

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

2nd April 2023: Palm Sunday

Hazel writes:

The **Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call** is raising money for projects that work to improve mental health and well-being. Our offertory next week will go towards the appeal, but you can donate by cash in boxes in both churches from this Sunday or via the Diocese of Southwark website at www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall, where there is also information on the projects being supported. This is also displayed in both of the churches for those who do not have access to the internet.

This week we have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Mary's Church and a joint service at 10am in St Francis' Church.

This is the beginning of Holy Week, so there are also services this week at the following times:

- **Maundy Thursday** (6th April): Holy Communion at 7.30pm in St Mary's.
- **Good Friday** (7th April): Churches Together service at 11am in St Francis', with children's activities happening in the hall;
An Hour at the Cross at 2pm in St Mary's.

Next **Sunday 9th April**, we will have Holy Communion services for Easter Sunday 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.

A **Memorial Service for John Cooper** will be held at The Bluebell Cemetery, Old London Road, Halstead, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 7AE on Monday 3rd April at 3.00 p.m. followed by a gathering nearby. Please contact pcooper746@gmail.com if you are hoping to attend.

Our Youth Club leaders are running an **Easter Egg Hunt** on Saturday 8th of April from 10am to 4pm. The activities and hunt will be available to take part in all day: drop in for however long you like, whenever you like! There will be plenty of games and activities running alongside the Easter Egg Hunt as well as the sale of cakes, tea, and coffee. The link to pre-book tickets (cost of £3) is: <https://www.Ticketsource.co.uk/st-Francis-of-Assisi>. You can turn up any time between 10 am and 3 pm to take part in the activities (pay on the door if you prefer). If you would just like to come along to socialise, we would also love to see you there! Please do invite family, friends and neighbours: all are welcome.

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.

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.

We will be editing **St Francis' Electoral Roll** from 2nd - 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.

A **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@gmail.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.

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 your own alcoholic drinks. Please contact Beryl Bolton 0208 289 8097 or berylbolton@hotmail.com for a ticket if you hope to come 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 – Saturday 20th May. We are hosting a piano recital with Nicholas Austin, followed by afternoon tea at St. Francis Church, Ravenswood Avenue, West Wickham on Saturday 20th May. Timings are: 2.00 - 2.45 pm piano recital with Nicholas Austin and afternoon tea from 2.45 pm - 4.00 pm. Tickets are £6 and are available from Nicky Nightingale on nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk. Many thanks.

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)

A **local Ukrainian woman**, employed at Glebe School, and her adult son are looking for new accommodation. If you know of anyone who would be able to house them in two bedrooms as a sponsor, or who has a two bedroomed property they could rent to

them, please ask them to contact Hazel. They have a caseworker who can help in dealing with all the necessary paperwork under either scenario.

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. These will begin in April.

Church Keys at St. Francis' You may have noticed that the doors to the Church kitchen and the Youth Room have been replaced with stronger more suitable doors. If you were a key holder previously, these will no longer work. PLEASE return the keys to the old doors to David Wada, both Yale and mortice – Thank you. There is a key attached to a wooden block to the Youth Room door in the Kitchen on top of the microwave. Additionally, there is a key to the Kitchen Door hanging on a chain by the door which can be used to unlock the door. The Kitchen Door MUST BE UNLOCKED if the church is in use as this is a Fire Exit. Please do not remove either of these keys from the building as they are used regularly, and the replacement cost is high. Thank you all for your help and support in this matter.

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. Thank you. We will be arranging the Easter flowers from 9.30 a.m. on Saturday 8th April.

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

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as
Messiah:

grant us the faith to know
you and love you,
that we may be found
beside you
on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.

First Reading:

Philippians 2: 5-11

⁵ Let the same mind be in
you that was in Christ
Jesus,⁶ who, though he was
in the form of God, did not
regard equality with God as
something to be
exploited,⁷ but emptied
himself, taking the form of a
slave, being born in human
likeness.

And being found in human
form,⁸ he humbled
himself and became
obedient to the point of
death— even death on a
cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly
exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰ so that at the name of
Jesus every knee should
bend, in heaven and on
earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue should

confess that Jesus Christ is
Lord, to the glory of God
the Father.

Gospel Reading:

Matthew 21: 1-11

When they had come near
Jerusalem and had reached
Bethphage, at the Mount of
Olives, Jesus sent two
disciples,² saying to them,
'Go into the village ahead of
you, and immediately you
will find a donkey tied, and
a colt with her; untie them
and bring them to me.'³ If
anyone says anything to
you, just say this, "The Lord
needs them." And he will
send them immediately.

⁴ This took place to fulfil
what had been spoken
through the prophet,
saying,
⁵ 'Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to
you, humble, and mounted
on a donkey, and on a colt,
the foal of a donkey.'

