

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

24th March 2024: Palm Sunday

Hazel writes:

Matthew Owen raised funds from gifts at his wedding to go on another trip, taking medical supplies in his van to Ukraine, showing real **compassion** for the situation there. Here are some photos.



This week we have Holy Communion services at 8am in St Francis' Church, at 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church. Special services for **Holy Week** happen during the week:

- **Maundy Thursday** (28th March): Holy Communion at 7.30pm in St Francis'.
- **Good Friday** (29th March): Churches Together service at 11am in St Francis'; An Hour at the Cross at 2pm in St Mary's.

Next **Sunday 31st March**, we will have a Holy Communion service at 8am in St Mary's Church, and Easter Family Communion services at 9.15am in St Mary's Church and at 10.45am in St Francis' Church.

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.

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.

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 2 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.

We have a concert with **afternoon tea on Saturday 13th April** at 3pm, when Clara Coslett and Jacqueline Turner will perform a selection of musical theatre songs. Entry will be by ticket only (£6), so that we know how many to cater for. You can get tickets in person at St Francis' Church, or on-line here:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/StFrancis-of-Assisi>.

Our next **Women's Event** is a trip to London to hear Kate Bottley speak at St Paul's Cathedral on Tuesday 16th April at 6.30pm. She will talk about some of the things she's learnt about love, death, forgiveness, loneliness and joy, and why she thinks faith is the key to happiness. The event is free, but you will need to book a ticket:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/have-a-little-faith-tickets-774399338267>. Let Kate Dyer or Hazel know if you're hoping to join us, and we'll make sure that you have the necessary information about travel, and we can get you a ticket if you can't do on-line booking.

St. George's Supper at St. Mary's will take place on **Saturday 20th April** at 7.00 p.m. The cost for a 3-course meal of prawn cocktail/melon, roast beef and all the trimmings, trifle, and coffee is £15, and you must provide your own alcoholic drinks. Places can be booked through Beryl 0208 289 8097 or berylbolton@hotmail.com and will be limited to 40 so book early to avoid disappointment. There will be a raffle and the usual sing-a-long of songs after the meal and any profit will be for church funds.

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 07834 983735) 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.

Gardening at St Francis' will continue on the **first Saturday of each month** from 10am to do light gardening, weeding, and trimming of the front and side beds. This will be 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 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>.

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.

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 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:

Ps 118: 19-29

Open to me the gates of
righteousness, that I may
enter through them and
give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰This is the gate of
the LORD; the righteous shall
enter through it.

²¹I thank you that you have
answered me and have
become my salvation.

²²The stone that the
builders rejected has
become the chief
cornerstone.

²³This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvellous in our eyes.

²⁴This is the day that
the LORD has made; let us
rejoice and be glad in it!

²⁵Save us, we beseech you,
O LORD! O LORD, we
beseech you, give us
success!

²⁶Blessed is the one who
comes in the name of
the LORD. We bless you
from the house of the LORD.

²⁷The LORD is God, and he
has given us light.

Bind the festal procession
with branches, up to the
horns of the altar.

²⁸You are my God, and I will
give thanks to you; you are
my God, I will extol you.

²⁹O give thanks to the LORD,
for he is good, for his
steadfast love endures for
ever.

Gospel Reading:

Mark 11: 1-11

When they were
approaching Jerusalem, at
Bethphage and Bethany,
near the Mount of Olives,
he sent two of his
disciples ²and said to them,
'Go into the village ahead of
you, and immediately as
you enter it, you will find
tied there a colt that has
never been ridden; untie it
and bring it. ³If anyone says
to you, "Why are you doing
this?" just say this, "The
Lord needs it and will send
it back here immediately.'"

⁴They went away and
found a colt tied near a
door, outside in the street.

As they were untying it,
⁵some of the bystanders
said to them, 'What are you
doing, untying the colt?'

⁶They told them what

Jesus had said; and they
allowed them to take
it. ⁷Then they brought the
colt to Jesus and threw
their cloaks on it; and he sat
on it. ⁸Many people spread
their cloaks on the road,
and others spread leafy
branches that they had cut
in the fields. ⁹Then those
who went ahead and those
who followed were
shouting,

'Hosanna! Blessed is the
one who comes in the name
of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming
kingdom of our ancestor
David! Hosanna in the
highest heaven!

¹¹Then he entered
Jerusalem and went into
the temple; and when he
had looked around at
everything, as it was
already late, he went out to
Bethany with the twelve.

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:**1 Cor. 11:23-26**

²³ For I received from
the Lord what I also
handed on to you,
that the Lord Jesus
on the night when he
was betrayed took a
loaf of bread, ²⁴ and
when he had given
thanks, he broke it
and said, 'This is my
body that is for you.
Do this in
remembrance of me.'

²⁵ In the same way he
took the cup also,
after supper, saying,
'This cup is the new
covenant in my

blood. Do this, as
often as you drink it,
in remembrance of
me.'

²⁶ For as often as you
eat this bread and
drink the cup, you
proclaim the Lord's
death until he comes.

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.

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

Here we are on Palm Sunday. Looking back to that day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and wondering what all the people of the time must have made of it. And what it means for us now.

My 10-year-old grandson told me this week that they had religion on Wednesday. I asked which religion, and he said Christianity which surprised and pleased me. He said they always do Christianity coming up to Easter, so they have the full Easter Story. He said that they were to make a strip cartoon of the events of Holy Week which I thought was a novel way of helping the children engage with all that went on.

He related some of the things that he had remembered and said he was pleased that they were doing it again as he had not remembered all that happened in Holy Week.

And so for all of us to revisit the events of Holy Week is a good thing to hear again and find something new in what we hear.

