

# **ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI WEST WICKHAM PARISH MAGAZINE**



**June/July 2023**

**50 pence**

**THE CHURCH OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI**  
**RAVENSWOOD AVENUE**  
**WEST WICKHAM KENT BR4 0PW**

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# REGULAR SERVICES

## SUNDAY

**8.00 am Holy Communion**

*1st Sunday varies - See calendar for details*

3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays at St Mary's Church, The Avenue

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays at St Francis' Church

**10.45 am Parish Communion**

Activities for younger children (aged 3+) and crèche facilities in church

**10.45 am 2nd Sunday – Morning Worship**  
(non–Eucharistic)

**10.00 am First Sunday – Joint Family Communion**  
with St Mary's, held alternately at each church  
*See calendar for details*

## WEDNESDAY

**9.30 am Morning Prayer**

**10.30 – 11.30am Church open for quiet and prayer**

# LETTER FROM HAZEL

Dear friends,

Each week at the end of our service of communion, people are sent out with the words 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord'. Having listened to and worshipped God in the service, he is then sending us out into the world to carry out his work or mission. This model of firstly listening to God (or spending time with Jesus), and then being involved in mission, indicates what it is to be a Christian – you cannot do one without the other:

- Taking part in church and community-based activities without spending time with Jesus is good, but it's not Christ-like. Jesus himself spent time in prayer to give himself spiritual sustenance for the teaching and healing that he did. Without that time with God our activities will be what we want to do, rather than what God has in mind.
- Likewise, just coming to church on a Sunday and having one's own prayer time, without taking that faith into the community, your family or the workplace, is to be very insular and not Christ-like at all.

It's like breathing – you have to breathe in and breathe out to stay alive. You have to take in God's word and go out on God's mission to remain a Christian. In all his letters to the early churches St Paul never told them that their task was to increase their numbers, but they were told to live as Christians (i.e., be like Christ).

At our recent APCM meetings, I talked about how we might bring more of a balance to our Martha and Mary characteristics in life. If you remember, in the bible passage (Luke 10: 38-42), Martha rushes around to prepare food and possibly places for Jesus and his friends

to stay, while her sister, Mary, sits at Jesus' feet listening to what he has to say. Both the resting and the working are necessary in life, but it can be difficult to strike the right balance, as anyone who has struggled with finding an appropriate work/life balance will know.

I don't always get it right myself, but I am constantly trying to change the balance in what I do. I'd like to share with you something of my sabbatical to illustrate this. I gained much learning about living a contemplative life and have seen benefits arising from living in this way since that time. I have set a date to do this in early June – see page 18.

Living as a Christian is not easy - living a life of faith outside the church buildings is not something we talk about much. There needs to be a balance between time with those from the churches, time with God and time with other friends and family. Finding a greater connection between what happens on a Sunday morning and what happens during the rest of the week might help us in achieving our Vision to have an abundant life connected to Jesus through compassion, community, commerce and congregation.

I have started to speak of some of the connections between this vision and what is happening in our community and West Wickham in my pew sheet messages. I hope that this will give pointers about where we are partnering with God in his mission when we are sent out after the service on a Sunday morning, so making us a kingdom-centred culture rather than a church-centred one.

*Hazel*



Go in peace to  
LOVE & SERVE  
the Lord

# CALENDAR FOR JUNE

## **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>**

8.00 a.m.

### **TRINITY SUNDAY**

Holy Communion at St. Mary's

*Hilary Fife*

10.00 a.m.

Joint Service at St. Francis' with livestream

*Hilary Fife/Brian Griffiths*

## **Friday 9<sup>th</sup>**

3.45 p.m.

Messy Church at St. Marys

*Messy Church Team*

## **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>**

Prayer Event at St Mary's 10 a.m. – 12 noon

## **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup>**

### **1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY – St. Barnabas**

8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Richard Ford*

9.15 a.m.

Morning Praise at St. Mary's with livestream

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Ken Bryan*

10.45 a.m.

Morning Worship at St. Francis'

*Richard Ford/Brian Griffiths*

## **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>**

St. Mary's Garden Party 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

## **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>**

### **2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Ken Bryan*

9.15 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's with livestream

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Ken Bryan*

10.45 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Richard Ford/Carol Coslett*

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>**

1.00 p.m.                      Baptism at St. Mary's  
*Hazel O'Sullivan*

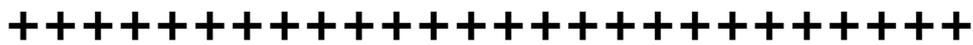
**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>**

**3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.                      Holy Communion at St. Francis'  
*Hazel O'Sullivan/Brian Griffiths (by video)*

9.15 a.m.                      Holy Communion at St. Mary's with livestream  
*Hazel/Ken Bryan/Brian Griffiths (by video)*

10.45 a.m.                     Holy Communion at St. Francis'  
*Carol Coslett/Brian Griffiths*



**CALENDAR FOR JULY**

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.                      Holy Communion at St. Francis'  
*Richard Ford*

10.00 a.m.                     Joint Service at St. Mary's with livestream  
*Hazel O'Sullivan/Richard Ford/Ken Bryan*

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup>**

Comedy Night at St Francis' – 7.30 p.m.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>**

**5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.                      Holy Communion at St. Francis'  
*Hazel O'Sullivan*

9.15 a.m.                      Morning Praise with livestream  
*Hazel O'Sullivan/Richard Ford*

10.45 a.m.                     Morning Worship at St. Francis'  
*Hazel O'Sullivan/Brian Griffiths*

3.00 p.m.                      Healing service at St. Francis'

*Richard Ford/Debbie Adams*

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup>**

3.45 p.m.

