

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

27th June 2021: Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Hazel writes:

Congratulations to **Freddie Derham** who was baptised at St Francis' Church last week in a small family gathering with his parents, Godparents, grandparents and great-grandparents in attendance.

Parents Michelle and Howard are pictured here outside the church with Freddie (now 8 months old).



Next Sunday we have in-person Holy Communion services at **8am in St Mary's church** and at **10am in St Francis Church**.

Morning Prayer is at St Mary's Church on Tuesday morning at 9am and at St Francis' Church on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am, followed by the church being **open for private prayer** from 10.30-11.30am.

Resources and updates for the week ahead – This week our service will be **livestreamed at 10am** on YouTube. All other files for this week have been combined and included in this pew sheet which has been sent on paper to those who have told us that they are not on-line. Other worship and resources that you might want to listen to or look at on Sunday:

- The Church of England's national virtual service will be available on their website at www.churchofengland.org.
- The BBC have the following programmes to watch and listen to:
 - Sunday Worship at 8.10am on Radio 4 – from Rugby School reflecting on theme of exile and return during the Covid pandemic.
 - Choral Evensong at 3pm on Radio 3 from the Chapel of Rugby School on the eve of the birth of John the Baptist.
 - On BBC 1: Sunday Morning Live at 10.30 a.m. – Sean Fletcher & Kate Bottley explore the ethical and religious issues of the day and
 - Songs of Praise at 1.15 p.m. – Claire McCollum meets HRH Princess Royal on the remote Scottish island of Iona.

Following the recent Refugee's Journey immersive exhibition at Coney Hill Baptist Church Deacon Laura MacBean has set up a JustGiving page to raise funds for **Hope Health Action's emergency appeal** for refugees in Uganda's BidiBidi settlement through a sponsored walk. She will walk 25 miles in the first week of July 2021 (the distance some of the refugees have fled to BidiBidi from their village in South Sudan) and build up to 128 miles by 31 July 2021. Please sponsor her here:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/laura-macbean>

Please bring **Foodbank donations** to the Vicarage or St Francis' Church. Currently their biggest need is "bags for life". They also need jellies, instant whips, biscuits, tinned tomatoes, coffee, squash, deodorant, cleaning spray, antiseptic wipes and washing up liquid. Please do not bring any fresh 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>.

June is Pride month and appropriately our next **Inclusive Church** meeting will focus on gender identity and sexuality. The event will be held on Thursday 15th July at 8pm online via Zoom. Three speakers with personal experience of these issues will form the panel for this event. Questions for the panel should be sent to Hazel by Thursday 8th July. A Zoom invitation will be sent out nearer the date.

We are pleased to announce that St Mary's will be hosting a **Prom Praise Watch Party** on Saturday 17th July at 5.45pm. An opportunity to gather with others, bringing your own picnic to watch and (restrictions allowing) sing along to live hymns and worship songs being streamed from All Soul's Langham Place. Tickets are free, but must be booked in advance, as capacity is limited, either on-line at www.stjohnsww.com/prompraise or through Geoff at geoff@mussard.org.uk or 020 8650 8389.

St Francis and St Mary's are working with the St John's Community Befriending Team to help tackle loneliness in the community by providing volunteer **Telephone Befrienders** for people referred by NHS Social Prescribers. More volunteers are always needed to give regular support to someone on the telephone. When asked about this opportunity, one befriender said:

I have found it very rewarding and so easy to do. The person I support says "it's so nice to hear a different voice and talk about different things". We normally have a lovely chat about what we've been up to and what's going on in the world and exchange ideas about gardening. Today she advised me to use porridge and garlic

paste to help ward off snails. It's great to know that my volunteering has benefited both of us'.

If this is something you think you might want to be involved in, please contact Kate Dyer katedyer41@hotmail.com.

