

REGULAR SERVICES

SUNDAY

- 8.00 am Holy Communion**
1st & 3rd Sundays at St Mary's Church, The Avenue
2nd Sundays at St Francis' Church
4th & 5th Sundays vary – See calendar for details
- 10.45 am Holy Communion**
Activities for younger children (aged 3+) and crèche facilities in church
- 10.45 am 2nd Sunday – Worship for All Ages** (non-Eucharistic)
- 10.00 am Last Sunday – Joint Family Communion**
with St Mary's, held alternately at each church
See calendar for details

TUESDAY

- 8.00 am Morning Prayer at St Mary's**

WEDNESDAY

- 9.30 am Morning Prayer**
10.45 am Holy Communion

THURSDAY

- 9.00 am Morning Prayer**

FRIDAY

- 9.00 am Morning Prayer at St Mary's**

SATURDAY

- 9.00 am - 10.00 am Church open for quiet and prayer**

DECEMBER 2018

Sunday 2 December – Advent Sunday

- 8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Richard Ford
10.45 am Holy Communion – Brian Griffiths /Richard Ford
Preacher: Richard Ford

Sunday 9 December

- 8.00 am Holy Communion – Hazel O'Sullivan
Preacher: Ken Bryan
10.45 am Worship for All Ages – Brian Griffiths
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan

Saturday 15 December

- 6.30 pm Scouts' Carols at **St Mary's** – Ken Bryan
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan

Sunday 16 December

- 8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Richard Ford
10.45 am Holy Communion – Richard Ford
6.00 pm Carol service – Richard Ford
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan

Sunday 23 December

- 8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Hazel O'Sullivan
10.45 am Holy Communion – Richard Ford
Preacher: Brian Griffiths

Monday 24 December – Christmas Eve

- 6.00 pm Lighting of the Lamps – Richard Ford
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan
11.15 pm Holy Communion – Richard Ford

Tuesday 25 December – Christmas Day

- 8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Hazel O'Sullivan
10.00 am Joint Service – Brian Griffiths
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan

Sunday 30 December

- 8.00 am Holy Communion – Richard Ford
10.00 am Joint Service at **St Mary's** - Richard Ford

Every Wednesday

- 10.45 am Holy Communion

JANUARY 2019

Sunday 6 January – Epiphany

8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Richard Ford
10.45 am Holy Communion – Richard Ford
Preacher: Ken Bryan

Sunday 13 January

8.00 am Holy Communion – Hazel O'Sullivan
10.45 am Worship for All Ages – Brian Griffiths
Preacher: Hazel O'Sullivan

Sunday 20 January – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

8.00 am Holy Communion at **St Mary's** – Hazel O'Sullivan
10.45 am Holy Communion – Richard Ford/Brian Griffiths
Preacher: Alex Terrett

Sunday 27 January

8.00 am Holy Communion – Hazel O'Sullivan
10.45 am Holy Communion – Hazel O'Sullivan
Preacher: Brian Griffiths
3.00 pm Healing Service at **St Mary's** – Ken Bryan/
Rowena Griffiths
Preacher: Lesley East

Every Wednesday

10.45 am Holy Communion

Parish Prayer Cycle for December & January

We pray for those who live in

Sherwood Way; Silver Lane; Southcroft Avenue; Springfield Gardens; Stanford House, High Street; Station Road; Surrey Road; Sussex Road; Tudor Gardens; White House, Dixon Place; Wickham Court Road; Wickham Crescent; Wilmar Gardens, Woodland Way.

In our cycle of prayer for other churches in West Wickham, we pray for Emmanuel Church: the Minister, Revd Bill Bowman, who will be retiring in May, and all the church family there.

Pray for peace in our world:

- Between countries and governments in conflict with each other. Pray for a resolution to the tension that continues to exist between Israel and Palestine.
- Within countries, especially those places where tension between rebel forces and the government have created situations that seem impossible to resolve, in particular in Syria and Yemen.
- In those places in our own country where different groups find it difficult to live in close proximity with each other. We pray for an end to gun and knife crime on the streets of London, which have claimed so many young lives this year.
- Between people within organisations and families.

We pray for our link parish of St Andrew's in Gweru (see the article on Zimbabwe) and the continuing development of our group ministry in West Wickham between St Francis', St John's and St Mary's churches.



Dear Friends

Prior to the Festival of Peace at St Francis' I visited Ypres with the 7th West Wickham Scout Troop. When visiting the graves of WW1 soldiers, I was struck by how hopeful many of the words engraved on the headstones were:

- Till the day dawns and the shadows flee away.
- Trust in Christ to meet again.
- Eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.
- Greater love hath no man.

