

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

10th July 2022: Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Hazel writes:

I hope that you've been able to find some time to see the great pictures and other creations from local artists and children of all ages that have been on display at our churches. Linking art with our well-being is something that the charities we are supporting – Mind and Bethlem Gallery – know all about and we will be continuing with this theme throughout our Festival events.

Today, we have Holy Communion services 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.

Hymns at 9.15 a.m. in St. Mary's – Colours of Day - For the beauty of the earth – Be thou my vision – Bless the Lord, of my Soul (10,000 reasons) Give me Joy.

Hymns at 10.45 a.m. in St. Francis' – Colours of day – For the beauty of the earth – Be thou my vision – Bless the Lord, O my soul (10,000 reasons) – Give me Joy.

Next **Sunday 17th 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. There will also be a **Healing and Wholeness service at St Mary's Church at 3pm**: an opportunity to receive anointing and laying on of hands and prayer for healing.

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.

The **Bereavement Support Group** will meet on Wednesday 13th July at 2.30pm in Emmanuel Church. Please do tell people about this group if you feel they might benefit from being able to talk to others about their loss.

We are once again holding our **Children's Society Coffee and Cake Morning**, having had to cancel this event for the last two years, due to Covid. This is on Saturday 16th July in St Francis Church Hall from 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon. There will be the usual delicious homemade cakes as well as tea, coffee and biscuits for sale, children's amusements, "Guess the Weight of the Cake" and a raffle. Everyone is welcome. Meet your friends for a coffee and treat yourself to a homemade cake! Donations of homemade cakes would be most appreciated. Christine Morton (020 8777 9213)

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be livestreamed on YouTube from St Mary's at 9.15am. 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.

An **open-air Passion Play** is happening at Gatton Park near Reigate on 14-17 and 20-23 July. Hazel will be going to the performance on Friday 15 July. Here's a link to the website for details and to book tickets:

<https://www.gattontheatre.org.uk/currentproduction/>.

Together with St John's, the women's group is hosting a Welcome Evening Event for Ukrainian families and their hosts on July 19th. We are looking for donations (OF EXCELLENT QUALITY) clothes, bags, jewellery and accessories. You can leave these in either of the churches any time before the event. This evening will be by invitation only, so if you know of any Ukrainian people, please pass on Milly's contact details, or give her theirs (with their permission): linktohopehighams@gmail.com or 07796 338483.

Oak Lodge School are looking for **volunteer community governors** who play an important role in supporting the school and holding it to account for standards. You don't need to be an expert in education or have links with the school, but you must be committed to the successful running of the school. This means being available to give your time to be in school and to attend meetings at various times throughout the year. In return, you'll find that being a governor is hugely rewarding and that you develop new skills and knowledge. As a school that is committed to building a diverse community, we're particularly keen to hear from people from underrepresented groups and with protected characteristics, particularly older people and those with disabilities. For more information or to express an interest please contact the Trust Governance Manager, Joyce Munro at governance@compassacademytrust.org.

A lady in Crystal Palace is moving to a home as she has dementia and is looking for someone to give a home to one (or both) of her two cats. They are around five years old. If anyone is interested in having more information, please contact Hazel.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require toilet rolls, soup, cooking sauces, tinned cold meat, squash, coffee, surface spray cleaner, toothpaste and washing up liquid. They are well stocked with pasta, cereal, tea 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 or 8916 9855) for St Francis'.

The pedestal at St. Marys this week has been donated and arranged by Beryl for family birthdays.

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

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of
Jesus you brought
salvation to our
wayward world:
draw us into harmony
with your will, that we
may find all things
restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus
Christ.

First Reading:

Phillipians 4:4-9

⁴ Be full of joy in the
Lord always. I will say
again, be full of joy.

⁵ Let everyone see that
you are gentle and kind.
The Lord is coming
soon. ⁶ Do not worry
about anything, but pray
and ask God for
everything you need,
always giving
thanks. ⁷ And God's
peace, which is so great
we cannot understand
it, will keep your hearts
and minds in Christ
Jesus.

⁸ Brothers and sisters,
think about the things
that are good and
worthy of praise. Think
about the things that
are true and honorable
and right and pure and
beautiful and
respected. ⁹ Do what
you learned and
received from me, what
I told you, and what you
saw me do. And the God
who gives peace will be
with you.

Gospel Reading:

Luke 10: 21-24

²¹ Then Jesus rejoiced in
the Holy Spirit and
said, "I praise you,
Father, Lord of heaven
and earth, because you
have hidden these
things from the people
who are wise and smart.
But you have shown
them to those who are
like little children. Yes,
Father, this is what you
really wanted.

²² "My Father has given
me all things. No one
knows who the Son is,
except the Father. And
no one knows who the
Father is, except the Son
and those whom the
Son chooses to tell."

²³ Then Jesus turned to
his followers and said
privately, "You are
blessed to see what you
now see. ²⁴ I tell you,
many prophets and
kings wanted to see
what you now see, but
they did not, and they
wanted to hear what
you now hear, but they
did not."