Messy Church at St. Mary's

*Messy Church Team*

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>**

West Wickham Choir Performance at St. Francis

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>**

**6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's

*Hazel O'Sullivan*

9.15 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's with livestream

*Hazel O'Sullivan*

10.45 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Richard Ford/Brian Griffiths*

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Carol Coslett*

9.15 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's with livestream

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Brian Griffiths (by video)*

10.45 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Carol Coslett/Brian Griffiths*

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>**

**8<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY**

8.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Ken Bryan*

9.15 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Mary's with livestream

*Hazel O'Sullivan/Ken Bryan*

10.45 a.m.

Holy Communion at St. Francis'

*Richard Ford/Mike Jeggo*

# READINGS FOR JUNE & JULY

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Reader</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> June</b>	2 Corinthians 13: 11-end Matthew 28: 16-end	James Pitt-Payne Hilary Fife
<b>11<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Special readings for Morning Praise	David Wada
<b>18<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Exodus 19: 2-8a Romans 5: 1-8 Matthew 9: 35 – 10: 8	Valerie Hamilton Carol Coslett
<b>25<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Jeremiah 20: 7-13 Romans 6: 1b -11 Matthew 7: 6, 12-14	Gill Kehoe Brian Griffiths
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	Jeremiah 28: 5-9 Romans 6: 12-end Matthew 10: 40-end	Miriam Richards Richard Ford
<b>9<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Special readings for Morning Praise	TBA
<b>16<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Isaiah 55: 10-13 Romans 8: 1-11 Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23	TBA Hazel O'Sullivan
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> July</b>	Isaiah 44: 6-8 Romans 8: 12-25 Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43	TBA Brian Griffiths
<b>30<sup>th</sup> July</b>	1 Kings 3: 5-12 Romans 8: 26-39 Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52	TBA Mike Jeggo

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## June

### **St. Mary's Garden Party**

Our annual Garden Party/BBQ will be held on **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June from 11am – 3pm**. The BBQ will be served between 12 noon – 2pm. Enjoy your BBQ with a glass of chilled PIMMS, cold beer or a hot cup of tea/coffee. Join us for some homemade cakes, get your summer plants, browse through the book stall whilst the children delve into the toys stall or have fun on the bouncy castle and various games. Muddy Boots will be on site during the day.

### **Hayes Symphony Orchestra**

The Hayes Symphony Orchestra have a concert at St Francis' on **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June** at 7.30 p.m. The theme of this concert is **British Sounds** with pieces by Coleridge-Taylor, the 'London' Symphony by Haydn and Vaughan Williams' 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony. You can get tickets here: <https://hayes.makingmusicplatform.com/Summer23> or on the door.

## July

### **Community Lunch**

The Community Lunch is on **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July** at 12.30 p.m. in the hall. Please contact Barbara Goodchild on 020 8777 8782 or [goodchild854@gmail.com](mailto:goodchild854@gmail.com) if you wish to join us.

## **Comedy Night**

This will be held at St Francis' Church on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July**. Doors open at 7pm with a bar available.

## **Trip to the National Gallery**

The **National Gallery** in London is hosting the first major UK **art exhibition** to explore **Saint Francis of Assisi's** life and legacy. This free exhibition looks at why this saint is a figure of enormous relevance to our time due to his spiritual radicalism, commitment to the poor, and love of God and nature, as well as his powerful appeals for peace, and openness to dialogue with other religions.

We are planning to travel up by train to Charing Cross on **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July** for this exhibition which will give an opportunity to see how Saint Francis has captured the imagination of artists through the centuries from some of the earliest medieval panels, relics and manuscripts to modern-day films and a Marvel comic. More information will follow, but if you are especially interested in joining the group, please speak with Richard Ford.

## **Healing Service**

We will be holding a Healing Service on **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July at 3pm** in St Francis' Church. This will be an opportunity to come and rest in God's presence. Although this may help with physical healing, it can also help with finding peace in a complicated world and with emotional, spiritual and mental matters. It would be most unusual if you thought you needed no help at all in these areas.