There was a real sense that families had comfort in knowing that, even in the horrendous conditions that the soldiers fought in, God was there with their loved ones, honouring them, and that they were now safe in heaven. This is what the Festival of Peace at St Francis' was all about: thanking God for those who fought in WW1 and subsequent conflicts and recognising how He has given them, and others, strength to fight for what is right, as well as peace in the knowledge that the promise of eternal life beyond death was for a life very different to the one in this world.

Christmas is a time when there is traditionally a greeting of 'peace' given to others. This isn't only about our destination at the end of life, or about an end to conflict between and within nations around the world. I think that there's also an application to everyone here in West Wickham, caught up in the Christmas shopping spree. Today, Christmas is taken up with many preparations and present-buying, resulting in stress and anxiety about the festive period. God can give us strength to meet these challenges, as well as being with us as we go through them. At any moment during the next few weeks, if you sense an inner turmoil, rather than peace, take your mind and body back to a peaceful experience of God. The following verse from the bible might help:

Be still and know that I am God (Psalm 46:10)

May I wish you and your families and friends PEACE this Christmas-time.

Hazel

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

In 2019 the theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is about how we are called together to form a united witness for justice and to be a means of Christ's healing grace for a fractured world. Services will be held at the following places and times in January:

- Friday 18th – 8.00 pm at St Mark's Catholic Church
- Saturday 19th – 10.00 am at Emmanuel
- Sunday 20th – 6.30 pm at St John's
- Monday 21st – 8.00 pm at Hawes Lane Methodist Church
- Tuesday 22nd – 8.00 pm at Coney Hill Baptist Church
- Wednesday 23rd – 8.00 pm at St Mary's
- Thursday 24th – 8.00 pm at West Wickham & Shirley Baptist Church

Hazel

Healing Service

Our next Healing Service will be on Sunday January 27th January at 3.00 pm in St Mary's Church. Please do join us for prayer, a quiet space to be with God, and time to reflect on how Christ brings wholeness to our lives.

Hazel

Confirmation

We will be hosting a confirmation service at St Mary's on Sunday 3rd February at 6.00 pm. If you know of anyone who might like to affirm their faith and be confirmed at this service, please do speak to me as I'd love to meet with any potential candidates for an informal discussion.

Hazel

Zimbabwe Link

It's been some time since we heard from our link parish of St Andrew's in Mkoba, a suburb of Gweru, Zimbabwe. The reason for this is that their parish priest, Revd Ignatius Makumbe, has recently become the new Bishop of Central Zimbabwe, replacing Bishop Ismael Mukuwanda, who has retired. Ignatius was consecrated and enthroned as Bishop on 10th June 2018.

Ignatius has now been replaced at St Andrew's by Revd Ronald Chikuyo. His wife is Tinotenda Constance and they have a daughter who is less than a year old. Bishop Ignatius has known Ronald for a long time as he was a parishioner at St Andrew's when he was called for the ordained ministry.

Ignatius, in his role as Bishop, recently emailed Bishop Jonathan, Bishop of Croydon, to update him on the current situation in Zimbabwe. Ignatius wrote:

In Zimbabwe we are seeing queues at fuel service stations and prices on some commodities have doubled and some disappearing from the shelves. We keep trusting God. I am well and the Diocese. We are facing challenges of cholera and typhoid in our cities. Large gatherings are discouraged and for our diocesan celebrations we have dropped the number of invited people from 1200 to less than 300, and we are not providing food for the celebrations. Celebration without food and drinks is not African. Sad to get to this departure from tradition.

Clearly the situation in Zimbabwe is not good, despite the departure of Robert Mugabe, and Bishop Jonathan has asked us to keep Zimbabwe in our prayers.

Richard Ford/Hazel O'Sullivan

'Sense' Donations Container

You may have noticed a new purple-coloured receptacle between the church and the hall, which is for donations to the organisation Sense, which has a branch in the High Street. This enables charity donations for sale in one of their shops to be left at a time convenient to you. Please use it to donate any clean clothes, shoes in pairs, accessories, books, DVDs or CDs.

Sense work with those who have complex disabilities in order to combat their isolation and to enable them to fulfil their potential. They do this through offering personalised support through centres, holidays and short breaks, or in people's own homes. In addition to practical support, they also offer information to families and campaign for the rights of people with complex disabilities.

Christmas Really Isn't About Toys

christmas really isn't about toys,
However much we love them, young and old.
Reductions in the fat of Christmas day
in time restore its vigour and its health.
so let us not display our absent wealth,
Though children should have ample chance to play.
More sweet and joyous music must be sung,
And thoughts of peace and mercy make their way
silent and uncluttered through the noise.

