th May at St. Mary's. This will take place at about 12 noon following drinks after the joint service at 10.00 a.m. on 7th May. The cost will be £10 a head (£5. For children under 14). All food, tea, coffee and soft drinks will be provided but you must bring along your own alcoholic drinks. Please contact Beryl Bolton 0208 289 8097 or berylbolton@hotmail.com for a ticket if you hope to come along and £10 must be made at time of booking. Numbers must be in by Monday 1st May in order to allow time for organising amounts of food etc.

Piano Recital and Afternoon Tea is being hosted at St. Francis Church, Ravenswood Avenue, West Wickham on Saturday 20th May. Timings are: 2.00 - 2.45pm piano recital with Nicholas Austin and afternoon tea from 2.45pm - 4.00pm. Tickets are £6. If you would like to come along, please email Nicky Nightingale on nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk to reserve a ticket. Many thanks.

Peter Tilling's funeral service will be at Beckenham Crematorium on Wednesday 26th April at 2.45pm.

From Wednesday April 5th our **Warm Space at St Francis'** will only be opening on the 1st Wednesday of the month from 10.30am-1pm. Thank you to Marion and Theresa for volunteering to do this. If anyone else is willing and available to take on regularly opening the Warm Space on another Wednesday of the month from 10.30am-1pm please get in touch with Kate (katedyer41@hotmail.com or 07808 468591) or with Marion Barry (whitelandm@yahoo.com or 020 87771470).

St. Mary's Garden Party is on Saturday 17th June. Please would all gardeners start to sow seeds/cuttings etc. This would be much appreciated. Thanks.

We have paper copies of **The Bridge**, the Southwark Diocese monthly newspaper, available in both churches. If you would like a copy, please do take one.

We are clearing out some cupboards in the **choir vestry at St Francis'** prior to refurbishing the space, so that this is more usable as a community meeting room. There are many copies of the **Book of Common Prayer**, which are now on one of the window-sills in the church. Please take as many as you would like to have.

A new **community garden** is being developed at the rear of St Francis' Church together with St John's Church. This is starting off as a small group, who will meet on a Thursday morning and will expand through referrals from social prescribers based in GP surgeries. We are hoping to have a formal opening ceremony at the end of the summer.

St Francis' Electoral Roll

We will be editing St Francis' Electoral Roll from 2nd April - 15th April in time for our APCM in May. If your name is not on the Roll and you wish to be included, please let me know before 15th April. If your name is on the Roll by then you will be able to vote, stand for any vacancies etc at this year's Annual Meeting. Please also let me have any changes of address, telephone numbers, emails etc. before this date. If you wish to know more or would like an application form please contact me at:-

rowena.griff19@btinternet.com or 020 8777 6112. Many thanks, Rowena Griffiths.

St. Mary's Hall Booking Officer is needed to take over 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 as soon as possible to find out more about what is required. Jackie will continue to do any purchasing for the hall but needs to hand over the administration of all hall bookings. **This is a 95% home-based position working with the computer. There is a team of volunteers who unlock the hall for parties. Please give this serious thought as this is a very important position for our church as the hall provides much needed finances.**

A **West Wickham Choir Concert** is planned for Saturday 15th July. Rehearsals will be extensions of choir practices usually on Thursday evenings at St. Francis, or occasionally Friday evenings at St. Mary's. **First rehearsal Thursday 13th April 7.45 p.m. at St. Francis.**

A new **network of Eco Churches** has been formed in Bromley Borough and some of us will be going to meetings on the following dates (all meetings at 7.30pm):

- Weds 3rd May at St Paul's, Beckenham
- Weds 31st May at Emmanuel URC here in West Wickham

If you would like to join us, please contact Richard (richard.ford73@gmail.com or 020 8289 2432

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require canned vegetables, canned hot meat, cold meats, UHT milk, bleach and desserts. 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 or 8916 9855) for St Francis'.

If anyone would like to make a donation towards the cost of the Easter flowers at St. Mary's, it would be much appreciated and should be given to Merri Womack. The arrangement in the Sanctuary today has been donated by Archie Symes in memory of Cynthia and arranged by Merri.

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

Collect

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains
of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith
and hope; for a new day
has dawned and the way to
life stands open in our
Saviour Jesus Christ.

