

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

30th April 2023: 4th Sunday of Easter

Hazel writes:

In June 2020 we held a couple of vision meetings which started the process of considering how we might work more closely together as two churches in a united benefice. In May 2021, the outcome of discussions within our Vision Group were set out with four headings for our activities, helping us to connect to Jesus and live the abundant life that he offers. As well as Brian's own personal experiences that he sets out in his sermon which will follow shortly, this week has been a great illustration of how these areas of activity are beginning to produce fruit two years on and I thought I'd share some aspects with you:

Compassion: we have strong links with the Bromley Borough Foodbank and one member of our community who always buys items on their 'wanted' list sent me a message asking if I could encourage others to do so too, as they are going to be away for some time. Please do bring items to St Francis' Church or the Vicarage, to maintain the generosity of our community.

Community: Last week a group of nine young children met for the first time at St Francis' on a Sunday morning as a Squirrel Drey – a new group within our scout group. It was also the first Sunday when Hope Church met at St Mary's in the Youth Hall, with their children's work in the main hall, so maintaining our close link with another church in West Wickham.

Commerce: we had two enquiries from potential new users of the hall and church at St Francis' on Thursday and our conversations were very encouraging. Please continue to pray for a solution to be found to our hall bookings manager vacancy at St Mary's.

Congregation: on Saturday 29th April I baptised Matilda Derham, so continuing a connection with the Teare family, following a wedding and Freddie's baptism in the past four years. Next week I will be introducing a new member of our community, The Ven. Carol Coslett, who will be joining as a third member of clergy. Carol has recently moved to West Wickham to take on a role with The Diocese of Southwark. Please do come to our joint service and/or the coronation lunch to meet with Carol and find out more.

This week we have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

Next **Sunday 7th May**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Francis' Church and a special joint service to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III at

10am in St Mary's Church. This will be followed by celebratory drinks and, for those who have booked a place, the Coronation Lunch will happen in the same place starting at 12noon.

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 **West Wickham Village Day** in Blake Park is on Monday 1st May. If you can help with setting up marquees early in the day or interacting with families during the day in our Messy Church space, please sign up on the sheets in the church buildings.

Coronation Celebration Get-together is on 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. The cost is £10 a head (£5 for children under 14). All food, tea, coffee and soft drinks will be provided but please bring your own alcoholic drinks. Contact Beryl Bolton 0208 289 8097 or berylbolton@hotmail.com for a ticket and payment must be made at time of booking. Numbers must be in by **Monday 1st May** to allow time for organising amounts of food etc.

There are signup sheets in the vestibule at St. Mary's asking for help with decorating and setting up the hall at **2.00 p.m. on Saturday 6th May** for the coronation lunch, and also for Sunday for help during and after the lunch. Thank you.

Thy Kingdom Come is a worldwide prayer initiative for which we will have resources available in the churches very soon. It begins on Ascension Day, Thursday 18th May, when we will be joining with other churches in our deanery for a **Communion service** in St George's Church in Shirley at 7.30pm. It ends on Pentecost Sunday when we will join with other churches in West Wickham for a **service and the Churches Together AGM** in West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church on Sunday 28th May at 6pm. There will also be a whole **day of prayer activity** on Saturday 27th May. More details to follow.

Mike East's funeral service will be on **Thursday 11th May** at 11am in St Francis' Church. More details to follow.

We are hosting a **fundraising concert** on Friday 12th May in St Francis' Church. The show begins at 7.45pm and will feature performers from current West End shows raising money for Christian Aid and their DEC Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal. Doors open at 7pm. There will be a bar and a raffle with a chance to win two tickets to a West End show. Tickets at £15 from: <https://stjohnsww.churchsuite.com/events/msbi17vmc>.

St Francis' APCM will be held on Sunday 14 May following the service at 10.45am where the Churchwardens and members of the PCC will be elected. Please do join us as we look back at the past year at St Francis'.

Our next **Women's Event** is on Tuesday May 16th at 8pm in St Mary's Church Hall. As this is during Christian Aid week, we will be doing a follow up from our service on Sunday 14th with a discussion on the video and a fun, pea-themed quiz. We will also be sharing in pea soup and other refreshments during the evening.

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 for the piano recital with Nicholas Austin and afternoon tea from 2.45 pm - 4.00 pm. Tickets are £6 and if you would like to come along, please email Nicky Nightingale on nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk to reserve a ticket. Many thanks.

Answers to last week's quiz:

1. St George was born in Turkey.
2. The quote *"Follow your spirit; and upon this charge, cry – God for Harry! England and Saint George!"* is from King Henry V.
3. Many other countries have St George as their Patron Saint, including Lithuania.
4. St George died in 303 and was made a saint in 494.
5. St George is said to have died in Lydda (now called Lod), which is in Israel.
6. William Shakespeare was born and died on St George's Day. Both William Wordsworth and Boris Yeltsin also died on St George's Day.
7. The Roman Catholic cathedral at Southwark is dedicated to St George.
8. Both Queen Elizabeth II and King George III are buried in St George's Chapel, Windsor, but Queen Victoria is buried at Frogmore.

Rotary want help **making hats for babies** in Ukraine (please use cotton or acrylic, not wool). If you'd like more information, please email babyhats@sent.com (including links to possible knitting or crochet patterns).

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 8777 1470).

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.

St. Mary's need someone to take over **hall bookings** 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 to find out more what is required. Jackie will still do any purchasing for the hall but needs to hand over the administration of all hall bookings. This is mostly a home-based position working with the computer. There is a team of volunteers to lock and unlock the hall. Please give this serious thought as this is a very important position for our church as the hall provides much needed finances.

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require squash/cordial, cooking sauce, hot and cold meat tins, canned tomatoes, UHT fruit juice and washing up liquid. 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 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, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father.

First Reading:

Acts 2: 42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their

number those who were being saved.

Gospel Reading:

John 10: 1-10

'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.

³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.' ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came

before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Post Communion Prayer

Merciful Father, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd, and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again: keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

REFLECTION – Brian Griffiths – to follow

Prayer Pointers

Thank God for the communities of St Mary's and St Francis' – for the fellowship and kindness we find in our churches. Pray for closer bonds between our two churches and for God's blessing on all the outreach we offer to the wider community in West Wickham.

Pray for healing of the divisions in the Church of England especially over same sex relationships. Pray that all may be included in every church community – that we may truly be one in Christ.

In the Southwark Diocesan Prayer Cycle, pray for the congregation of St Luke, West Norwood, their Vicar Donald Davis and for St Luke's CofE School

Hold before God particular places of conflict and pain to you this week. Pray for the people of Sudan, Ukraine, Yemen, and other places of conflict no longer in the news.

Pray for those in need of your comfort and sustaining love right now. Pray for those who are ill, in sadness or in confusion. 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 and Caroline Morris – and those known to God alone.

Hold before God all those who have died. Pray especially for Peter Tilling, Nina Tilling, Robbie Georgel, Pam Faull, George Verwer and Mike East 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.

A Prayer in Coronation Week (from the United Reformed Church)

Eternal God, you order and govern our world and all that is therein. Bless, we pray, Charles and Camilla as they are crowned and anointed, that amid the pomp and ritual, they may feel your loving presence, that they may fulfil the roles prescribed for them, and that we may, in this kingdom, be better governed, and always reminded of your eternal Kingdom which is to come.

Amen.