"We are delighted to be able to commence our **Thursday lunchtime concerts at St. Francis'** this year and, although it will be a shorter season than usual, we have some very talented musicians happy to come and play for us. The dates for your diary are: July 15th, when Paolo Rinaldi will play a popular programme of Chopin; then August 12th, August 26th and September 23rd. All commence at 12.45. Further details of programmes soon."

Our **bereavement support bags** will be especially helpful in the months ahead. If you would like a bag to give to someone that you know who has lost a loved one, do take one from the back of either of the churches.

Do you feel you are being called to put yourself forward to be on the **Southwark Diocesan Synod**? Elections will take place by the beginning of July. The Synod brings people together from across the Diocese to drive mission, set strategies, shape priorities as well as appoint to a range of positions on boards and committees. It is a body which is advisory and is a place where important topics facing the church can be discussed. If you want to find out more, please take a leaflet which you will find copies of in both churches. There are also two webinars where potential members to join and gain an overview of the Synod and agenda for the 2021-2024 triennium and ask any questions that they may have. The dates have been set for Tuesday 8 June at 6pm and Wednesday 9 June at 2pm. Please speak to Hazel if you would like to register for either of these events.

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 Nicky Nightingale (nicholanightingale@hotmail.co.uk or 8916 9855) for St Francis'

The pedestal at St. Mary's this week has been provided by Audrey Tibbles for her 95th birthday and has been arranged by Beryl.

Are you keen to help a small independent business survive as they emerge from the pandemic? A young couple with a carpentry business are about to lose their current workshop space. If you have a spare garage or workshop space with an electric supply, which you would be happy to let them use, with costs covered, please contact Toby and Saffron at TM12358@outlook.com or 07872 938235.

During Christian Aid week this year the donations that we raised were similar to those from last year: a total of £1,357. Thank you to Anita and Geoff for co-ordinating our efforts and to everyone who made a donation or encouraged friends and neighbours to do so.

Glebe Housing Association are looking for a volunteer minibus driver for any of the following mornings each week: Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri. You could make a real difference for residents who value being able to access local community activities and shops. You must have had a FULL UK Driving License for 2 years or more and this must include category D1, with no serious driving convictions. If you are interested, please contact the HR department at hr@glebeha.org.uk or call 0208 777 1122.

Each week our “**coffee/tea & chat**” on Thursday at 2.30 pm is an opportunity to share with others. It is just 40 minutes and you don’t need to commit to joining each week. Please let Rowena (rowena.griff19@btinternet.com /020 8777 6112) know if you would like the log-in details.

Any items for the joint pew sheet to Beryl bbolton@ntlworld.com and items for the websites to brian.griff19@btinternet.com or Gifty office@stmarywestwickham.co.uk

Collect

Gracious Father,
by the obedience of Jesus
you brought salvation to
our wayward world:
draw us into harmony with
your will, that we may find
all things restored in him,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

First Reading:

2 Corinthians 8: 7-end

⁷ Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you —so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking. ⁸ I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. ⁹ For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. ¹⁰ And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something

— ¹¹ now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to our means. ¹² For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. ¹³ I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between ¹⁴ your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. ¹⁵ As it is written,

‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.’

¹⁶ But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have. ¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but since he is more eager than ever, he is going to you of his own accord. ¹⁸ With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his proclaiming

of the good news; ¹⁹ and not only that, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our goodwill. ²⁰ We intend that no one should blame us about this generous gift that we are administering, ²¹ for we intend to do what is right not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of others. ²² And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found eager in many matters, but who is now more eager than ever because of his great confidence in you. ²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker in your service; as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. ²⁴ Therefore, openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