1st Reading: Acts 10: 34-43

³⁴Then Peter began to
speak to them: 'I truly
understand that God shows
no partiality, ³⁵but in every
nation anyone who fears
him and does what is right
is acceptable to him. ³⁶You
know the message he sent
to the people of Israel,
preaching peace by Jesus
Christ—he is Lord of all.
³⁷That message spread
throughout Judea,
beginning in Galilee after
the baptism that John
announced: ³⁸how God
anointed Jesus of Nazareth
with the Holy Spirit and
with power; how he went
about doing good and
healing all who were
oppressed by the devil, for
God was with him. ³⁹We
are witnesses to all that he
did both in Judea and in
Jerusalem. They put him to
death by hanging him on a

tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him
on the third day and
allowed him to appear,
⁴¹not to all the people but
to us who were chosen by
God as witnesses, and who
ate and drank with him
after he rose from the
dead. ⁴²He commanded us
to preach to the people and
to testify that he is the one
ordained by God as judge of
the living and the dead.
⁴³All the prophets testify
about him that everyone
who believes in him
receives forgiveness of sins
through his name.'

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 28: 1-10

28 After the sabbath, as the
first day of the week was
dawning, Mary Magdalene
and the other Mary went to
see the tomb. ²And
suddenly there was a great
earthquake; for an angel of
the Lord, descending from
heaven, came and rolled
back the stone and sat on
it. ³His appearance was like
lightning, and his clothing
white as snow. ⁴For fear of
him the guards shook and
became like dead men.
⁵But the angel said to the
women, 'Do not be afraid; I
know that you are looking

for Jesus who was
crucified. ⁶He is not here;
for he has been raised, as
he said. Come, see the
place where he lay. ⁷Then
go quickly and tell his
disciples, "He has been
raised from the dead, and
indeed he is going ahead of
you to Galilee; there you
will see him." This is my
message for you.' ⁸So they
left the tomb quickly with
fear and great joy, and ran
to tell his disciples.
⁹Suddenly Jesus met them
and said, 'Greetings!' And
they came to him, took hold
of his feet, and worshipped
him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to
them, 'Do not be afraid; go
and tell my brothers to go
to Galilee; there they will
see me.'

Post Communion Prayer

God of Life, who for our
redemption gave your
only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious
resurrection have delivered
us from the power of our
enemy: grant us so to die
daily to sin, that we may
evermore live with him in
the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our
Lord.

Collect

Risen Christ,
for whom no door is
locked, no entrance
barred: open the doors of
our hearts, that we may
seek the good of others
and walk the joyful road of
sacrifice and peace,
to the praise of God the
Father.

First Reading:

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32

¹⁴ 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.

²² ‘You that are
Israelites, listen to what I
have to say: Jesus of
Nazareth, a man attested to
you by God with deeds of
power, wonders, and signs
that God did through him
among you, as you
yourselves know— ²³ this
man, handed over to you
according to the definite
plan and foreknowledge of
God, you crucified and
killed by the hands of those
outside the law. ²⁴ But God
raised him up, having freed

him from death, because it
was impossible for him to
be held in its power. ²⁵ For
David says concerning him,
“I saw the Lord always
before me, for he is at my
right hand so that I will not
be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my
heart was glad, and my
tongue rejoiced; moreover,
my flesh will live in hope.
²⁷ For you will not abandon
my soul to Hades, or let
your Holy One experience
corruption.

²⁸ You have made known to
me the ways of life; you will
make me full of gladness
with your presence.”

²⁹ ‘Fellow Israelites, I may
say to you confidently of
our ancestor David that he
both died and was buried,
and his tomb is with us to
this day.

³⁰ Since he was a prophet,
he knew that God had
sworn with an oath to him
that he would put one of his
descendants on his
throne. ³¹ Foreseeing this,
David spoke of the
resurrection of the
Messiah, saying,

“He was not abandoned to
Hades, nor did his flesh
experience
corruption.”³² This Jesus
God raised up, and of that
all of us are witnesses.

Gospel Reading:

Luke 24: 13-35

¹³ Now on that same day
two of them were going to
a village called Emmaus,
about seven miles from
Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking
with each other about all
these things that had
happened. ¹⁵ While they
were talking and discussing,
Jesus himself came near
and went with them, ¹⁶ but
their eyes were kept from
recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he
said to them, ‘What are you
discussing with each other
while you walk along?’ They
stood still, looking
sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them,
whose name was Cleopas,
answered him, ‘Are you the
only stranger in Jerusalem
who does not know the
things that have taken place
there in these days?’ ¹⁹ He
asked them, ‘What things?’
They replied, ‘The things
about Jesus of
Nazareth, who was a

prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him. ²⁵ Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to

them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying,

'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

³² They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!'

³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION – Hazel O’Sullivan

The gospel reading this morning is all about the difference between finding something unexpected and not finding something that’s expected. These are two very different scenarios and result in very different responses.

I wonder if you’ve ever lost something.