⁶ The disciples went and did
as Jesus had directed
them;⁷ they brought the
donkey and the colt, and
put their cloaks on them,
and he sat on them.⁸ A very

large crowd spread their
cloaks on the road, and
others cut branches from
the trees and spread them
on the road.⁹ The crowds
that went ahead of him and
that followed were
shouting,
'Hosanna to the Son of
David! Blessed is the one
who comes in the name of
the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest
heaven!'

¹⁰ When he entered
Jerusalem, the whole city
was in turmoil, asking, 'Who
is this?'

¹¹ The crowds were saying,
'This is the prophet Jesus
from Nazareth in Galilee.'

Post Communion Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in
taking the form of a
servant, and in obedience
died on the cross for our
salvation:
give us the mind to follow
you and to proclaim you as
Lord and King, to the glory
of God the Father.

Collect

God our Father,
 your Son Jesus Christ was
 obedient to the end,
 and drank the cup
 prepared for him:
 may we who share his
 table, watch with him
 through the night of
 suffering and be faithful.

First Reading:

Exodus 12: 1-4, 11-14

The LORD said to Moses
 and Aaron in the land of
 Egypt: ² This month shall
 mark for you the
 beginning of months; it
 shall be the first month of
 the year for you. ³ Tell the
 whole congregation of
 Israel that on the tenth of
 this month they are to
 take a lamb for each
 family, a lamb for each
 household. ⁴ If a
 household is too small for
 a whole lamb, it shall join
 its closest neighbour in
 obtaining one; the lamb
 shall be divided in
 proportion to the number
 of people who eat of it.

¹¹ This is how you shall eat
 it: your loins girded, your

sandals on your feet, and
 your staff in your hand;
 and you shall eat it
 hurriedly. It is the
 Passover of the LORD.
¹² For I will pass through
 the land of Egypt that
 night, and I will strike
 down every firstborn in
 the land of Egypt, both
 human beings and
 animals; on all the gods of
 Egypt I will execute
 judgements: I am
 the LORD. ¹³ The blood
 shall be a sign for you on
 the houses where you
 live: when I see the blood,
 I will pass over you, and
 no plague shall destroy
 you when I strike the land
 of Egypt.

¹⁴ This day shall be a day
 of remembrance for you.
 You shall celebrate it as a
 festival to the LORD;
 throughout your
 generations you shall
 observe it as a perpetual
 ordinance.

Gospel Reading:

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

Now before the festival of
 the Passover, Jesus knew
 that his hour had come to
 depart from this world
 and go to the Father.
 Having loved his own who
 were in the world, he
 loved them to the
 end. ² The devil had
 already put it into the
 heart of Judas son of
 Simon Iscariot to betray
 him. And during
 supper ³ Jesus, knowing
 that the Father had given
 all things into his hands,
 and that he had come
 from God and was going
 to God, ⁴ got up from the
 table, took off his outer
 robe, and tied a towel
 around himself. ⁵ Then he
 poured water into a basin
 and began to wash the
 disciples' feet and to wipe
 them with the towel that
 was tied around him. ⁶ He
 came to Simon Peter, who
 said to him, 'Lord, are you
 going to wash my
 feet?' ⁷ Jesus answered,
 'You do not know now
 what I am doing, but later

you will understand.'

⁸ Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.'⁹ Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.'¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you?' ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Very

truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come."³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Post Communion Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament, you have given us the memorial of your passion: grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood, that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruit of your redemption, for you are alive and reign, now and for ever.

REFLECTION - Ken Bryan

We are still in Lent, yet on Palm Sunday we have this hiatus with a triumphant ride into Jerusalem. We are cheering with the crowd recognising the preacher, healer and prophet. Ordinary people swept up in the enthusiasm and excitement of the occasion.

But this is to be short lived with the actions of Jesus and the response of the authorities. And we know where this is leading even if they didn't.

What we see here is:

The determination of Jesus to fulfil his destiny.

The fickleness of people.

And we realise the constancy of God.

Jesus is clear in what he must do to fulfil his destiny. He has been working towards this moment for three years. He has his select group of disciples and there are other close followers. He has taught them either with direct conversations along the way, or by showing them what he could do. Such as healing blindness or withered limbs or even by raising a young girl or Lazarus who seemed to be already dead. And also performing miracles right in front of their eyes like when they were terrified that their boat would sink and he quelled the storm.

Jesus knew his scriptures when he told two of his disciples to go ahead and find a donkey on which he would ride into Jerusalem. He knew that the prophet Zechariah over five hundred years before had written:

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you;

triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey. *Chapter 9, verse 9*

And people did shout aloud. As people had done for kings to show their loyalty, so they threw their cloaks in their path. This was a significant act as many of them were poor and they would only have had one cloak. And after being trampled by a king and his retinue it would not be in great shape. Palm branches being cut down and waved was also as a celebratory sign having been used in the past to cheer and affirm their allegiance to a new king.

