

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

9<sup>th</sup> July 2023: 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

### Hazel writes:

Hope Church have held their last meeting in the hall at St Francis' but continue to part of our **community** through membership of Churches Together in West Wickham. This positive relationship was confirmed very clearly on their last day, 25<sup>th</sup> June, when we both sang '*I will offer up my life*' in our services and they heard us singing through the Youth Room door. We have also received these photos from Ukraine of the donations which have been taken by van from Hope Church, reaching those in need and showing the **compassion** of many in our congregations.



This week we have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Francis' Church and non-eucharistic Songs of Praise services in St Mary's Church at 9.15am and in St Francis' Church at 10.45am.

We also have a **healing service** this afternoon at 3pm in St Francis' Church – an opportunity to come and rest in God's presence for physical healing, or to find peace with emotional, spiritual and mental matters.

Next **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am and 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.

The **bereavement support group** meets this week on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July at 2.30pm in the Hewitt Room, Emmanuel Church, The Grove. This is open to anyone who would like to talk about bereavement with others.

This Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July we welcome three performers to St. Francis to give **our lunchtime concert**, a guitarist, a soprano and a pianist. They have an interesting and varied programme for us and are new to us, so please bring your friends along to give them a warm welcome. Tea and coffee available before the concert which begins at 12.45p.m.

**Messy Church** is on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 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.

Tickets for the **West Wickham Choir summer concert** on Saturday 15th July at St. Francis Church at 7.30 p.m. are on sale from Anita Curtis 0208 777 5973 or [john.curtis23@ntlworld.com](mailto:john.curtis23@ntlworld.com) and Geoff Mussard 0208 650 8389 or [geoff@mussard.org.uk](mailto:geoff@mussard.org.uk). Tickets are £7 each and proceeds will be for church charities. The programme includes 'Hiawatha's Wedding Feast' and songs from Jesus Christ Superstar.

Our next **Women's Group meeting** is at St Francis on Tuesday 18th July at 8 p.m. We are focussing on homelessness. Anne Horner-Tree will speak about the Bromley Homeless Starter Pack Scheme which provides household items for those made homeless, (e.g., on coming out of prison, or returning from hospital and finding accommodation is taken back by the landlord and the contents disposed of - this really happens). Brian Griffiths will also speak about the experience of some from St Mary's and St Francis' in travelling weekly to London with sandwiches and soup for the homeless on the streets. Please bring along suitable items for donation (e.g., cutlery, crockery, duvet covers (not duvets), pillow slips, tea towels, saucepans, frying pans, bath towel, toothbrush, etc.) Come along and find out more and we will continue to collect in the weeks to come.

**Children's Society Coffee Morning and Cake Sale:** St Francis' Church Hall on Saturday, 22nd July from 10.00-12.00 noon. Delicious home-made cakes for sale, coffee and biscuits, children's amusements, 'Guess the weight of the Cake' and a raffle. Please come along and bring your friends. All proceeds to The Children's Society. Donations of home-made cakes to sell at this event, would be very welcome. Christine Morton

The **Croydon Area Racial Justice Group Study Day** is on July 22, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM at Christchurch Purley, Brighton Road, Purley CR8 2BN. The day will focus on the Anti-Racism Charter and how we might engage with it. All are welcome: reserve your place at <https://christpurley.churchsuite.com/events/ziomb6rs>.

**Advance Notice - Liz and Mike Jeggo**, the OMF missionary workers in Japan, whom St Francis support, will be coming with their family to the 10.45 service at St Francis on July 30th, when Mike Jeggo will be the preacher. It would be good to have as many people there as possible to support and encourage them.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require tinned vegetables, cold meat tins, desserts (e.g. sponge pudding, jelly, Angel Delight), coffee, ladies' deodorant and toothpaste. They have plenty of pasta, 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'.

The sanctuary pedestal this week at St. Mary's has been donated by Margret Bond, Michelle Graydon and Beryl Bolton in memory of Joy Yallop and has been arranged by Beryl

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

Almighty God,  
send down upon  
your Church the  
riches of your Spirit,  
and kindle in all who  
minister the gospel  
your countless gifts  
of grace; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

## First Reading:

### Psalm 147: 7-11

<sup>7</sup> Celebrate and sing!  
Play your harps for  
the LORD our God.  
<sup>8</sup> He fills the sky with  
clouds and sends rain  
to the earth,  
so that the hills will  
be green with grass.  
<sup>9</sup> He provides food for  
cattle and for the  
young ravens, when  
they cry out.  
<sup>10</sup> The LORD doesn't  
care about the

strength of horses or  
powerful armies.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD is pleased  
only with those who  
worship him  
and trust his love.

## Gospel Reading:

### Matthew 11:16-19

<sup>16</sup> You people are like  
children sitting in the  
market and shouting  
to each other,

<sup>17</sup> "We played the  
flute, but you would  
not dance!  
We sang a funeral  
song, but you would  
not mourn!"