## **Children's Society Cake and Coffee Morning**

On **Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023** between 10.00-12.00 noon, the Children's Society Cake and Coffee Morning will be held in the Large Hall at St Francis. Delicious home-made cakes for sale. Coffee and biscuits, children's amusements, "Guess the weight of the Cake", 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.*

## **Lunchtime Concerts at St. Francis**

Spring means a new season of lunchtime concerts to be held in St. Francis church, and as usual, we have a varied programme of music to be enjoyed; we will be welcoming pianists, a guitarist, a singer and a small orchestra. The dates to note in your diaries are all Thursdays: June 15<sup>th</sup>, July 13<sup>th</sup>, August 17<sup>th</sup> and either 21<sup>st</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> September (which one is to be confirmed by Langley Park school). Let's make up a full audience for these talented musicians! The concerts commence at 12.45 pm, and as usual tea and coffee will be available before the concerts. Friends and colleagues are all welcome too!

*Jean Mathers*

## **West Wickham Choir Concert**

The Summer West Wickham Choir concert is at 7.30 p.m. on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July** at St. Francis Church. The programme will include "Hiawatha's Wedding Feast" and Songs from "Jesus Christ Superstar". Please watch the pew sheet for details of tickets.

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# PAST EVENTS

## **St. George's Supper - Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

Dennis and I had never been to a St. George`s Day Supper before, so we made enquiries about what to expect. We were told about a choice of Starter-prawn or melon. We were told about roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. We were told about trifle and coffee and choc mints but we were not told how good the meal would be. Everything was perfect.

We were not told that the hall and table would be decorated and how that would add to the pleasure of the evening. We were not told about the Quiz about St George which made us think. We were told that appropriate songs would be sung but we were not told how enjoyable that would be.

So, just in case you are thinking about attending next year, I am letting you know now!

With special thanks to Paul and Michelle Graydon for preparing and cooking the meal and to Rebecca Graydon and Matt Thompson for serving us so beautifully. Thanks also to Geoff for playing the piano for our sing-along and to those who set up the hall.

*Jean Pogose*

## **Coronation Weekend: 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> May**

After many months of intense preparation, organisation discussions and rehearsing every detail the Coronation Day arrived. The Mall was packed with thousands of people from all walks of life, from several days beforehand, new friendships were formed, and old ones renewed. There was an air of excitement and anticipation of the imminent

parade. Eventually the procession started followed by the coach carrying the King and Queen and was greeted by loud cheers and applause.

Westminster Abbey was opened very early in order that the many guests could be seated in good time. They enjoyed some beautiful music and the choristers while they waited.

On arrival at The Abbey, the King was greeted by many dignitaries. He processed slowly along the aisle where he was greeted by a confident young choirboy. The Service was full of Pageantry and historical procedures dating back several centuries. Leaders from many Faiths took part in the Service, including a Gospel Choir. After the Crowning, Prince William, Prince of Wales, vowed allegiance to his father. During the Service the theme was that the King was coming to serve rather than be served.

The return journey to the Palace with Princess Anne, Gold Stick in Waiting, riding behind the King's coach, and the Royal Children waving enthusiastically to the crowds received rapturous cheers from the crowds in spite of the wet weather. The crowd surged down the Mall to see the 'Working Royals' on the balcony and waited for the Red Arrows fly past in perfect formation as usual.

Sunday was a beautiful day ideal for the Palace Lunch which was attended by invited guests. Some had tickets, but many were chosen for their Community Service. The evening Concert at Windsor contained something for everyone, music, drama, and ballet. It was delightful to see Prince George and Princess Charlotte enjoying the proceedings, while Prince William gave a moving tribute to his father.

St Mary's hosted a most appetising Buffet Lunch for about fifty people. Ann, Gifty, and their team did a wonderful job of decorating the Hall and organising the food, various sandwiches, cold meats, quiches, coleslaw and crisp salad followed by delicious desserts and fresh fruit. There was a very happy & friendly atmosphere. Thank you to all concerned.

On Monday, The Royals and their children were out in the Community painting, digging, and generally helping by volunteering and serving as they promised, a wonderful example to us all.

*Merri Womack*



# PRAYER

## June

**4<sup>th</sup>  
Trinity** Praise the Lord, who has revealed himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**11<sup>th</sup>  
St. Barnabas** Pray for all who travel the world to spread the Christian faith.

**15<sup>th</sup>  
Corpus Christi** We give thanks today for Jesus' gift to us of Holy Communion.

**24<sup>th</sup>  
St. John, Baptist** Lord, help us, like John, to bear witness to you and the coming of your Kingdom.

**29<sup>th</sup>  
SS Peter and Paul** Pray that we may have same qualities of faith, courage and devotion as we serve God.

### The Free Forgiveness of God

**LET US GIVE THANKS** to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For in our union with Christ he has blessed us by giving us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world. Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his, through our union with Christ, so that we would be holy and without fault before him.

Because of his love, God had already decided that through Jesus Christ, he would make us his children. This was his pleasure and purpose. Let us praise God for his glorious grace; for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son! For by the blood of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God, which he gave to us in such large measure.

*Ephesians 1: 3-8a*

# FOCUS

## July

**3<sup>rd</sup>** When we are unsure, help us to trust – when we  
**St. Thomas** can't see ahead, help us to keep going.

**22<sup>nd</sup>** May we also proclaim the Good News that JESUS IS  
**St. Mary Magdalene** ALIVE!

**25<sup>th</sup>** Pray that we both listen and are obedient to Christ's  
**St. James** calling to us.

**29<sup>th</sup>** Let us be as quick to spend time at the feet of Jesus  
**SS Martha & Mary** as we are to actively serve him.