I remember when I was quite young – in my 20s – I lost my purse. I’d gone to pay for petrol that I’d just put in the car, and I couldn’t find my purse. This was before the days of having all your banking on your mobile phone, so this was a big deal. I had that empty feeling in the pit of my stomach. That’s what it must have felt like to the women who came to see the tomb on the morning after the sabbath. Jesus had been killed and now they were coming to see his dead body. They must have felt as though they’d lost everything.

When I lost my purse, I was with my flatmate, so she was able to pay for the petrol and she calmed me down, telling me not to worry, we could cancel my cards and get another purse. This is what the angel did for the women at the tomb. The angel said, “Do not be afraid” and he told them that Jesus had been raised from the dead. I’m not sure it made them feel that much better, but they did go off to tell the disciples about what had happened. However, they had still lost what they had gone to find – Jesus’ body. They had not found what they expected to find. The bible reading said that they left the tomb with both great fear and great joy.

I imagine that what happened next changed their mood completely.

I wonder if you’ve ever found something unexpected, or if you’ve had a nice surprise. I remember another time in my 20s when John, who’s now my husband, called me up to ask me out on our very first date. I hadn’t seen him for a couple of years since we’d met briefly through work. The date he was inviting me to was an award ceremony at the Dorchester Hotel in London, and it was happening the very next day. I couldn’t wait to tell somebody else about the call, and I felt very excited. That’s what it must have felt like to the women who met with Jesus as they left the tomb. They fell at his feet and worshipped him – they were clearly excited. And Jesus gives them that instruction to go and tell the disciples about what they’d found – something unexpected.

Not finding something that was expected left the women with fear (as well as joy). However, finding something unexpected left them with excitement and a desire to go and tell others. When they met with Jesus, they found a new life.

And once the disciples had been told about Jesus rising from the dead and they met with him too, they also went about telling others. The Book of Acts is full of stories about how they told others of Jesus, including our other reading this morning, where Peter tells Cornelius and his relatives and close friends about the peace and forgiveness that Jesus offers to everyone who believes in him.

This is what it means to be Easter People – we find something unexpected when we meet with Jesus, and it's exciting. We're told not to be afraid and to go and tell others about how they can meet with Jesus too.

How about you? Are you excited today when you meet with Jesus here in the church and worship him, or when you're at home reading this reflection? I wonder if you've noticed anything unexpected today – maybe a moment of peace, maybe a moment of forgiveness from God, maybe something else. Will you go out afterwards and tell others about what you've experienced and how they can experience it too?

The new life of peace and forgiveness that is offered by Jesus is for everyone. This is a life that's not one that's expected in today's world – life is normally about hassle and blame, not peace and forgiveness.

So, rather than focussing on what's not been found that we might have expected, let's be Easter People and go out excited, without fear, and tell others about the unexpected new life of peace and forgiveness that Jesus can bring.

Prayer Pointers

When the two Marys came to Jesus' tomb at first light, they came to grieve but were met with joyful good news. Pray that God will meet us in our deepest, most difficult places with the good news of his presence and comfort.

In our benefice give thanks for our Pastoral Care Team who show the love of Christ to those unable to be at church and to those experiencing sickness and bereavement. Give thanks for their sensitivity and concern for those to whom they minister.

In the Southwark Diocesan Prayer Cycle, pray for the congregation of St Paul, Clapham - their Vicar, Jonathan Boardman and their Reader, Rosemary Palmer.

Hold before God all leaders and their advisers at this uncertain time for the whole world. We pray for our King, Prime Minister and government and all MPs and local councillors - that they may act honestly, with humility and compassion as they seek to cope with the present and plan for the future.

Give thanks for our NHS, praying for those whose appointments or surgery have been cancelled. Pray especially for those undergoing treatment for cancer as they cope with side effects of the medication. Pray for a swift end to the Junior Doctors strike.

Continue to pray for those areas where normal, daily life is violence, war and grinding poverty. We continue to remember the situation in Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Pray that as we approach Easter, peace may begin to take root even in these dark places.

Pray for those people in our communities who are ill or in situations that are very difficult. In our congregations pray for these by name – Mark Outten , Vicky Pearce, Mike East, Jane Smith, Joan Burford, Graham Stone, Rowena Griffiths, Daphne Dack, John Dack, Barbara Goodchild, Karen Plummer, and Nina Tilling – and those known to God alone.

Hold before God all those who have died in the faith of the Risen Jesus. Pray especially for Stuart Froment, Joyce Town, Margaret Creedon, John Cooper, Peter Tilling 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.

Offer our own personal prayers and thanksgivings. Help us always to remember that Jesus will be with us, beside us, within us and his love will guide us on the way forward.