

# St Francis Weekly News for Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ST FRANCIS CHURCH?

### ST FRANCIS FREE FOOD AND THE COMMUNITY FRIDGE

Over the past couple of months we have been in the process of responding to the fact that not only has the supply of food coming in to us dwindled but we are also receiving fewer requests for food assistance.

This has meant that we have had to rethink how we manage requests for help in the future – but also if the way we have been operating is viable for the future, and indeed, necessary.

This does not mean that we no longer offer support to anyone who is in need of a helping hand.

I would like to make it clear that although we have now wound down St Francis Free Food we will continue to make every effort to make sure that no one in our community is going hungry through lack of food in the cupboard. We have a proposal on the table for an alternative scheme for helping out, we will be making this known when it has been agreed and we are in a position to offer it.

In addition, we have met to discuss whether or not to continue with what was the Community Fridge at some point in the future. On balance, it was recognised that circumstances have changed drastically and that we are now called to respond to the needs of the community in a different way. The accommodation in the former Hive is now drastically reduced too. In view of these changed circumstances, it was agreed that the community fridge will no longer be offered from St Francis. We would like to offer a huge thank you to all those who volunteered to make the scheme a success in the past.

Be assured that the Church of St Francis is totally committed to serving this community, both now and in the future.

Revd Janet

## WHERE IS EYORE?

A few weeks ago, Rev Winnie and Eeyore went away on holiday to Italy. Unfortunately, Eeyore got himself thoroughly lost in Milan, and ended up in Assisi. He thought this was a posh name for Heartsease, as it is where our patron saint St Francis came from. We received a few letters with occasional updates, but we have been desperately worried about his safety, and whether he would ever find his way home.

We are thrilled to be able to report that Eeyore is now safe and sound and back at home!



The mystery was solved, and our fears were put to rest, shortly after we went to press last week. Half way through our Sunday service, there was a knock at the side door. Rev Janet went to investigate, and who should be there but Eeyore!

He looked very smart in what we thought was a nice new brown dressing gown, but we have subsequently learned from Eeyore that this is a Franciscan 'habit'

worn by all who are members of the Order of St Francis. In case you are wondering why Eeyore is wearing one, it is because he joined the order and is now to be known as Brother Eeyore.

We are so pleased for him, and for the fact that he responded to God's call. Is God calling you? How will you respond?



Eeyore with his Ee-oar

## REMEMBERED WITH LOVE

On Sunday November 1<sup>st</sup> at 3pm we are holding a memorial service for the feast of All Souls, 'Remembered with Love'.

We are inviting all those who have been recently bereaved, and the service is welcome to all. Perhaps you too would like to come along and commend to God the memory of someone you miss. That's Sunday November 1<sup>st</sup> at 3pm.

## NUMBER 94 RIDER HAGGARD ROAD...

We are hoping that we will soon be seeing lots of activity happening in what was the Hive building.

The renovations are complete and the areas that St Francis Church will be using are almost ready to go – These include the office where The Heartsease Community Money Advice Centre will be located and the large reception area that has been laid out as an area of welcome and hospitality.

As there have been such substantial changes to the way the building will be used we are thinking that it would be good to have a change of name to signal the fresh new start.

We are inviting suggestions and would welcome any ideas that especially include a reference to 'St Francis'

Please get in touch if you have a suggestion!

## CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

Following on from discussions with the Bishop's office, we are now about to relaunch our confirmation preparation sessions.

If you have ever thought about being confirmed; or would like to know what it means to make a commitment to Jesus by being confirmed into the Church of England please contact Revd Janet or Fr Tracy. We will be very pleased to hear from you.



## PASTORAL CARE MATTERS

As we enter into the colder autumnal months and the days get shorter and darker, coping with the changes that seem to happen from day to day may lead to feelings of sadness and perhaps increased anxiety.

If you would like the opportunity to have a chat, or if you need some assistance of any kind please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We are very happy to talk with you if that would be helpful.

Please do not feel that you are alone - help and support is always available, whatever may be troubling you.

Revd Janet [07990 576118]

**Father Tracy [07834 845623] please note this number has changed.**

Eleanor [07840 206716]

Also, there is always someone available in the church building weekdays 10.00am – 12.00pm; please feel free to knock at the door, it will open to you.



## USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Childline: 0800 1111

Samaritans: 116 123

Domestic Violence Hotline: 0808 2000 247

[If you hear a neighbour in distress please do not hesitate to call this number or 999; you could save a life]

Mind: 0300 123 3393

Age UK: 0800 169 6565

## THE CURATE'S CORNER

The COVID-19 pandemic, as we all know, has been a difficult time for all of us but this week I have been forced to reflect yet again on the huge emotional and psychological stress it is causing and especially the damage that is being inflicted on relationships we have with our loved ones. A few days ago a person known well to me suddenly developed dramatic symptoms of dementia that threatened their own safety, and since some violence was being manifested, that of others too. We are experiencing a sea change at the moment in the way that healthcare is managed and as a result it was very difficult to get help. I was horrified by how much effort and – frankly – shouting was required to get the assistance this person is entitled to, but fortunately in the end a place was made available in a suitable home. This means that, after a COVID-19 test, the person will be in a safer environment, but sadly it also means that no-one will be allowed to visit, and for who knows how long. In the moments when this person is lucid they will be feeling abandoned and probably unable to understand why the isolation is demanded, factors that will inevitably add to confusion and deep distress.

I know that this is something that is affecting many. I am also seeing the inevitable trauma that is being caused to family and friends who are quite simply cut off completely from those they have known and loved, and been loved by, for many years. This is a result of the effects of a response to a pandemic that has been deemed necessary. I am not convinced, however, that the spiritual consequences of these measures have been adequately considered.

May I urge us to pray for all those who are suffering, perhaps by being separated from their friends and families, and for all those who are so deeply and tragically unable to be where they feel they should be at this time. As difficult as it might be, let's also try and keep a check on those known to us who are alone, as well as holding them firmly in our prayers.

On a different note, this coming Tuesday the Church of England calendar remembers with honour two incredibly strong and brave Norwich women.

Elizabeth Fry was born near Magdalen Street in 1780. She was a minister and preacher in the Society of Friends ('Quakers') and became deeply concerned about the shocking and inhuman state of prisons. She is now famous for having worked hard to improve conditions in prisons and spent much of her time looking after women prisoners in particular. Less well known is the fact that she was the first woman to address parliament, worked tirelessly to help the homeless and was significantly involved in the campaign to abolish the slave trade. She opened a

training school for nurses in 1840 that was a huge influence on Florence Nightingale.



Another famous nurse is remembered on Tuesday, Edith Cavell. Edith was born in Swardeston, the daughter of the vicar. She trained as a nurse, eventually working for the Red Cross in Belgium where she found herself at the outbreak of World War 1. She refused to come home and tended the sick of both sides. She became involved in smuggling British soldiers into Holland and in 1915 she was caught and put on trial. Protecting her colleagues, she was sentenced to death and executed by firing squad. Her body was eventually returned to Norwich and her funeral was at the cathedral, where she is buried. Her grave has been recently restored and it can be found a little way eastwards from the south door.



Elizabeth and Edith died on October 12<sup>th</sup>, in 1845 and 1915 respectively. They remain a massive inspiration to us all and we remember them with pride. May they rest in peace.

Every blessing,

**Fr Tracy**

## FOR OUR PRAYERS

We pray for those who are in acute need of prayer at this time: David & Cynthia S; Darren L & family; Maegan; Tom; Riley & his mum and family; Jeanette, David & Grace; Paula; Colin; Pete; Lauren; Fr Brian; Hazel; Ben; Frazer.

We continue to pray for all those in our Church, friends and family who are managing long term health issues including Doreen; Rosemary; Sheila; John; Joy; Shirley.

We remember with love Terry and all those who have died in recent days and pray for their family and friends.

## PRAYER FOR THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES

God of compassion,  
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.  
In their loneliness, be their consolation;  
in their anxiety, be their hope;  
in their darkness, be their light;  
through him who suffered alone on the cross,  
but reigns with you in glory,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Church of St Francis  
Heartsease**

**Heavenly Father  
We ask your blessing upon us.  
Hold the Heartsease Community,  
and all the world,  
in your arms of love.  
Be with us.  
Give us your strength,  
peace, and healing grace.  
Watch over us,  
protect us from harm;  
and keep in safety  
all those who care for the sick  
and attend to our needs,  
in Jesus name we pray.  
Amen**

## PRAYERS FOR 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Almighty and everlasting God,  
increase in us your gift of faith  
that, forsaking what lies behind  
and reaching out to that which is before,  
we may run the way of your commandments and win the  
crown of everlasting joy;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

God, our judge and saviour,  
teach us to be open to your truth  
and to trust in your love,  
that we may live each day  
with confidence in the salvation which is given  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

We praise and thank you, O Christ,  
for the sacred feast of Holy Communion:  
for here we receive you,  
here the memory of your passion is renewed,  
here our minds are filled with grace,  
and here a pledge of future glory is given,  
when we shall feast at that table where you reign with all  
your saints for ever. Amen

## READINGS FOR 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ISAIAH 25:1-9



O LORD, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt.