### **Peace for a Suffering World**

God's love and compassion never fails; we bring before him in prayer the people of war-torn countries especially thinking of Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and Ukraine: - Lord, may you bless the work of all who are seeking to help bring peace and healing to our world; all who are working to restore unity and harmony among nations.

We pray for all who are homeless, thinking of those who have been made refugees by war and oppression. We think of and pray for those who sleep rough and who sleep out in our towns and cities. Please give them your comfort, Lord.

Grant that we who live secure in this insecure world, may be generous in caring for our displaced brothers and sisters.

We ask in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

# RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL EVENTS DATES

## 2023 DIARY

### June

- 4<sup>th</sup> Joint service at St Francis' (Trinity Sunday) – 10am
- 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Matchbox performances
- 10<sup>th</sup> Prayer Event at St Mary's – 10am
- 11<sup>th</sup> Non-eucharistic: St Barnabas
- 15<sup>th</sup> Lunchtime Concert at St Francis – 12:45pm
- 17<sup>th</sup> St Mary's Garden Party

### July

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint service at St Mary's – 10am
- 2<sup>nd</sup> St Francis' Community Lunch – 12:30pm
- 7<sup>th</sup> Comedy night at St Francis'
- 8<sup>th</sup> Trip to the National Gallery – St Francis' exhibition
- 9<sup>th</sup> Healing Service at St Francis – 3pm
- 13<sup>th</sup> Lunchtime concert at St Francis – 12:45pm
- 15<sup>th</sup> West Wickham Choir performance at St Francis
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Coffee & Cake for Children's Society at St Francis – 10am
- 30<sup>th</sup> Mike & Liz Jeggo at St Francis

### August

- 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Service at St Francis' (Transfiguration) – 10am
- 17<sup>th</sup> Lunchtime Concert at St Francis – 12:45pm

### September

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint service at St Mary's – 10am
- 10<sup>th</sup> Non-eucharistic: Creation Sunday
- 21<sup>st</sup> Lunchtime concert at St Francis – 12:45pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> St Francis' Community Lunch – 12:30pm
- 30<sup>th</sup> Harvest Supper at St Mary's – 7pm

## **October**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Joint service at St Francis – 10am: St Francis' Patronal Sunday (Gift Day)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Pet Service at St Francis
- 7<sup>th</sup> London Concert Chorus concert at St Francis – 7:30pm
- 8<sup>th</sup> All Age Harvest Services
- 8<sup>th</sup> Debbie's licensing Service at Southwark Cathedral 6pm
- 15<sup>th</sup> Joint service at St Mary's – 10am: Celebrating Debbie's Licensing, followed by breakfast
- 29<sup>th</sup> CTWW Bible Sunday service and meeting - 6pm

## **November**

- 5<sup>th</sup> Joint service at St Mary's (All Saints') – 10am
- 5<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service at St Mary's
- 11<sup>th</sup> (TBC) High Street Foodbank collection 10am to 3pm
- 12<sup>th</sup> All-age Remembrance Sunday services
- 24<sup>th</sup> High Street Christmas Lights event at St Francis'
- 25<sup>th</sup> St Mary's Christmas Market
- 30<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec Matchbox performances

## **December**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> The Big Christmas Sing at St Francis' 4pm
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Joint service at St Francis' (Advent Sunday) – 10am
- 4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Festival at St Francis'
- 16<sup>th</sup> Scouts' Carols service at St Mary's
- 17<sup>th</sup> Carol Services
- 17<sup>th</sup> St Francis' Community Lunch – 12:30pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> Christingle service at St Mary's 4pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> Lighting the Lamps service at St Francis' 6pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> Midnight Communion at both churches 11:15pm
- 25<sup>th</sup> Joint service at St Francis – 10am
- 31<sup>st</sup> Joint service at St Mary's – 10am



**This is the greatest thing that we can do:  
form a relationship with God,  
the creator of the universe.**

## **Prayer event with a difference**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June from 10am to 12noon

At St Mary's Church, The Avenue,  
West Wickham

There are many ways to pray. This is an opportunity to try out different things.

If you feel in need of encouragement in prayer, or want to try out something different, this morning is for you. Hazel will also share some of her experiences from her sabbatical.