<sup>18</sup> John the Baptist did  
not go around eating  
and drinking, and you  
said, "That man has a  
demon in him!"

<sup>19</sup> But the Son of Man  
goes around eating  
and drinking, and you  
say, "That man eats  
and drinks too much!  
He is even a friend of  
tax collectors and  
sinners." Yet Wisdom  
is shown to be right  
by what it does.

## Post Communion Prayer

Grant, O Lord, we  
beseech you, that  
the course of this  
world may be so  
peaceably ordered  
by your governance,  
that your Church  
may joyfully serve  
you in all godly  
quietness;  
through Jesus Christ  
our Lord.

## REFLECTION – Hazel O’Sullivan

Who do you trust? Many people want our trust – politicians, businesses, teachers, friends, family. However, we are all human and sometimes we let others’ trust in us down – I know that I have. Sadly, this means that some people end up trusting no-one. We are sceptical about anyone who says, “Trust me”. I wonder if you can identify with this way of thinking.

Both the readings today illustrate that God asks us to trust him and they have a musical twist to them. I want to explore how this idea of trust is important to who God is.

If we look firstly at our reading from Matthew, Jesus is talking about a game where music reflects the emotions. It’s a very simple one, where children play some music, and everyone responds with an action that appropriately matches the music. If it’s joyful, they dance and if it’s sad, they’ll act in a sad way. For example, if you listen to Vivaldi’s four seasons – Winter and Spring start so differently. Music is a great way of illustrating feelings – film scores do this when the music gets you in the right frame of mind for what’s happening on screen.

Jesus is making the point that it seems as though the people where he lived didn’t want to play this kind of game. He says that ‘music’ was being played (by God) through the messages and behaviours of those who he sent to live on earth, but people weren’t joining in as intended. John the Baptist had not publicly celebrated God – he’d gone around wearing rough clothing and eating whatever he was able to gather in the wilderness. He was encouraging others to recognise the bad stuff that they were doing and change their behaviours, but people thought that he had a demon. Jesus on the other hand wanted to celebrate God’s love and was often found eating and drinking with others. However, there were many rules about how religious stuff should be done and so people felt they couldn’t let their hair down and celebrate in the way that Jesus intended.

Do we celebrate God’s love in the way that Jesus intended? I wonder if you’ve been able to do this today in some way, whether you’ve been to church or not. Or have you been held back from ‘celebration’ by the thought that maybe you’re not doing it right if you’re not in church, or when in church maybe you don’t know the liturgy that’s used in a service or the songs that are sung. Or maybe you don’t know about the love of God that we’re celebrating when we read the bible, pray or listen to worship music.

Do you remember my question at the very start? Who do you trust? We are sceptical about everyone's request to trust them, and always quick to criticise others. And we sometimes translate this to God as well, just as Jesus noticed in our reading.

But God is someone that you can trust. That's what the other reading today is about: it reminds us that the earth is full of good things – plants and animals are wonderful, and they show how great God is in enabling their creation through evolution. However, rather than putting trust in an animal or another human, if we look to God and trust in him, then, as things begin to work out for good (and this may take some time), we can know that God loves us. Remembering this never-ending love, through looking back at what he has done in our own lives and in the stories told in the Bible, can bring us hope. This is what motivates us to worship God, and this can be done in any way that helps us to recognise this love and be uplifted and inspired. Sometimes this will involve music, but it doesn't need to – any form of art, writing, physical movement, speaking to others, or resting quietly in God's presence can be worship. My prayer is that you'll be able to do this at some point today and every day.

## **Prayer Pointers**

Pray for St Mary's and St Francis' churches as we, in common with other churches, face the future of aging and decreasing membership with fewer members of our congregations that can serve in practical ways. Pray that we may continue to offer a caring and pastoral ministry.

In the Southwark Diocesan Prayer Cycle, pray for the parish of St Nicholas, Tooting Graveney and their Rector, Timothy Dennis.

Pray for those caught up in the riots in France. Pray for the family of the teenager killed by the police that caused the riots. May peace be forged, and scars healed.

Pray for the family of Selena, the eight-year-old killed in the car accident at school in Wimbledon and for all those injured and their families who wait anxiously at hospital bedsides.

Pray for the people and the nations of Ukraine and Palestine, that those responsible for war crimes would be brought to justice. Pray for an end to the conflicts.

Pray for the Church of England General Synod meeting in York. Pray for calm debate on the issues of safeguarding and sexuality. Pray that the church may find a way to be inclusive and show the love of Christ to all.

Pray for those we know and love who are struggling to make sense of their lives, through financial pressures, illness or age, family strife or rifts. 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, Jack Bramwell and Sue Jones – and those known to God alone.

Hold before God all those who have died. Pray especially for Daniel Grainger, Pat Allegacone and Martin Rees and their families.

Offer our own personal prayers and thanksgivings - all those things that worry us; those situations we feel helpless in; those decisions that burden us; those losses that overwhelm us, and all that we are thankful for.