Nicholas Gordon



Remembrance

I want to concentrate on three things: Remembrance, Hope & Peace, starting with Remembering.

Remembering – What exactly?

For some it will be the names and faces of loved ones caught up in warfare from the past. No matter how long ago, the pain of loss can endure in some families through the generations, especially those who don't know where their loved ones died or are buried and have no grave to visit.

For me, this month marks a year since my mum died on 18 November, so that will be hard and my dad would have been 100 years old this year. Remembrance Sunday can be a very difficult day for those who mourn the loss of loved ones, especially children.

For others, it might be situations around the world today that cause civil disturbances and refugees. In our churches and community, it

can be difficult relationships or tensions and conflicts within families or between friends or colleagues. Some bear mental, physical or spiritual scars.

Most of us have never experienced or seen National Service, although some of us may have heard about war from our parents and grandparents, but we have continued to see British Armed Forces engaged in combat around the world and suffered from domestic terrorism and civil conflict. More recently, there has been a huge escalation of knife and gun crime, especially on the streets of London, with seven stabbings in the last week, and at least five of them fatal. Some of them not that far away from us, here in West Wickham.

So remembering means different things to different people and generations. Our news broadcasts today report on armed warfare and conflicts which can result in feelings of great sadness, fear, anger or depression, especially among our younger generations.

Our country was very different 100 years ago. Most people believed in God and went to church or chapel regularly. They were also loyal to their King and country. Times were very hard for some and they struggled to make ends meet.

This led many young men being caught up in the excitement and fervour of the recruitment campaigns. Many even as young as 12 years old, lying about their age. They were encouraged to take the 'King's Shilling', join up and fight for their God, King and country and enticed by a promise of a weekly wage.

Verse 13 from John 15, which Hazel has recently read, was also used: *"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends"*. God commanded this because Jesus had already paid the ultimate sacrifice by dying for us on the cross.

These young men had no idea what was waiting for them on the battlefields and in the trenches. None of us can fail to be moved by the thought of so many young lives lost by the waste and futility of the conflict of war and other events, but the least we can do is to honour their memories and retell their stories.

Our War Memorial is a roll of honour naming local young men who lost their lives fighting for our country – some of their names appear

on the Menin Gate, Tyne Cot and other Memorials which our Scouts visited last month, so let us begin by honouring their memory this week-end.

Sacrificial Love:

In the silence, as you listen to your own breathing, remember those who fought and died. Think of your own friends and family. What would you be prepared to die for?

**(Page 15, Remembrance 100 Silence booklet –
Remembrance100.co.uk)**

Hope

Have you ever taken a leap in the dark and been asked to do something that takes you out of your comfort zone? How did that make you feel? Did you experience feelings of excitement, could it be a bit of an adventure or a thrill, a new beginning, a challenge, or were you petrified, apprehensive and nervous?

Recently I have experienced a few challenges of taking on something new, including speaking to two groups of more than 90 people at Southwark Cathedral last week, and I get in a terrible state, but I always hear Chris Chapman saying when he taught us on our SPA course: "Don't worry, everything is possible with God".

So it must have been for these young soldiers I mentioned earlier. They were full of hope and the joys of youth; it was new territory and they were gripped by excitement at going to war. Most of them had never travelled anywhere, apart from maybe visiting relatives. When they signed up, they were all given a Bible as a source of hope for eternal peace.

During the summer I visited the York Army Museum and was very moved by the accounts of what happened in many small villages in Yorkshire and the North of England and the forming of the PALS battalions. This comprised of whole villages sending their young men off to war as a unit. They all wanted to sign up to fight alongside their friends, colleagues and neighbours. People were led to believe that the war would be over by Christmas.

They were all so very young and inexperienced. Their joy & excitement soon turned to despair, after witnessing the horrors and atrocities of war and life in the trenches. This led to heavy losses, with whole villages losing all their young men, some of them within minutes of going into battle.

I quote from one of the letters home written by a young soldier: “O how I wish I had stayed at home with my ma that Saturday when I went to buy her bread and joined the queue to sign up”. Families were left without any male relatives and women had to take on the role of the breadwinner.

This conjured up the image for me of Christ on the cross and Mary and the other women weeping at the foot of it. It's always those who are left behind who suffer. The one thing these young men held on to was hope because they were fighting for peace.