Gospel Reading:**Mark 5: 21-43**

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered round him; and he was by the lake. ²² Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet ²³ and begged him repeatedly, 'My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.' ²⁴ So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. ²⁵ Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. ²⁶ She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ for she said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.' ²⁹ Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her

disease. ³⁰ Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' ³¹ And his disciples said to him, 'You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?"' ³² He looked all round to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.' ³⁵ While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, 'Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?' ³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, 'Do not fear, only believe.' ³⁷ He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people

weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ When he had entered, he said to them, 'Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.' ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, 'Talitha cum', which means, 'Little girl, get up!' ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. ⁴³ He strictly ordered them that no one should know this and told them to give her something to eat.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, comfort of the afflicted and healer of the broken, you have fed us at the table of life and hope: teach us the ways of gentleness and peace, that all the world may acknowledge the kingdom of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The collect and post communion prayer, copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England or reproduced with permission from other copyright owners.

Bible reading from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition, copyright © 1989, 1995 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Sermon – Ken Bryan: From hope to belief

The theme of today's gospel reading seems to me to be 'from hope to belief'.

For Jairus his hope was that the miracle worker would heal his daughter and he ends up believing that Jesus has divine powers.

For the woman, she hoped for a healing that nobody else had been able to give her and being healed, she ends up with the courage to face Jesus and openly share her troubles with him and he sees her deepening faith that she believes in him.

As we read these two stories it might help us more fully understand what effect Jesus has on people if we imagine ourselves as one of the participants.

The humble hurting woman, people in the crowd, the disciples watching on, Jairus, his wife, his daughter waiting to be healed, the friends with the sad news, or Jesus himself. Even those who hear of the events of the two healings.

The two stories are deliberately set against each other for our instruction. The difference in sex, status and public recognition and the way that Jesus deals with them.

Jairus was a man who was used to controlling events and speaking to people at the top level to get things done. Yet here he is not in control. He looks for the person who he thinks could help him but he has to come and grovel, belittle himself. His town was possibly Capernaum, which was small and he may not have been the most powerful of people. He doesn't seem to have servants as it says some men, perhaps neighbours or friends, come to bring him the sad news. But for all that, he will have been a respected figure in the community. He will have known about the new preacher who was back in town and he may not have been well disposed to him because of his radical views and an upsetting of the usual order of things. But in desperation he sees Jesus as a possibility for the healing of his daughter whose illness is becoming more and more severe. I wonder if his wife was instrumental in making him swallow his pride and go to seek out Jesus for his help. And even humble himself falling at his feet which he won't have done that many times in his life. He is then left agitated as Jesus stops when the woman touches the fringe of his cloak.

The woman was never in control of situations. She would not have had any social standing and would have had to wait in queues for things and she did not get satisfactory results from the learned doctors. These doctors would not have had the knowledge that they have today. But even today there are many who are treated poorly by the system and are fobbed off or demeaned if they ask for what seems to be their right.

Jesus would have known that the religious rules of the day included that ritual uncleanness would be considered both for touching a person with a discharge of blood and for touching a corpse, if in fact the little girl had died.

As the woman believed that healing power was even in the garments of prophets she plucked up the courage to touch the fringe of his cloak. Jesus asked his disciples if they knew who touched him, but they were dismissive saying how can you tell if someone touches you when a crowd is pressing around you? But Jesus knew that power was taken from him to heal the woman after twelve years of suffering. Jesus tells her that it was her faith that unlocked the power. Her faith acting as a channel for the power to flow.

Her commitment to Jesus is complete when she takes his power for healing then opened her life and her problems to Jesus and she receives his peace through her faith. From hope to belief.

Now the walk to the house with the despair of thinking they were now too late. Yet Jesus had said 'don't be afraid. Just believe'. Jairus' wife probably ran out when they arrived in tears as she said that their daughter had died.

Jesus says to the crowd who were already mourning that she is asleep which they take to mean that she is dead. When he insists she is only sleeping they laugh at him.

The Aramaic words spoken by Jesus 'Talitha cum' 'Little girl, get up'. One of the few places in the bible where we have the actual words spoken by Jesus in his own language.

And again the human touch 'Give her something to eat'. With these words and showing concern it shows that God cares and is breaking into the world in the ordinary details of life.