**All are welcome.**

*St. Francis  
West Wickham Concerts  
presents*



# COMEDY EVENING

*Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023*



*Hosted by*

*Carly Smallman*

'A bundle of energy' - The Sun

*Starring*



*Stefano Paoloni*

Star of Britain's Got Talent.  
'The best voice merchant on  
the live circuit, destined for  
wider exposure' - The Evening  
Standard

*And*



*Alyssa Kyria*

'Sensational' - The Mirror

*Doors: 7.00 pm*

*Performance: 7.30 pm*

*Bar available*

*Advance Tickets: £10 (On the Door: £10)*

*.St. Francis Church Hall, Ravenswood Avenue, West Wickham BR4 0PW*

*Ample free car parking*

*Purchase your tickets using debit/credit card at:*

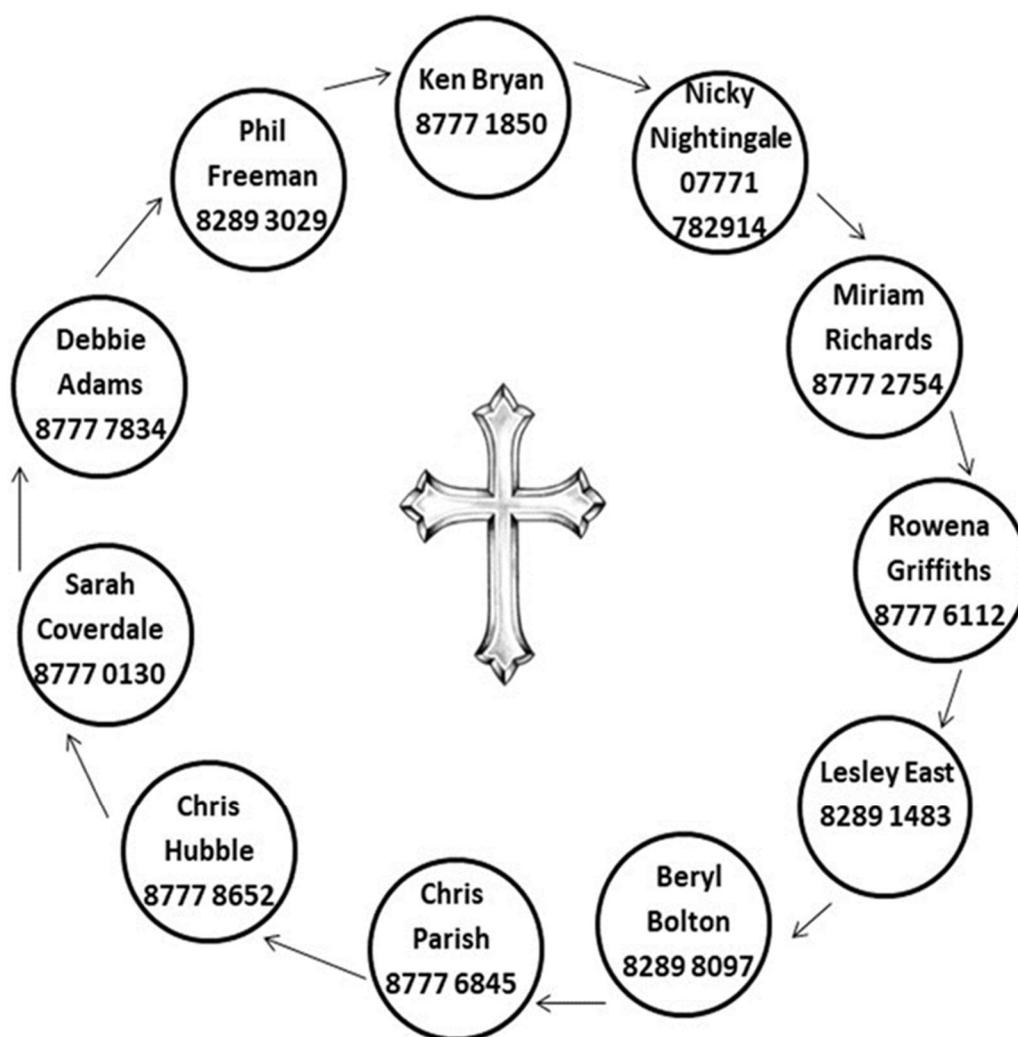
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-francis-of-assisi>



# St Francis and St Mary's Prayer Chain

Many people find they are given strength and peace of mind when they know that they, or their loved ones, are being prayed for. And the more people who are praying for someone, the better!

If you would like prayer for yourself, please call anyone on the chain below and they will pass a message on around the circle. If you like a name added to the intercessions list in our services, (which will be on-line as well as in-person) please state this when you make contact.



## **God on Mute – Lent 2023**

Many people in our congregations have been going through really tough times coping with, amongst other issues, bereavement and illness. It led me to explore how we cope with those difficult situations when God seems far away – when our prayers seem to go unanswered. I did an internet search for the phrase ‘unanswered prayer’ and the first site listed was ‘Prayer Course 2 – Unanswered Prayer’ and the accompanying book ‘God on Mute’ by Pete Greig. He is the founder of the organisation ‘Prayer 24/7’ and, with his wife Sammy, is the pastor of Emmaus Road, a large church with congregations in Guildford, Woking and Aldershot. He wrote ‘God on Mute’ after a particularly traumatic time in his life when his wife was seriously ill. The course and the book seemed to answer many of my questions about unanswered prayer and so the Ministry Team decided that we would use the course for our Lent Groups and a complementary series of sermons.

We began by looking generally at prayer and why God sometimes seems absent or silent during the storms in our lives. In this introduction it was acknowledged that life is messy – it isn’t all plain sailing – even for those with a strong faith. It’s OK to have doubts. Indeed, the opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty. Certainty is missing the point entirely. Faith includes noticing the mess, the emptiness and discomfort, and letting it be there until some light returns.