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, comfort of
the afflicted and healer
of the broken, you have
fed us at the table of
life and hope, teach us
the ways of gentleness
and peace, that all the
world may acknowledge
the kingdom of your
Son Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen

REFLECTION – Hazel O’Sullivan

The world is a complex place. And it’s getting ever more complex day by day. Post-pandemic we need to take our own decisions on what we’re doing about social distancing and mask wearing and, with an ability to now hold celebrations, meet with families and friends and travel overseas, many people want to be doing much more. So, there’s more going on, and it’s complicated working out the best way to get somewhere, with transport difficulties due to strikes and short-staffing and still having restrictions on visiting some places, such as retirement homes where there’s a Covid outbreak. Add to this the consequences of the war in Ukraine, including the cost-of-living crisis and how we welcome refugees here in West Wickham, and then the current happenings in Westminster, as well as the ongoing environmental and climate crisis and it’s clear that keeping up to date with all that impacts our lives is extremely difficult. Dealing with all these complexities of life means that we all currently feel a certain amount of stress, anxiety, and depression. This is the case if you’re too busy, or if you feel you’re not busy enough and there might be things going on that you’re not aware of. And sometimes yes, you have your life in balance, but you might think too much about a situation that you find yourself in and you can’t enjoy it, because you’re worried about what others might be thinking or you’re thinking about what’s coming up next.

So, this is the world that we’re all currently living in ... Now let’s think about something different.

Have you ever seen young children playing, or drawing, or watching TV? They are so engrossed in what’s happening and are completely oblivious to what else might be going on around them. This total involvement in an activity means that their minds cannot be distracted by something else that’s happening, or by looking forwards or backwards to what has happened or will be happening.

I think that it’s this ability of children to get themselves lost in something (to be taken up in the power of the Spirit, if you like) that Jesus is talking about in our gospel reading for today. He’s speaking to his disciples who have just returned from visiting other towns where they were able to cure the sick and drive out demons. He makes it clear that they weren’t able to do this because they were wise and smart, but because they looked at something deeply (while keeping their minds open to what might be possible), just like little children do when they’re playing together.

I wonder if you have an activity where you can find yourself like one of these children, so engrossed in it that you’re not distracted by other thoughts or things going on

around you. Different people have different activities that enable this to happen for them and this weekend we've been showcasing the use of visual arts of many different varieties to do this. Many people find that having an activity, whether it's painting, or flower arranging, or doing some other kind of creative activity, is a way of leaving behind the stresses and strains of today's complex world.

Brian Griffiths wrote about his scroll-sawing in the most recent magazine – about how he finds the whole process very relaxing and mindful, so that time flies and he can lose himself in the work through concentrating on following the pattern lines with the blade. Maybe you joined him for a few moments at St Francis' to understand more about how such an activity can be mindful and can improve your mental health and wellbeing.

This same experience is what's open to us when we look at something not with the expectations and experience of the world on our shoulders, but with an open mind and an open heart to what might be possible.

Sometimes we think too much about an experience, or when faced with a piece of art we try to read too much into it. This can mean that we're not really engaged with whatever we're doing. Alternatively, if we get lost in doing something and follow the Holy Spirit, we might gain real enjoyment from whatever it is that God wants to show us. Like children playing – they have no concept of the next thing on the agenda or what someone else might be thinking. This is what it's like to get lost in creating a piece of visual art, or looking at one, and to be led by the Spirit.

Maybe it's not visual things that enable you to be led by the Spirit, maybe it's reading or writing, maybe it's gardening, maybe it's music, maybe it's something else.

This weekend is the first in what we hope will be a series of events which show how important different art activities are to our well-being. I urge you to make time for whatever it is that is your passion and helps to bring you to that place where you know yourself to be lost in the Spirit. As Jesus promises, it's through this that you will be blessed by God, and you'll be able to experience something that many prophets, kings and wise and smart people have not.

Prayer Pointers

As we celebrate our Festival of the Visual Arts, thank God for art, music, books and hobbies that help us to put aside the cares of the world and immerse ourselves in beauty and creativity. Pray for Bromley Mind and the Bethlem Gallery.

Pray for our Government and all in authority, local and national, in our country. Pray for stability and for those having to choose a new Prime Minister that the person elected may champion the truth and serve with integrity and a concern for the poor.

Pray for young people coming to the end of the school and further education year and for all those waiting for exam results that will determine their next steps. For all those leaving education and stepping out into the world with its uncertainty and their own uncertainty.

Pray for the people of Zimbabwe – for peace in the run-up to the general election there next Summer, especially in the capital Harare, and for those suffering from Covid there as cases have started to rise again. Pray for the Government of the country as they battle rising inflation.

Pray for families and households who are struggling in poor housing conditions and for those facing eviction by their landlords. Hold before God all those in local authorities and housing associations who manage social housing.

Hold before God all those we know who are sick, especially those suffering from cancer and undergoing treatment. In our congregations we pray for those struggling with ill health – especially Vicky Pearce, Mike East, Pat Allegacone, Jane Smith, Graham Stone, Daphne Dack, John and Anita Curtis – and those known to God alone.

Pray for all who have died recently, especially Brian Walsh, father of Deborah Howell, and for all who we have loved and yet see no longer. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Offer our own personal prayers and thanksgivings. We entrust to God 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.