

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

10th March 2024: Mothering Sunday

Hazel writes:

The involvement of so many families in the 7th West Wickham Gang Show and the number of connections between people at Brenda Humphrey's funeral on Thursday has highlighted the strength of **community** here in West Wickham. This is why I am planning a gathering with afternoon tea on Saturday 27th April in the hall at St Francis' from 3pm, as the links between the churches and other organisations will be critical to the continuation of our mission. I hope to get out formal invitations to different groups in the next week or so, but do put the date in your diaries as an opportunity to make your own links with others in the community.

This week we have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Francis' Church, and Mothering Sunday services at 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church where we will be joined by the 7th West Wickham Scout Group.

Next **Sunday 17th March**, we will have Holy Communion services at 8am and 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church. The 9.15am service will be followed by the **St Mary's Annual Parochial Church Meeting**.

We meet to **pray for growth of the Church** on Tuesday mornings between 10-11am at 130, The Avenue. Please contact Jean Pogose for more information: (dennis.pogose@ntlworld.com or 8289-5996).

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.

The **Bereavement Support Group** will meet on Wednesday 13th March at 2.30pm in the Hewitt Room, Emmanuel Church, The Grove. Do encourage anyone who would like to talk about bereavement at this time to come along.

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 next **Community Lunch at St. Francis** will be held on Sunday 17 March between 12.30-2.30pm in St Francis Church Hall - tickets are £8.00 payable in advance from

Barbara Goodchild.

Hazel's final service will be a joint service at **St. Mary's at 10.00 a.m. on Sunday 5th May**. This will be followed by drinks in the vestibule and then a buffet lunch in the Hall. Lists have been posted in both churches for people to sign up if they hope to attend or they can contact Beryl Bolton berylbolton@hotmail.com or 07834983735 at St. Marys and Nicky Nightingale nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk or 07771 782914 to give their names and state whether they are vegetarian, vegan or have a food allergy. Final numbers are required by **Sunday 21st April**. Thank you.

In 2024, the **Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call** is raising money for projects in Zimbabwe and the Diocese of Jerusalem. Our offertory on Easter Sunday will go towards the appeal, but if you would like to donate in the meantime, you can do so via the Diocese of Southwark website at www.southwark.anglican.org/lentcall. There is also more information on the projects and on associated prayer activities in the church buildings if you do not have access to the internet. Please take a pack of information if you would like to and this will be replenished as necessary.

St Mary's are hoping to re-site their **defibrillator machine** outside the hall, so that it is available 24/7. Following a WhatsApp survey, it seems that local residents would be willing to support this project financially, and we have done a door-to-door leaflet drop. Please do take a leaflet if you know of someone else who would like to make a donation, or if you would like to do so yourself. Many thanks.

Gardening at St Francis began on Saturday 2nd March and will continue monthly from 10am to do light gardening, weeding, and trimming of the front and side beds This will run alongside our Action Aid coffee mornings which run 10.30-11.30 am. All welcome: just turn up with your trowel or secateurs. The more people involved the easier it will be. Thank you, Kate and Valerie.

We will continue to collect items for the **Bromley Homeless Starter Pack Scheme** for those starting out in a new home with nothing. Starter packs for families in need include cutlery, crockery, duvet covers (not duvets), pillow slips, tea towels, saucepans, frying pans, bath towel, toothbrushes, etc. Please continue to bring any excess items that you have in cupboards at home.

We have received a certificate of thanks from **Bromley Borough Foodbank** for the donations made during January and February which weighed a total of 83.95kg. Many thanks to all those who have contributed. Please keep the donations coming in by using the boxes outside either the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently they require

tinned vegetables (including potatoes and tomatoes), hot and cold meat tins, cooking sauces, UHT milk, squash, UHT fruit juice, coffee, desserts, washing up liquid and toilet rolls. 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 arrangement under the Madonna in St. Mary's is for Mothering Sunday.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl berylbolton@hotmail.com and items for the websites to Gifty office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk.

Collect

God of love,
 passionate and strong,
 tender and careful:
 watch over us and hold us
 all the days of our life;
 through Jesus Christ our
 Lord.

First Reading:**Proverbs 31:10-31**

A good woman is hard to find, and worth far more than diamonds. Her husband trusts her without reserve, and never has reason to regret it. Never spiteful, she treats him generously all her life long. She shops around for the best yarns and cottons, and enjoys knitting and sewing. She's like a trading ship that sails to faraway places and brings back exotic surprises. She's up before dawn, preparing breakfast for her family and organizing her day. She looks over a field and buys it, then, with money she's put aside, plants a garden. First thing in the morning, she dresses for work, rolls up her sleeves, eager to get started. She senses the worth of her work, is in no hurry to call

it quits for the day. She's skilled in the crafts of home and hearth diligent in homemaking. She's quick to assist anyone in need, reaches out to help the poor. She doesn't worry about her family when it snows; their winter clothes are all mended and ready to wear. She makes her own clothing, and dresses in colourful linens and silks. Her husband is greatly respected when he deliberates with the city fathers. She designs gowns and sells them, brings the sweaters she knits to the dress shops. Her clothes are well-made and elegant, and she always faces tomorrow with a smile. When she speaks she has something worthwhile to say, and she always says it kindly. She keeps an eye on everyone in her household, and keeps them all busy and productive. Her children respect and bless her; her husband joins in with words of praise: "Many women have done wonderful things, but you've outclassed them all!"

Charm can mislead and beauty soon fades. The woman to be admired and praised is the woman who lives in the Fear-of-GOD. Give her everything she deserves! Adorn her life with praises!

Gospel Reading:**John 19:25b – 27**

²⁵ And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Post Communion Prayer

Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

REFLECTION – Richard Ford

To follow.

Prayer Pointers

Remembering that God gave us an example of unconditional love, we give thanks for our parents, families and friends. Thank you for those who care for us, who sit by quietly, supportively and let us make our own mistakes, who are willing to forgive and encourage us.

Pray for those who find Mothering Sunday a difficult day:

- Those who have had difficult experiences of their mother or father, or whose family life is full of conflict, bitterness and recrimination.
- Those who have lost a child, or who are unable to have much-wanted children. We pray for those who struggle to bring up children alone.
- Those who have recently lost their own mother, or whose mother is unwell at this time and so celebrations are not possible.

Pray for those throughout the world who live in difficult conditions, including:

- where there is not enough water or food or shelter; those whose children die of starvation.
- where there is war or conflict, and parents are concerned for their children's safety.
- where children are ill, but there is no medicine to bring them back to full health.

A prayer for the Bishop's Lent Appeal, focussing on hospitals in the Diocese of Jerusalem:

Heavenly Father, we thank you that you care for those experiencing injustice. Your heart hurts for those who are looking for a place of safety and care and you are close to people in pain. Please bring peace to Gaza and all Israel. Thank you that you won't let injustice continue but your justice and righteousness is stronger. Make strong the people working in hospitals across Gaza and Israel. Please would there be enough electricity, medical supplies and people to care for the sick really well. Amen.