The other sermons followed Jesus to the cross, embracing themes around Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Day.

### *Maundy Thursday (How I am going to get through this?)*

Jesus must have struggled with this thought when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Yet, he didn't try to avoid it, but surrendered to His Father's will. Jesus wept in the garden and Pete Greig writes that often tears are the best form of prayer.

### *Good Friday (Why have you forsaken me?)*

When Jesus uttered his cry of desperation from the cross, there seemed to be no answer, there was no immediate miracle. In this moment Jesus made it plain for all time the need we have for explanation. 'Why is this happening to me? Why does it appear that you have distanced yourself from me? Why have you abandoned me?' Pain, disappointment, confusion or a sense of abandonment cause us to ask God the ultimate question - 'Why?' It is perfectly right that we should ask that most fundamental question 'Why.' 'Why, when I try to do good do bad things happen to me? And often there's no answer to that question, except that God's world is complicated. It's impossible to answer everyone's prayer and his will might be different to ours (often it's much better in the long run). And sometimes our pain might be because we are having to fight with God against the evil one.

### *Holy Saturday (Where is God when Heaven is silent?)*

Sometimes, silence is part of God's plan for us. However, in the silence there is still room for prayer. God is still there beside us.

### *Easter Sunday (When will my prayers be answered?)*

There are three ways in which our living hope (an answer to unanswered prayer) can come through Christ's resurrection: the understanding that the greater our suffering, the greater our joy; finding something to be thankful for at all times; and using our

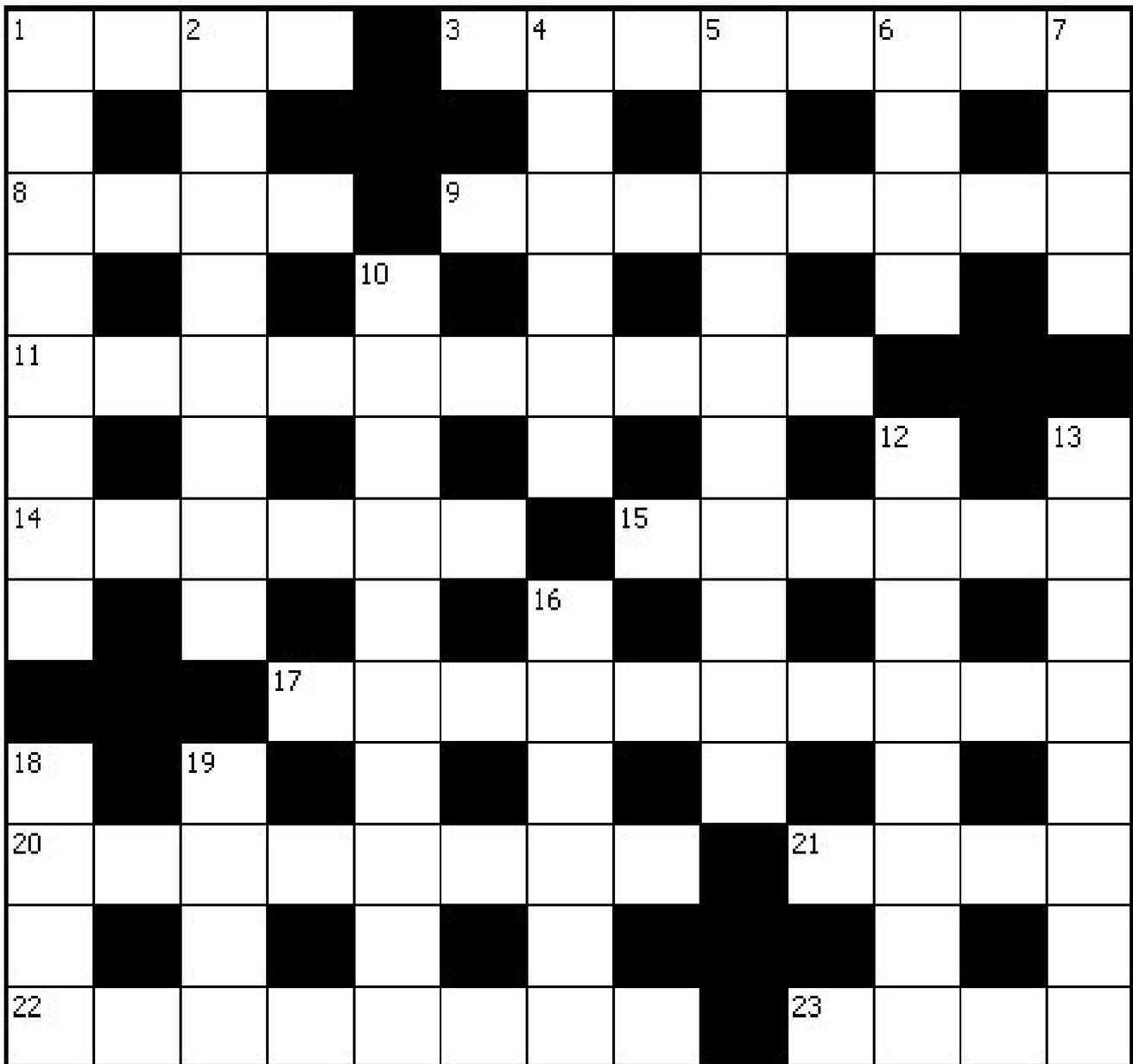
experience to help others and serve God. Seeing unanswered prayer as an opportunity to experience God with us, or to understand him better, or to gain other blessings through helping others or being supported ourselves through difficult times can reveal an answer to prayer, even if the answer is not the one that we've been praying for.