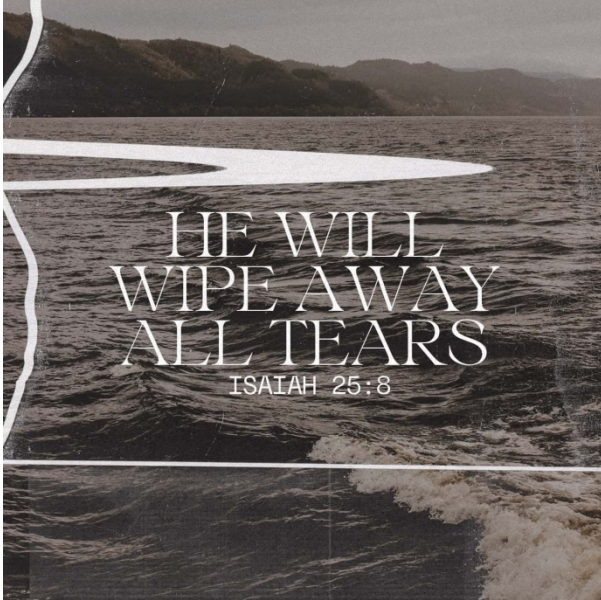
Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.

When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled.

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured

wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.



## PSALM 23



The Lord is my shepherd; •  
therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures •  
and leads me beside still waters.

He shall refresh my soul •  
and guide me in the paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of  
death, I will fear no evil; •  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.

You spread a table before me  
in the presence of those who trouble me; •  
you have anointed my head with oil

and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy  
shall follow me all the days of my life, •  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now,  
and shall be for ever. Amen

## PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and  
long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this  
way, my beloved.

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same  
mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal  
companion, help these women, for they have struggled  
beside me in the work of the gospel, together with  
Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names  
are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let  
your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is  
near. 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.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is  
honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever  
is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any  
excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise,  
think about these things. Keep on doing the things that  
you have learned and received and heard and seen in  
me, and the God of peace will be with you.

**Rejoice in the Lord  
always: and again I say,  
Rejoice.**

**—Philippians 4:4**



## MATTHEW 22:1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.



'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

## REFLECTION FOR 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Our reading in Isaiah follows chapters recording the demise of many cities and the judgement of God on all nations when he lays waste the earth. It does actually fit well post creationtide when we considered what is going on in our world today and the damage the earth is suffering. The chapter ends with an image of Gods' reign over a renewed earth, his triumph is for himself but also for his people.

Today the reading from Isaiah begins with a song from a lone singer, taken to be Isaiah, which praises all the wonderful things God has done. The gloom has gone and he is transported to the heavens by a song of praise, he is impressed by the sheer power of the Lord's

deeds. God has been and always will be on the side of the poor and needy.

On Mount Zion God will provide a feast for all people which includes the best of food and wine. By implication the feast is free and God will be the host, but the feast is both inclusive and exclusive. It will be for all people but in one place, only on Mount Zion. The onus is on nations to go there, it is not restricted to only to faithful Israelites.

The feast is to be a victory celebration, but this one will be a total victory, it will defeat the ultimate enemy, death itself. The destruction of the shroud or sheet in verse 7 represents the universal sorrow that death has brought into the world. There is no clear time line given, the assertion simply is that this is what God will do. The decisive victory over death is won in the death and resurrection of Jesus which we enter into more fully when Jesus returns. It is then that death is swallowed up for ever, pain and sorrow are removed and tears are wiped away.

Our reading in Matthew also records a feast, for the wedding of the king's son. I think it would be fair to say that in most cultures weddings are a big event. Even in poorer families there is pressure to put on a good show, they can be the best of times but also the worst of times. Everything has to be perfect, the brides dress, outfits of the bridesmaids, the groom and grooms' men, flowers, venue etc., etc.

In the midst of a pandemic things have changed, and for some couples it may be a relief. Think of the money they will save that can be put to better use, it also gives them an opportunity to be more creative in the way they conduct the event. Those of you who read the EDP may have seen the couple who arranged a drive-in for their wedding enabling many more people to be there, the happy couple had a buggy and were able to drive around and see everyone quite safely. I thought it was quite enterprising. Doubtless there will be those whose plans have fallen by the wayside who are bitterly disappointed and businesses that may suffer due to lack of income.

There were many couples during the war who had to make do, some brides using parachute silk to make their dress, it isn't new and by and large most weddings will still be enjoyed, for the right reasons.

In biblical times an invitation to a wedding was something to be taken seriously. In this parable the wedding feast was arranged by the king for his son, it would not have been a brief affair and those invited should have felt very honoured. This should have been a joyous occasion throughout the kingdom, along the lines of the royal weddings we have seen in this

country, no expense spared. It was customary for the initial invitations to be sent out well in advance and then followed up with a reminder when the feast was ready. Any one unable to be there should have spoken up much earlier.