Through these healings Jesus isn't showing that he is a one man emergency doctor but he is pointing to greater things. The greater healing from sin with his own death on a cross and resurrection.

His final instruction to Jairus and those around him to 'tell no one', is perhaps to keep as much of the knowledge of the events away from the powers that be who might rise against him before the time is right for him. Or it might be to keep to a minimum intrusion into their lives as receivers of his healing power. I am sure in our world today they would not have had a moment's peace with constant questioning of what happened, why do they think they are so special to receive this healing and what are they going to do now?

For the Corinthians in our epistle reading they seem to hope they have got things right in their faith but it takes Paul to put them on a true course to belief and what that means in practical terms.

Corinth was a wealthy trading city and the Corinthians were confident and lived their lives their way. They were known for their sexual impropriety. The new Christians were divided into factions and there were false teachers infiltrating the community. They challenged Paul's integrity and his authority as an apostle.

Before he visits he writes that he hopes that the collection will have been taken for the poverty stricken believers in Jerusalem. They had started collecting but stopped when they thought that Paul might be lining his own pocket.

Paul praises them for being good at many things, though this may well have been with his tongue planted firmly in his cheek he then asks them to be generous in giving. There is no coercion but an encouragement to be like the poorer Macedonians, the Thessalonians and Philippians who were mentioned earlier in this chapter who gave as much as they were able and beyond. He asks them to give as an expression of their love.

Now Paul uses Jesus as his example of one who was rich but for their and our sake became poor. Jesus was rich in that he became poor when he came down to be born into a human family. Taking the nature of a servant, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death. His poverty was his humility.

So he encourages them to get on with it as a matter of showing their eagerness to follow Jesus and support those followers who are in need. He was not asking for over the top giving but just for them to recognise what they have, which is more than most, and always consider that one day the boot may be on the other foot and they might be looking for someone else's generosity when things have not gone well for them.

They should move to a true belief in a loving God and a humble Jesus who was prepared to come among us, be our servant and to die for our sins.

For us belief should lead to a willingness to share and a generosity of giving according to our resources.

We must also be mindful that we are not like those in the crowd. Are we so focused on getting Jesus to meet our needs that we fail to notice the spiritual and material needs of others? We should always ensure that we are not missing signs in people that they are hurting or in need of help in some way or another. While there is nothing wrong with having our gaze fixed on Jesus, we must also make sure that our eyes are on those who are equally made in God's image. We must see those whom Jesus sees.

Moreover, much like the woman, whose problems may not have been obvious, we must be able to look beyond the superficial, and see what is really at the heart of the matter. Let us pray for eyes, ears and hearts that are more attentive to the needs of others.

I hope that at St Mary's and St Francis' our belief in Jesus grows and grows for us to serve him and our neighbour.

Amen

Prayer Pointers

- Give thanks that Jesus reaches beyond cultural barriers to heal the marginalized and those who have little voice.
- Give thanks for the role women have played in forming and nurturing our faith and especially for women in ministry in the church.
- For sick children and their parents who wait anxiously at the bedsides. Pray especially for all who care for sick children in our local hospitals and for the pioneering treatments at Great Ormond Street Hospital.
- For the rescue operation at the collapsed building in Miami, USA and for those waiting to discover news of their loved ones.
- For Zimbabwe and especially our link Diocese of Central Zimbabwe about to celebrate its 40th anniversary. For our link Parish of St Andrew's in Gweru where it is now winter and temperatures have dropped. For St Patrick's Hospital and for St Patrick's School where there is a new head teacher.
- For all those who are ill and for their friends and relatives – especially for Vicky Pearce and Julie Bailey.
- For all those who have died and for their loved ones who mourn at this time – especially pray for the soul of Michael Sanders and his wife Mary and for Sheila Green and her husband Ron as they come to terms with their passing.