There's a lovely prayer entitled Silent God by Edwina Gateley that expresses how God doesn't abandon us, but is always near even though we may not be aware of his presence:

This is my prayer — That, though I may not see, I be aware  
Of the Silent God who stands by me.  
That, though I may not feel, I be aware  
Of the Mighty Love which doggedly follows me.  
That, though I may not respond, I be aware  
That God—my Silent, Mighty God, waits each day.  
Quietly, hopefully, persistently.  
Waits each day and through each night for me.  
For me—alone.

*Brian Griffiths*

# CROSS WORD GRID



## ***Across***

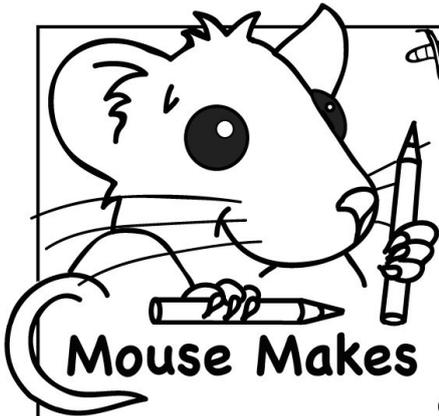
- 1 See 23 Across
- 3 Where the thief on the cross was told he would be, with Jesus (Luke 23:43) (8)
- 8 Invalid (4)
- 9 Blasphemed (Ezekiel 36:20) (8)
- 11 Adhering to the letter of the law rather than its spirit (Philippians 3:6) (10)

- 14 Shut (Ecclesiastes 12:4) (6)  
 15 'This is how it will be with anyone who — up things for himself but is not rich towards God' (Luke 12:21) (6)  
 17 Mary on Isis (anag.) (10)  
 20 Agreement (Hebrews 9:15) (8)  
 21 Native of, say, Bangkok (4)  
 22 Deaf fort (anag.) (5-3)  
 23 and 1 Across 'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of — to work it and take — of it' (Genesis 2:15) (4,4)

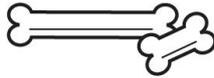
**Down**

- 1 Struggle between opposing forces (Habakkuk 1:3) (8)  
 2 James defined this as 'looking after orphans and widows in their distress and keeping oneself from being polluted by the world' (James 1:27) (8)  
 4 'The one I kiss is the man; — him' (Matthew 26:48) (6)  
 5 'Be joyful in hope, patient in — , faithful in prayer' (Romans 12:12) (10)  
 6 St Columba's burial place (4)  
 7 Swirling current of water (4)  
 10 Loyalty (Isaiah 19:18) (10)  
 12 'God was pleased through the foolishness of what was — , to save those who believe' (1 Corinthians 1:21) (8)  
 13 Camp where the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 men one night (2 Kings 19:35) (8)  
 16 'There is still — — — Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet' (2 Samuel 9:3) (1,3,2)  
 18 David Livingstone was one (4)  
 19 Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (1,1,1,1)

*The NIV bible was used to set the crossword. Answers on page 28*



The Lord said to Moses,  
 "Your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh  
 to let the people of Israel go out of his land...  
 The Egyptians shall know that I AM the Lord  
 when I stretch out my hand against Egypt..."  
 As Pharaoh's heart was hardened against the  
 Israelites, God sent ten plagues upon him...



**1**  
**Water turns to Blood**  
 Which water turned  
 to blood?  
*Read - Exodus 7:19*

D F G B O I L S L  
 L S O O T O P I B  
 A W D P E O P L E  
 N A N I M A L S A

**2**  
**A Swarm of Frogs**  
 In which  
 places were the  
 frogs found?  
*Read - Exodus 8:3-4*

D R S N G N A T S  
 U M I D N I G H T  
 S S T A F F U U O  
 T A A R O N E N O

**3**  
**A Plague of Gnats**  
 When Aaron struck his  
 staff on the ground  
 what became Gnats?  
*Read - Exodus 8:16-17*

