

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

24th April 2022: Second Sunday of Easter

Hazel writes:

Recent fundraising events illustrate the generosity of the community here in West Wickham. Our collection for the Bromley Borough Foodbank on Saturday 9th April in the High Street brought in over £270, along with food donations, and the concert in the evening raised a further £1,000. Then, at the Churches Together service on Good Friday we had donations for the DEC Ukraine appeal which totaled £600, and after the Easter Sunday services almost £260 was sent off to the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Appeal. Thank you to everyone who contributed to these appeals.

Today, we have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Francis' Church and a joint St George's Day Parade service at 10am in St Mary's Church, when the 7th West Wickham Scouts will be doing some more fundraising.

Hymns at 10 a.m. in St. Mary's – Be bold be strong – Give me joy in my heart - We have a King who rides a donkey - Brother, sister let me serve you – Onward Christian soldiers.

Next **Sunday 1st May**, we will have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Mary's Church and a joint Holy Communion service with a Thanksgiving at 10am in St Francis' Church, as well as a presentation from Christians Against Poverty.

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 at St Mary's Church on Thursday morning at 9am.

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be livestreamed on YouTube from St Mary's **at 10am** on Sunday. All other files for this week have been combined and posted as a pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line. Other worship and resources that you might want to listen to or look at on Sunday:

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at www.churchofengland.org.
- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
 - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 – A Meditation from the Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family in London.
 - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from the Chapel of Merton College, Oxford.

- On BBC 1: Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m. – Katherine Jenkins visits Scotland’s Paisley Abbey to hear how faith inspires local people.

There will be a **“Songs of Praise” service** in both churches on Sunday 8th May.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis’ Church. Currently they require tinned hot and cold meat, tinned potatoes, tinned vegetables, long life fruit juice, tinned fish, chopped tomatoes, rice, custard, rice pudding. They are well stocked with pasta, cereals and baked beans. Please do not bring any fresh 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.

We have a **Community Lunch** on Sunday 1 May at 12.30pm in St Francis’ Church Hall and we are looking for **donations of raffle prizes** – if you have a donation, please bring it along on Sunday 1 May to St Francis’ church hall. Many thanks, Nicky Nightingale.

The **West Wickham Village Day** is on Monday 2nd May from 10am to 4pm in Blake Park. Churches Together in West Wickham will be hosting a hospitality area with tea and coffee, Messy Church and a children’s play area. If you are able to volunteer any time during the day, or for set up or dismantling, please contact Joan Clark at laurel46@btinternet.com with details of which area you’d like to volunteer in and a two-hour time slot when you could be available. There are also sign-up sheets in both church buildings. Thanks Hazel

We recently held a meeting to discuss our **Ukraine response**. Before any refugees arrive in the West Wickham area, we would like to connect with any potential hosts, so that we can enable them to share experiences (for example, helping with the visa application process, or what the council are looking at when they come to your home). If you or anyone that you know in the local area has offered to host refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, please do ask them to contact Hazel, who will begin to co-ordinate this response until someone is identified to facilitate this work on a longer-term basis.

Action Aid Saturday Coffee mornings are held from 10.30 to 11.30 or thereabouts on the first Saturday of the month, including next week on Saturday 7th May. It will be nice to meet up for a chat again on these occasions, so please do come along.

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'.

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

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 5: 27-32

²⁷ When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.' ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than any human authority. ³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, so that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses to

these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.'

Second Reading:

Luke 24: 35-48

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. ³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' ³⁷ They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled

fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence. ⁴⁴ Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

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

Imagine that you have been one of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. You and your friend have returned from Emmaus to Jerusalem as quickly as you could after recognising Jesus during a meal when he had broken the bread.

When you had left Jerusalem, your talk had been full of sadness and despair. Now your joy and gladness give wings to your feet, and you race back to Jerusalem. You are very excited, and you can’t wait to tell the others.

No one had believed the women who had found the empty tomb and reported that two angels had told them Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter also had found the tomb empty except for the binding cloths. Now you know why they didn’t find Jesus’ body: he is alive; he has conquered death, as he promised. This journey, bearing such great news, is the happiest experience of your life, and you can’t wait to see the disciples’ faces when you tell them.

You know where to find them; they will still be hiding in the upper room, the last place you had seen Jesus before Gethsemane. You arrive.

You rush up the stairs and enter the upper room, the room that holds so many memories for all of you.

You throw open the door and shout a greeting.