In the book *Hear My Cry* (Bible Society - biblesociety.org.uk/ww1) there is an image of a painting by Pieter Bruegel, commented on by Sister Wendy Beckett, which resonated with me as someone who is visually impaired. It's entitled *Parable of the Blind* which depicts the horrors of trench warfare and its effect on the human spirit. She remarks that “If the blind lead the blind they both fall into the ditch” or trench, which is in stark contrast to a photograph in the book from WW1 showing a line of soldiers blinded by poisoned gas, yet they are all walking straight because they have a leader who sees and is leading them into healing. They have hope.

What is this Hope?

The Holy Spirit “Christ in you, the hope of Glory” as Paul puts it.

It is important to hold on to hope in challenging situations by putting our complete trust in God's peace to surround and keep us safe. Hope remains in the midst of despair. It is a gift from God – He never lets us go and always hears us.

Tough Issues

Think about what soldiers and their families go through. Few of us face such physical and emotional suffering, but we do have to work through tough issues. In the silence, be aware of your own fears and

anxieties. Whatever you are facing right now, ask for God's help and courage in that difficult situation

**(Page 23, Remembrance 100 Silence booklet –
remembrance100.co.uk)**

Peace

What does the word 'Peace' mean to you?

There are many kinds of peace – peace when the children are in bed asleep; peace and quiet of the countryside and so on. It can mean different things to different people, but here we are talking about God's Peace.

One example of this can be found in Philippians 4:

'Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'

The lives and senseless deaths of those young men whom we mentioned earlier, remind us of the terrible cost of war and how our best response to their loss is the active bringing about of peace.

A few years ago we hosted 'The Forgiveness Project' here at St Francis' and this showed that forgiveness can take many years of hard work and sacrifice. For this to happen, we need to let go of the past, all the pain, hurt and bitterness because without forgiveness there is no future and no peace.

Jesus commanded that we should do it repeatedly – by doing so, it opens up the way for us to receive God's healing and helps us experience a deep sense of peace. In Matthew 5:9 Jesus said 'Blessed are the Peacemakers for they will be called children of God'.

Can we live in harmony with one another in response to God's commandment to love one another? To do this we must allow Jesus to come close to us.

God knows us individually – we are made in His image. It is interesting that there is an inscription on the unmarked graves of those who died which reads:

‘Unknown’ – ‘Known unto God’.

Historical reports also tell us that these men knew the comfort of God’s love and the promise of a heavenly home with no more death or sadness.

Recently, have you noticed instances of things like jealousy, anger, or envy in your life and by contrast have you noticed instances of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and other fruits of the Spirit? Paul says in his letter to the Galatians: ‘Let us be guided by the Spirit’. Is now a good time to ask God for that openness and readiness to sense where His Spirit is leading us and to follow?”

Would you, for example, be able to offer the gift of peace to everyone in our world? Could you offer the gift of peace to those near you at this moment? Could you be a catalyst for peace in some small way today? A presence of peace among those you love, live and work with, here in our church at St Francis’ or within the local community in West Wickham? Ask God for a deepening of peace in your own life, mind and heart today.

We pray that we can let go of any anger, hurt or bitterness and allow God’s love to rule in our hearts and minds.

I’d like to finish with the last two verses from a poem by the Army Chaplain, Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy (more fondly known by the soldiers as ‘Woodbine Willie’), in which he is questioning God on how he can bear to watch all the horror and suffering that is happening around him. It’s called **‘The Suffering God’**:

“Bread of Thy Body give me for my fighting,
Give me to drink Thy Sacred Blood for wine,
While there are wrongs that need me for the righting,
While there is warfare splendid and divine.

Give me, for light, the sunshine of Thy sorrow,
Give me, for shelter, shadow of Thy Cross;
Give me to share the glory of Thy morrow,
Gone from my heart the bitterness of Loss”.

God’s Help:

As you sit in the silence, clench your fists tightly, then (when you are ready) open them, showing your willingness to let go of the things that stop you finding peace in your life. Ask God for his help to work this out in the coming weeks and months.

*(Page 27, Remembrance 100 Silence booklet –
Remembrance100.co.uk)*

Amen

*Rowena Griffiths
Reflective Service, St Francis’ Church, 9 November 2018*



Mothers' Union

Unfortunately, we will be closing the St Francis' Mothers' Union in December. Our last meeting in the church hall will be on Tuesday 4 December at 2.00 pm. At this sad occasion we will be enjoying companionship and mince pies!

In January we are having a church service on a Wednesday morning, no date arranged yet. Also, we will be going to the Toby Carvery for a meal together. Again, no date has been arranged yet, but it will probably be Tuesday 15 January 2019. It would be lovely if as many of you as possible could join us in December and again in January.

Have an enjoyable Christmas and New Year everyone.

Joan Burford, Leader, St Francis' MU



The Big Christmas Sing!