D E B K D F S D G  
 T M A N W A T E R  
 M O S E S R W R O  
 C R F S N I L E U

**4**  
**Swarms of Flies**  
 In which land were the  
 flies not be found?  
*Read - Exodus 8:22*

F I R S T B O R N  
 I V O K N L C F D  
 R E G H W O U I E  
 E R S A K O S S A

**5**  
**Death of Animals**  
 Which animals that belonged  
 to the Egyptians died?  
*Read - Exodus 9:2*

H W I N D T H T  
 I L F L I E S E H  
 GOD • PLAGUES • MOSES • AARON  
 WATER • BLOOD • STAFF • RIVER • NILE • FISH  
 FROGS • SWARM • GNATS • DUST • FLIES  
 GROUND • DEATH • ANIMALS • SOOT  
 BOILS • PEOPLE • HAIL • THUNDER • FIRE  
 MAN • BEAST • LOCUSTS • WIND • LAND  
 DARKNESS • FIRSTBORN • MIDNIGHT

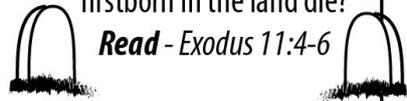
**6**  
**A Break out of Boils**  
 What did Moses throw into  
 the air before boils appeared  
 on people and animals?  
*Read - Exodus 9:10*

**7**  
**A Rain of Hail**  
 What also rained  
 down with the hail?  
 Where did it not hail?  
*Read - Exodus 9:24-26*

**8**  
**A Swarm of Locusts**  
 Where did the wind  
 come from that brought  
 the locusts to the land?  
*Read - Exodus 10:13*

**9**  
**Darkness over the Land**  
 How many days did  
 it remain dark?  
*Read - Exodus 10:21-22*

**10**  
**Death of the Firstborn**  
 At what time would the  
 firstborn in the land die?  
*Read - Exodus 11:4-6*



# Bereavement Support Group



This group meets to share bereavement experiences and to support each other through the grief process, in whatever form might be needed, for however long might be necessary.

**Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month - 2.30 to 4pm**

**The Hewitt Room, Emmanuel Church,**

**The Grove, West Wickham. BR4 9LL**

**For more information, or if you're interested, but can't make the next meeting, please call Hazel on 020-8777-5034**

## ST FRANCIS' PRE-SCHOOL HELD IN THE CHURCH HALL

We are a small, friendly Pre-School and we take children aged between 2 to 5 years.

Contact: Kelly Fiander  
Tel: 07719-397637  
Email: [stfrancispreschool21@gmail.com](mailto:stfrancispreschool21@gmail.com)  
URL: <https://stfrancispreschool.co.uk>



### Answers to Crossword Puzzle

#### Across:

1 care; 3 paradise; 8 null; 9 profaned; 11 legalistic;  
14 closed; 15 stores; 17 missionary;  
20 covenant; 21 Thai; 22 trade-off; 23 Eden

#### Down:

1 conflict; 2 religion; 4 arrest; 5 affliction; 6 Iona;  
7 Eddy; 10 allegiance; 12 preached; 13 Assyrian;  
16 a son of; 18 Scot; 19 DVLA

# **GROUPS & ACTIVITIES AT ST FRANCIS** **CHURCH**

**On the first Saturday of every month** the church is open from 10.30 am to 11.30 am when refreshments are served, and this raises money for Action Aid.

*Contact Barbara Goodchild      8777 8782*

**The Church Halls.** Our main large hall is available for hire. There is also a small hall which can be used in conjunction with the main hall at weekends and during school holidays.

*Bookings Secretary: Liz Raper      8777 2745*

**Church Choir.** The choir helps to lead the singing at Sunday services. It regularly sings anthems and there are special musical services at festivals. Rehearsals: 7.15 pm – 8.15 pm on Thursdays.

*Contact: Geoff Mussard      8650 8389*

**Men's Group.** This meets on the second Monday evening of the month, alternately at St Francis' and St Mary's.

*Contact: Tim Shingler      8402 8286*

**Reading Group.** This meets on the second Thursday morning of the month.

*Contact Rosemary Swatland      8777 7369*

**Matchbox Theatre.** A well-established amateur dramatic society which includes members of St Francis' Church and performs in the church hall, two or three times a year.

*Contact Annie Norris      8651 1775*

# **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN THE CHURCH HALL**

## **Cubs**

Tuesdays from 6.15 pm to 7.45 pm

Contact Kat Hardman .. .. .

[katkahardman@gmail.com](mailto:katkahardman@gmail.com)

## **Scouts**

Fridays from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm

Contact Hilary Moy, Group Scout Leader .. .. . 07961 826814

## **Ravenswood Women's Institute**

Fourth Thursday of the month from 7.45 pm

Contact Barbara Goodchild .. .. . 8777 8782

## **West Wickham Market [Stalls & Refreshments]**

Fridays from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm .. .. . 07712 492854

## **Wednesday Market**

From 9.00 am to 1.00 pm .. .. . 07956 580467

## **Debbie's Dance**

Thursdays from 9.00 am to 10.00 am [debbiesdanceschool@yahoo.com](mailto:debbiesdanceschool@yahoo.com)

## **Sugar Craft & Cake Decorating**

Thursdays at 8.00 pm (Six meetings a year)

*Articles and items for the magazine are always welcome.*

*We are currently looking for a new editor, but if you have any contributions for the next bi-monthly magazine [editions for Dec/Jan, Feb/March, etc], please contact our vicar, Hazel*

*by the second Sunday of the month*