Depressed faces look up, surprised to see your excited happy face and hear your joyful greeting.

You sit down at the long table where Jesus had celebrated the Passover meal, and you share with them the wonderful news. Not only had Jesus appeared to you in the breaking of the bread, but he had explained to you how all that had happened to him was part of God’s plan which had started with Moses and the prophets.

All is well, no need for anyone to despair. Jesus has overcome death and is risen from the dead.

As you speak, you see the incredulous expressions on the disciples’ faces suddenly change to alarm. They no longer look at you, but intently stare over your shoulder at something behind you.

They begin to move away from you – what is wrong with them? What have you said?

You turn around to see what they could be looking at. And there stands the same person you met on the road to Emmaus.

You recognise him immediately, but the others think that they are looking at a ghost.

The ghost speaks; in his familiar, clear voice Jesus says, "Peace be with you."

He asks, "Why are you so frightened? And why all this talk of loss and despair?"

The disciples are silent. They still keep their distance from Jesus; some are moving towards the door.

You want to reassure them and tell them this is Jesus; he has appeared again as he did on the Emmaus road.

But you are silent. Jesus will deal with the situation in his own way.

Jesus takes a step nearer to the disciples and invites them to look closely at his hands and feet. "Yes, see the wounds," he says. "It really is me, nothing else."

He moves closer. Fear has left the disciples; now incredible wonder lights up their faces.

To finally convince them that he is not a ghost, he holds out his hands and invites them to hold them. You watch as all the disciples in turn grasp Jesus' hands, not so much to gain proof that he really is flesh and blood but with gladness they welcome him into their company again.

You don't need any more proof, but you take his hand in love and respect. You feel the warmth of his hand, still carpenter's hands but now open wounds show his integrity.

The disciples don't doubt that Jesus is with them, but they are still unable to take it all in. They are dumbfounded and just sit looking at him in speechless wonder.

Then, true to his nature, he breaks the spell and reminds them they are lacking in hospitality. "Have you anything to eat?" he asks.

All, yourself included, spring into action. There is great confusion as everyone rushes to get the grilled fish which has been prepared for this evening.

You crowd around Jesus at the table and watch him eat the fish.

And while you sit down, he tells you all again what you heard on the road to Emmaus.

But he goes further. The disciples can understand all he said about the fulfilment of the prophecies and all that had been written about him in the Law of Moses, but as they listen, they sense that their minds are clearing; they can think logically, realistically and discern the truth more easily. Their minds are opened; they have eyes to see and ears to hear, ready to receive the Grace of God.

And the true purpose of his suffering and resurrection is that through his name, anyone who asks for forgiveness will become reconciled with God.

“You,” he says, “are witnesses to everything you have seen and heard; all that is necessary to enable you to spread the good news, that everyone is loved and forgiven.”

You have shared his death, now you can share in establishing his kingdom.

Prayer Pointers

Pray for people who suffer for their Christian beliefs especially in the workplace. Pray for those of other faiths who suffer for their religion, for political prisoners and for whistle blowers. Comfort them and give them courage to stand up for what they believe in.

As we celebrate St George’s Day on Sunday, pray that we may be brave like St George, gentle like St George, truthful like St George and help us to love Jesus as much as he did.

Lift to God all the places in our world that are suffering right now. Pray for Ukraine, still in the grip of war; for Afghanistan and Yemen whose conflict and pain has gone from our news screens; and pray for the victims of flooding in South Africa.

Pray for peace on the streets of our city. Pray especially for the four victims of stabbings in New Addington over the Easter weekend, the victim of the stabbing in Bromley and for the family and friends of the teenager murdered in Lewisham last week. Pray for the police and those in the justice system who investigate these senseless crimes.

Hold before God all those we know who need your peace at the moment: those who are sick; those who are anxious and troubled; those who are sad or grieving; those who are dying; those who are afraid. In our congregations we pray for those struggling with ill health – especially Julie Bailey, Vicky Pearce, Barbara Colpus and Mary Sanders. Pray that Jesus, may breathe his peace deep into their hearts

For the soul of Cynthia Symes, for her husband Archie, her daughters Joanna and Michelle and all her family. May God help them all to begin again.

Offer our own personal prayers – our deepest needs, our fears, our joys and thanksgivings and for all those who we love dearly. Help us to look for signs of you in everything we do, wherever we go and whoever we meet this week. Keep us focussed on you, our risen triumphant Lord.