The West Wickham Choir, under the guidance of Geoff Mussard, will be holding the Big Christmas Sing at St Francis' Church on Saturday 1 December at 4.00 pm.

All are welcome to come and join in with some of our favourite carols and hear some Christmas poems. Children are especially welcome, as we will be joined by a choir from a local primary school.

The event is in aid of Christian Aid. There is no admission charge, but a collection for Christian Aid will be taken. Free refreshments will be provided.

David Wada, Events Co-ordinator



Website : easyfundraising.org.uk

Now that we are thinking about buying Christmas presents for our family and friends, if you buy on-line, please consider buying via 'easyfundraising'. By using the website, easyfundraising, to make any on-line purchases, our Church will get a commission on your purchases without you paying any more than you would have by going direct to the supplier.

We appreciate that some of you do not have access to the Internet at home, but suggest that you may be able to solicit the help of other Church members or use the computers at the Library.

The procedure is:

1. Login in to: www.easyfundraising.org.uk
2. Select our page – St Francis of Assisi, West Wickham.
3. Select the supplier you want.
4. Continue with your purchase as you would normally

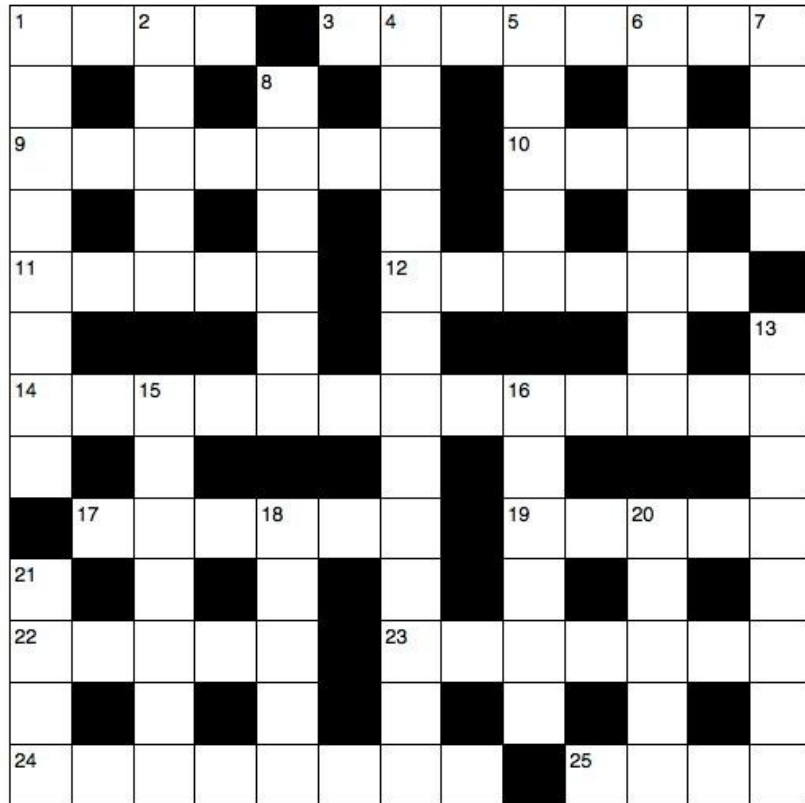
No record of your transaction is retained by easyfundraising as you have paid your supplier direct. Your supplier pays the commission to easyfundraising, who pay it to us quarterly.

Needless to say, the website can be used for other purchases throughout the year, not just for Christmas presents!

*David Wada
Hon Treasurer*



Bible Crossword for December/January



Clues

Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13)(8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any . . . who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder" (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)

20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)

21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)

Solutions to October/November Crossword

	H	O	P	E	F	U	L	N	E	S	S	
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December/January Magazine

Items for inclusion in the next magazine are needed by Sunday 13 January 2019 please, or contact Margaret Green to make alternative arrangements via:

Tel: 8777 4450 or email: magletitiagreen@hotmail.com



JOINT SERVICES IN 2019	
January	No Joint Service
February	3 rd – Joint All Ages Candlemas Service at St Francis’ 24 th – Joint Service at St Mary’s
March	24 th – Joint Service at St Francis’
April	28 th – All Ages: Joint St George’s Day Service at St Mary’s
May	27 th – Joint Service at St Francis’
June	30 th – All Ages: Joint Service at St Francis’ followed by a family barbeque organised by the scouts
July	28 th – Joint service at St Mary’s
August	25 th – Joint service at St Francis’
September	29 th – Joint service at St Mary’s
October	27 th – Joint service at St Francis’
November	24 th – Joint service at St Mary’s
December	25 th – Joint Service at St Francis’ 29 th - Joint Service at St Mary’s