By the way we might be wise when talking to children to talk of the 'events' rather than 'tell the story'. They hear so many stories that are fiction, so we don't want them thinking that we are telling them just another story of fiction, but these are things that actually happened.

So what did happen? Let us take ourselves back to that time on a hot and dusty path some half a mile outside Jerusalem.

Jesus and his disciples were on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus knew why they were taking this most dangerous path. The disciples were following him, but probably a little confused and hesitant. At one moment excited and yet at another terrified at the possible outcome.

Jesus knew what he was doing, he knew his scriptures. He knew that the prophet Zechariah over five hundred years before had written:

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 colt, the foal of a donkey.

Chapter 9 verse 9

He told two of his disciples to go ahead and find a donkey on which he would ride into Jerusalem. They must have been confused and wondered what they would find in the nearby village and how they might be treated. It makes me think of how we feel when we do something for Jesus which is out of our normal activities. Are we doing the right thing and are we nervous of the outcome?

Can we imagine going into a farming village looking for a particular donkey. A place you don't know with people you have not met before. How would that make you feel? They just went ahead in faith and found a donkey as Jesus had described. The villagers seemed to know what was happening although not knowing these two disciples.

They return with the donkey and then they throw their cloaks on it when they see that Jesus intends to ride on it. What a strange sight he must have made but they try to make the best of it for him. They use their cloaks as they did not have a proper saddle which any self-respecting person would use, and certainly one who was going to ride into the city. It is hardly looking like the hymn we sing, 'Ride on, ride on in Majesty'. But then Jesus does things so very differently and majesty does not mean the usual pomp.

The walk to Jerusalem begins and some locals who have heard Jesus preach and possibly have seen him perform miracles come out to see him and wonder what he is doing and where he is going.

More join them as they go along. The people getting more excited as they go. So much so that some dash to cut down palm branches to place on the path. That was a celebratory sign that had been used in the past to cheer and affirm allegiance to a new king. Others believing that Jesus really is someone special throw their cloaks on the ground in front of him, as people had done for kings to show their loyalty. 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. Would we have done the same in their position? Would we have given out of our poverty, and would we now give out of our plenty?

The crowd grows and now gets even noisier. They believe they have a celebrity in front of them just as crowds get excited today for so called stars. The shouts of 'Hosanna', get louder and louder. They even shout the words from Psalm 118 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'

If we had been nearby, would we have wanted to join that crowd and revel in the excitement? Would we have been shouting out with them? If so, how about today?

Are we bold enough to shout about Jesus? It's not easy in this day and age for any of us but a little boldness might go a very long way to building the church here in West Wickham. After all we are not in some countries, where shouting out for someone who is not approved of by the authorities will get you arrested or even jailed.

As they continue rowdily on their way the message of their impending arrival in the city will be getting out to 'the powers that be'. What were the Pharisees and the elders thinking? How are they going to deal with this man? And what were the Roman leaders anticipating? They will all be thinking that things are getting out of hand. Will there be an uprising as has happened before with charismatic preachers? Or will it just blow over after a few days of notoriety? And should it be dealt with by force or not?

The Pharisees want Jesus stopped by whatever means. The Romans wanted a quiet life although always prepared to exert the heavy boot of authority with no fear or favour.

If we were a religious leader, would we not want the status quo to be upset? After all we knew what we should believe, we had all the scriptures and the rules and regulations of our faith to instruct us. And we knew how and where we should worship. If we have lived our lives in a certain way which worked for us, would we not want to cling on the certainties of our life? Do we really want someone turning our life and beliefs upside down?

And for us are we stuck in the customs that we are comfortable with, thinking that everyone should believe and worship as we do, and we do not want to change even if Jesus is prompting us in a different direction.

And if we were a Roman leader or soldier we would not be involved and just see that we have a mob to deal with and the sooner they are sorted out the better.

Amid the noise and turmoil Jesus enters Jerusalem. Much to the probable dismay of the Jewish leaders he makes straight for the temple. An obvious challenge to their authority.

It is late by now, so he turns and leaves the temple and the city and goes back along the path to the village of Bethany. There to rest before the most momentous week in history.

All are left wondering what will happen next. The local people, the bystanders, the poor and the rich, the young and the old, the religious authorities and the Romans.

We are about to come into Holy week with all its events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus and finally his resurrection.

What will this week mean for them and what will it mean for each of us as we remember these events?

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.

Prayer Pointers

Pray that the leaders of nations, factions, armies and dictatorships where peace is not present, to respond to the suffering and heartache around them by negotiating and bringing peace. Among other places, remember Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, North Korea, Haiti and Sudan.

Give thanks for those in caring professions and those who look after others: for health professionals, education staff, parents and carers. Pray that they would be encouraged and strengthened in these times of tight budgets and lack of resources.

Pray for children and young people who may be facing worries and challenges and struggling because of physical or mental health. Pray for those who lead and set examples to young people that they would be wise in showing the risks of social media.

Pray that those who cause harm through bullying, abuse, internet stalking and cruel messaging may repent of the pain and damage they have caused. Pray for the police, the criminal justice system and all who work to protect others and investigate those who cause harm.

Pray for our government and parliament as they use scarce resources, plan budgets and work out how to spend money for the benefit of the nation. Pray for local elections in a few weeks and the campaigning that has just started.

Pray that church leaders would work together across denominations to bring the life and growth that can be found in Jesus to our friends and neighbours.

Prayer for Holy Week

O Holy One, you are the one who makes us whole again.

We present to you our bodies, our minds, our spirits, our cultures and communities.

Heal us and send us out to tell others all that you have done for us.

Amen