This parable is the last of three Jesus spoke to the chief priests and Pharisees who opposed him in the temple. It's a form of teaching used by him which compares the known with the unknown, or the familiar with the unfamiliar. Parables are designed to convey lessons, not to portray real life. A few days after preaching this parable Jesus will be crucified.

It seems astonishing that so many people declined the final invitation to the feast when so much trouble had been taken to prepare everything, killing the king's servants was the last straw for the king. Going to war may seem extreme but other more recent wars have erupted over less. The events present a somewhat bizarre image, a wedding feast going on with a city burning in the near distance. To scorn the offer to attend such a joyous feast was an act of rebellion against the king himself.

The King in this parable is symbolic of Jesus' heavenly father and the bridegroom is Jesus himself. The original guests invited to the wedding are the Jews, God's chosen people with whom God made a covenant. The king's servants who are attacked were God's prophets,

and the new guests are the Gentiles and others less worthy. For the last two thousand years or so the blessings of God's kingdom have not been reserved exclusively for the Jews but are extended to all who will believe in his son. God keeps all his promises, his gifts and calling are irrevocable.

Eventually there are sufficient guests to make the feast a worthy occasion. It was customary for people to be well dressed at weddings, clothing would probably be embellished and decorated even the poor would have made sure they had the best they could afford, probably white. The king however was angry to find one of the guests unsuitably clothed and he was thrown out into the dark which seems rather harsh, especially as there had been little time to prepare and the individual may have been in very reduced circumstance.

The reading in Matthew links well with Isaiah, both depict a feast to which specific people are invited who fail to respond positively to the invitation, enabling others to take up the offer. For those who have responded to the call of God and trust in Christ through faith there is the prospect of being at the marriage feast of Christ. Many are called, but few are chosen, may we be among the chosen few. Amen

Gloria Chinery  
Lay Reader



My dear brothers, I love you and want to see you. You bring me joy and make me proud of you. Continue following the Lord as I have told you.

I ask Euodia and Syntyche to agree in the Lord. And because you serve faithfully with me, my friend, I ask you to help these women to do this. They served with me in telling people the Good News. They served together with Clement and others who worked with me. Their names are written in the book of life.

Be full of joy in the Lord always. I will say again, be full of joy.

Let all men see that you are gentle and kind. The Lord is coming soon. Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it.

Brothers, continue to think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honourable and right and pure and beautiful and respected. And do what you learned and received from me. Do what I told you and what you saw me do. And the God who gives peace will be with you.



The Lord

is my Shepherd

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down  
in green pastures, He  
leadeth me beside still  
waters.

He restoreth  
my soul.

Psalm 23

Psalm 23

Psalm 23

D. MOLLER



# Brother Eeyore & Friend



Name .....



### Philippians 4.1-9

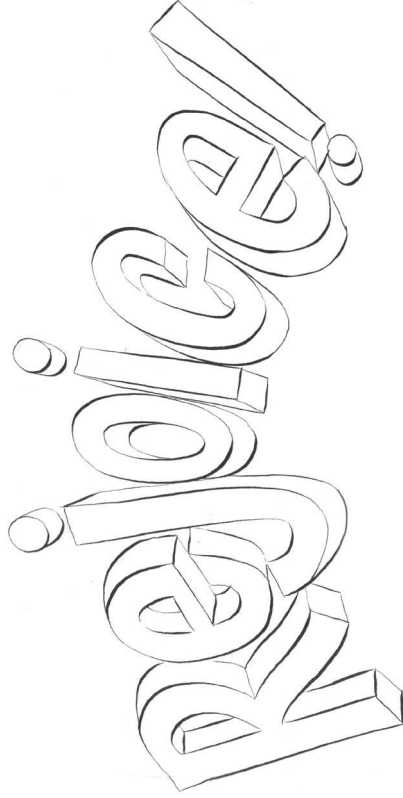
Paul ends his letter to the Philippians telling them to rejoice and not to worry but bring everything to God in prayer.



## Activity time



Colour in and decorate the word 'Rejoice!'  
Draw things/people you want to bring to God in prayer.



# ROOTS children's sheet

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Imagine you are a Philippian and write to Paul thanking him for the letter he has sent.



## Family time

**Talk** What can you do if you are worried or anxious about something?

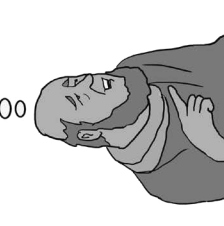
**Do** Read *The Huge Bag of Worries*, Virginia Ironside, and talk together about the book afterwards.

**Pray** What makes you want to rejoice? Share these things together and shout out 'Rejoice in the Lord!' after each one.



### Puzzle

Unscramble the letters to see what the Philippians might have been feeling when they heard these words from Paul.



Name .....

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## Colouring time

Paul tells the Philippians to rejoice, always!