This showed how important the crowd felt Jesus to be. They shouted 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'

The crowd were encouraging each other to believe that here with this prophet they had the heir to David's throne that they had been expecting for a thousand years.

They weren't to know that even though he was in David's line, he would be a far different king from what they were expecting.

Crowds as we know can be fickle and can be dangerous. As anyone who has been in a football stadium can testify. Cheering and encouragement can soon turn to anger and abuse. Seemingly ordinary people caught up in the moment. And in worse cases there is violence, which can see many people joining in who didn't even know how or why it started.

And here we have today's 'Hosanna' changing to 'Crucify' in only a few days. The cheering turning to anger.

But it was not only the crowd who would be fickle. The disciples too.

From Judas - a chosen disciple - there was to be a betrayal, to Peter's moment of fear for himself, saying 'I don't know the man you're speaking of'.

The other disciples too, are fickle in their response to Jesus. They were quick to express words of confident faith, saying: 'Lord, I believe! I will follow you wherever you go. Though others fall away, I never will'. A confident faith. Yet the words weren't able to carry the truth that they intended. For they would fall away, all of them. When it was all going wrong, their confident faith would let them down.

So here we have the crowds who were fickle and the disciples who were also fickle.

What about us? Can we be fickle in our response to Jesus? 'I will offer up my life,' we are happy to sing, but some days we may not manage to offer up a couple of minutes of prayer, and certainly not anything as comprehensive as our lives.

In Holy Week we're invited to acknowledge the fragility and fickleness of our faith too. Like the crowd, like the disciples, we are fickle too.

During all this Jesus knew that God was a constant in his life and would be always with him as he approached his destiny.

As Jesus journeyed to the cross, he was surrounded by some of the worst characteristics of humanity; the greed of Judas, the arrogance of Peter, the cowardice of Pilate, and the jealousy of the High Priest. Yet he continued in complete obedience to his heavenly father, to fulfil his mission. 'It is finished,' he said.

But God was with Jesus now and through the dreadful week, even with the people in their different moods.

Holy Week points us again and again to a God who is faithful, who will continue to reach out to us in love, though our response to Him may be half-hearted and fickle.

The journey through Holy Week and towards Easter is a vital one to make every year. Every year we remember the same events, but every year God speaks to us differently through them. Every year there are new resonances and parallels in our own lives, new aspects that we hadn't noticed before. As we look, each year, at the darkness of the human failure that surrounded Jesus, it encourages us to understand the depth of God's grace, and the reality of his forgiveness, for them, and for us.

And as we follow Jesus through these events, there's always more to be known, more to be understood, of the price that was paid, the victory that was accomplished, the faithful love that conquered on the cross.

As it says in Philippians Jesus is our Servant king. Not like other kings but humble and he gave himself for humankind by paying the ultimate sacrifice. Yet because he was offering himself up to die, God was constantly with him and raised him so that all should worship him.

Finally can we take a moment to look back at our time through Lent?

During my talk on Ash Wednesday here at St Francis I suggested that we take time to make this Lent a special time.

It is always good to look back and see what has happened.

So do we think that we have heard God's promptings of us during this time?

Do we think God has met us in a new way?

Have we let go of something to make space for a positive activity? I know I have found this difficult.

Have we done something new? I know the Home Groups have spent time considering “God on Mute” which has been very challenging. In our group discussions there has been a lot of opening up of things rarely spoken about.

And have we found time to pray more? To make time for God in prayer. As Jesus said ‘where your treasure is, there your heart will be also’.

We now come into Holy Week with all its events leading up to the crucifixion and finally the resurrection. May the final days of Lent be prayerful and thoughtful for you and may we know that God is constantly with us in all that we go through. And may we all celebrate the risen Jesus on Easter Day.

Amen

Prayer Pointers

In this coming Holy Week, pray that we may be faithful, not fickle like the crowd on Palm Sunday. Pray that we may stand at the foot of the cross having walked with you the way of sadness.

In our benefice give thanks for the groups who studied the Unanswered Prayer course and for the skill of the group leaders. Pray that those going through hard times may find some answers to their questions about prayer.

In the Southwark Diocesan Prayer Cycle, pray for the congregation of St John the Evangelist, Angell Town – their Vicar, Robert Faulkner; their Assistant Priests, Funke Ogbede and Ivelaw Bowman and their Pastoral Auxiliary, Hannah Abiri.

After yet another week of violence on the streets of London pray for the families of those injured and murdered. Pray for peace on the streets and for those responsible for bringing the perpetrators to justice.

As we think during Holy Week of the people in power at Jesus’ arrest and trial, pray for wisdom in those who seek to lead us nationally and locally. Pray for honesty and strength in those now having to change the culture in the Metropolitan Police.

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, grieving 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 Christ crucified. Pray especially for Stuart Froment, Joyce Town, Margaret Creedon, John Cooper and Mary Gearing 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.